

**PSYCHOSOCIAL FACTORS INFLUENCING
PARTICIPATION IN SCHOOL MUSIC: THE CASE OF
A TYPICAL FORMER 'MODEL C' BOYS' HIGH
SCHOOL IN DURBAN, SOUTH AFRICA**

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DECLARATION

This work has not previously been submitted for a degree at any university. To the best of my knowledge and belief, this short dissertation contains no material previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the short dissertation itself.

ABSTRACT

This short dissertation presents a case study of eleven students from a typical former 'Model C' single sex high school in Durban South Africa. At the time of the study, 2006, these were the only students who were actively availing themselves of the school's limited opportunities for studying and making music. The school, which shall remain anonymous, is shown to typify a psychosocial environment that is at best indifferent to active musical participation and, at worse, hostile to it. The study investigates how the attitudes towards, and the perceptions of, music involvement at the school emerge as stereotypical ways of thinking that are counter to the interests of its learners.

This case study, supported by two questionnaires completed by peers and parents, and informed by the researcher's experience teaching Music at the school, generated conclusions from which explanations for the general reluctance of adolescent males to engage in specific kinds of school-based musical activities have been attempted. Informing the analysis and interpretation of the data is Erik Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development as it pertains to the psychosocial characteristics of adolescent males and provides an explanation as to the extent to which social environments can influence the individual.

A close reading of the subjects' responses helps in the articulation of the generally unspoken assumptions of 'muscular Christianity', the Victorian ethos that continues to dominate in schools such as the one that formed the focus of this study, and which is still pervasive in many if not most South African schools.

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CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION

1.1 Motivation and intentions

This short dissertation presents a case study of eleven learners from a typical former 'Model C' boys' high school in Durban, South Africa. The subjects of this case study, which took place in 2006, were the only learners who chose to attend Music Theory lessons at the school (with the purpose of completing external graded examinations) and had involved themselves in the limited music activities available at the school.

The name of the school has not been revealed in this case study in order to preserve the subjects' and the institution's anonymity. The researcher believes that the omission of the school's name from this dissertation does not lessen the value of this case study. The aim of this study is to show how a school, as a psychosocial environment, can influence the choices regarding school music participation made by those who attend this institution.

The school used for this case study had an ethos that promoted the values that it perceived to be "traditionally British". Learners of the school were expected to conform to the ideals of post Victorian hegemonic masculinity, which is often referred to as "muscular Christianity" (Adler 1994, Bloomfield 1994, Chandler et al 2002, Haley 1978). This has been proven to be typical of most male single sex high schools of KwaZulu-Natal (Morrel 2001b). The study investigates how the attitudes towards and perceptions of music involvement at the school emerge as stereotypical ways of thinking that are counter to the interests of its learners.

The researcher was an educator at this particular school for a period of five years. She taught subjects in two different Learning Areas to learners from grade eight to Matric level. It was during this time that she observed that Music Education and activities available at the school were highly stereotyped and generally avoided by staff and learners alike. The ideology of the school appeared to be consistent with the ethos of muscular Christianity, in that both are antagonistic to any behaviour that is deemed feminine, and both focus on promoting sport for the achievement of idealistic goals. This status quo created a psychosocial environment that was at best indifferent to music involvement and at worst, induced reluctance to any participation in music at the school. The researcher is of the

opinion that this status quo needs to be challenged for the sake of those learners who choose to remain involved in music activities at the school, and in order to promote music in future. It is the researcher's belief that music activities add value to education and that these benefits could further enhance the quality of education at the school.

In order to fully understand how the attitudes and perceptions of the school can have such a profound effect on its learners, one must analyze the school as a psychosocial environment. The researcher has applied Erik Erikson's theories relating to Psychosocial Development (Erikson 1950, 1968 and 1980), with particular reference to identity formation in stage five of his development scheme, in analyzing the school as a psychosocial environment. The reason for this choice of theory is because it explains that during adolescence, the social environment profoundly influences identity formation, and that the adolescent may make choices in order to receive recognition from society or to avoid rejection by society.

This case study has relevance in South African music education. It is the researcher's hope that this case study will challenge the status quo that has been deemed acceptable in schools that promote a muscular Christian ethos at the expense of Music. The case study provides evidence of the negative psychosocial effects that this ideology has had on the learners who attend these institutions. The researcher believes that this case study will be particularly relevant in the field of Music Education, especially within single sex former Model C schools in South Africa. It appears that the challenges facing Music as a subject in schools requires the music education profession to understand the reasons why society perceives music education to be irrelevant in the education of young males and how this attitude might affect the choices made by these learners.

1.2 Theoretical and conceptual framework

1.2.1 The ethos of muscular Christianity

Muscular Christianity is an ethos that encourages athleticism in order to achieve moral character, and implies that "manliness" cannot be achieved without physical exertion. The ethos highlights and celebrates the association between physical strength and resiliency, and a strong code of ethics. Muscular Christianity is a notion that formed a key feature in discourses concerning masculinity or masculinities in the later half of the nineteenth century.

The term, muscular Christianity, originated in 1857, but has been implicit within literature since 1762. Rousseau advocated the notion of muscular Christianity in his book, *Emile* (1762) and stressed that educators should: ‘Give his [a boy’s] body constant exercise; make it strong and healthy in order to make him good and wise... The lessons the scholars learn from one another on the playground are worth a hundredfold more than what they learn in the classroom’ (Rousseau 1762 cited in Watson et al. 2005).

Writers such as JJ Rousseau, W. Clarke, D. Kilner, W. Howitt and S.G. Goodrich all advocated the notions of muscular Christianity, but it was T.C. Saunders who created the term in his review of Charles Kingsley’s *Two Year’s Ago* (1857). Thomas Hughes, who supported this ethos in his writing, was responsible for the introduction of muscular Christianity in education through his association with the Rugby School, which in turn became a model for the public schooling system in Britain. The British public schooling system was used as a model for the secondary schools of Post-colonial Natal (Morrel 2001b).

The ethos of muscular Christianity has continued to influence the single sex, “traditionally British” secondary schools of KwaZulu-Natal and has particularly flourished at the school presented in this case study. The school promoted sports among its learners above all other activities available at the school. Learners who are involved in sports were perceived to have a greater sense of loyalty to the school and were valued above other learners, with an implication of having stronger ethical characters.

The original intentions of introducing the ethos of muscular Christianity to the education system was to instill moral values and an ethical core, a sense of national pride through team sports, and an aversion to all things effeminate. It was believed that the promotion of muscular Christianity would rectify social problems that had arisen in the Victorian era, such as political unrest, social insecurities, public displays of homosexuality and the perceived femininity of the church. This ethos, while maintained at schools, does not encourage young men to participate in activities perceived to be feminine, such as Music.

1.2.2 Introduction to Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development

Erikson’s Theory of Psychosocial Development (Erikson 1950, 1968, 1980) describes the development of the ego-identity throughout the life cycle and emphasizes the impact that society and culture have on psychological development. The main purpose of the

Psychosocial Theory of Development is to explain human behaviour and identity formation whilst providing insights as to how the growing individual can best be supported by their social environment. In his own words, Erikson's psychosocial theory offers

[A] conceptual explanation of the individual's social development by tracing the unfolding of the genetically social character of the human individual in the course of [his/her] encounters with the social environment at each phase of [his/her] epigenesis. Thus it is not assumed that societal norms are grafted upon the genetically asocial individual by "disciplines" and "socialization" but that the society into which the individual is born makes [him/her] its member by influencing the manner in which [he/she] solves the tasks posed by each phase of [his/her] epigenetic development (Erikson 1980:11).

Erikson's theory is based on both his own observations in psychoanalysis and the work of Freud, Anna Freud and Heinz Hartman. Erikson agreed with Sigmund Freud's concept of the ego, but his interest lay in the influence that the social environment has on the human being's psychological development.

According to Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development, identity is 'the perception of the self-sameness and continuity of one's existence in time and space and the perception of the fact that others recognize one's sameness and continuity' (Erikson 1968:50). In other words, identity is a culmination of our unique inner self under the influence of past experiences and social expectations. This definition is important because it emphasizes the contributions that the individual and society make to the formation of one's identity throughout the human lifecycle.

Identity formation is a process that starts at birth. It begins when a 'rudimentary sense of identity' (Erikson 1950:239) is established in early childhood and this sense gradually becomes a distinct ego identity in adolescence. The ego-identity continues to refine and redefine itself through adulthood. The psychosocial identity develops through a process of stages that Erikson termed the "eight ages of man," the most significant of which is adolescence. Erikson tabulates these stages in *Identity, Youth and Crisis* (1968:94). Erikson's theory was based on Freud's Theory of Psychosexual Development (referred to in Erikson 1950, 1968, 1980), which was also presented in a series of stages. Table 1¹ shows

¹ Table 1, Appendix, Page number 110.

the progression of Erikson's psychosocial development in relation to Freud's psychosexual stages. It becomes obvious that the physical and psychosexual development of the growing human provides them with what Erikson referred to as turning points, or crises. These situations or circumstances are viewed as opportunities for humans to increase their psychosocial maturity at each of the eight stages.

Erikson states that the term 'crisis' indicates a turning point, or critical period of increased potential and vulnerability, rather than a moment of chaos. It is a moment at which a developing young person has to face issues that may seem daunting to them. The crises that occur throughout psychosocial development may be collectively referred to as 'the crises of wholeness' (Erikson 1968:87).

Each of the eight stages contributes to the formation of the ego-identity. The complex emergence of the ego and identity occurs throughout the life cycle, with each stage representing the increasing capacity of the ego-identity, before it emerges as an established identity in adolescence.

Three tables that represent Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development have been included in the Appendix² in order to provide a clear explanation of the theory. While Table 1 presents the psychosocial theory in relation to Freud's psychosexual theory and the stage specific influences of the individual's social environment, Table 2 presents the eight stages of psychosocial development in their epigenetic sequence. The epigenetic principle requires us to understand that the stages are in fact interrelated, and have a direct influence on the formation of future stages. The empty boxes of Table 2 are in fact a visual representation of the interdependence of the stages.

Stage five is the period that will be the focus of this study. During this stage, a series of identifications will be integrated through the ego functions to form an identity, which is the main achievement of adolescence. The child will enter adolescence with the capacities acquired in the previous stages, in addition to the complexes that could be present as a result of failure to overcome the past crises. Both the positive and negative aspects of the childhood stages will influence the way in which the identity is formed. Society provides the adolescent with a culturally specific allocation of time, that Erikson has called a "moratorium", in order to form an identity. The moratorium will allow the adolescent time

² Appendix, page numbers 110 onwards.

to experiment with notions of sexuality and vocational choices, before society will expect the individual to become a contributing member of his or her community. In the event that the adolescent is unable to find a role worth assuming, they may experience a crisis of identity confusion. It is therefore important to understand how previous crises contribute to a failure to form an identity.

Table 2 has been adjusted to form Table 3³, which shows how the conflicts of previous stages will influence identity formation in adolescence and the issues that will arise in future stages regarding identity evaluation and maintenance. In Table 3, row V represents the vast range of crises that occur during adolescence, all of which are encompassed in the formation of an identity but are influenced by previous stages. If a conflict was not resolved during a previous stage, it will cause complications in identity development. For example, V1 represents the issues that will be based on the crisis that was experienced in infancy, namely trust versus mistrust. If the adolescent was unable to experience trusting relationships with others, or have a sense of trust in themselves, they may experience ‘time confusion’; a sense of being neither a child nor an adult and the inability to commit to either, with a continuous feeling of mistrust towards their environment. Achieving autonomy in stage 2 will provide the adolescent with a sense of self-confidence, but doubt will cause them to remain self-conscious.

In a similar fashion, the table continues to suggest that role experimentation (V3) and assuming an apprenticeship for a future occupation (V4) will be evident in the behaviour of “healthy” individuals.

It is however possible for one or a combination of latent crises to surface during identity formation in adolescence. Each individual will experience the crisis of adolescence differently according to their history of experiences and the support they receive from their social environment. The successful resolution of past developmental crises will ease the transition into stage 6, while a complication of crises may arise if a poor foundation was laid in childhood.

In addition to the influence of past stage conflicts and potentials, adolescence is a time in which future stages are prepared for. We must remember that stages overlap according to the epigenetic principle and therefore potentials realized in adolescence (stage 5) will emerge

³ Table 3, Appendix, Page number 112.

as a foundation for subsequent stages. Erikson suggested that the positive resolution of conflicts in stage 5 can provide the individual with a firm conviction of their sexuality (Table 3, V6), the ability to both lead and follow (Table 3, V7), as well as an ideological commitment that will give meaning to their life (Table 3, V8). The inability to find their sexual orientation, accept authority or find values and ethical integrity in adolescence will present a complication in the crises of subsequent stages. Individuals will then have to overcome the re-emergence of past issues in order to progress in a manner that will be deemed successful by what is considered appropriate in their specific community.

Table 3 therefore provides a graphic representation of the influences that previous stages will have on the formation of an identity, in addition to the issues that will arise in adulthood if the individual is unable to define their psychosocial core. The adult will continue to face conflicts throughout their life cycle, but Erikson suggested that adolescence is the most important period regarding identity formation. Although the adult will continue to redefine their identity, the outcome of this process will be based on the identity they formed in adolescence.

1.2.2.1 The influence of a social environment in the formation of identity in adolescence

Development of the ego-identity involves a variety of dimensions: the increasing libidinal needs; a widening social radius; increasing capabilities and potential; developmental crises leading to newly developing psychosocial strengths; feelings of estrangement; and a progression towards adulthood (Erikson 1968:105).

Erikson proposed that the ego, or the inner core of the individual, causes a series of developments to occur throughout life that will ultimately prepare the basis for identity formation, but that the identity only exists in a rudimentary form prior to adolescence. The identity is constantly developing throughout the life cycle according to 'the organism's readiness to be driven toward, to be aware of, and to interact with, a widening social radius, beginning with the dim image of a mother and ending with mankind, or at any rate that segment of mankind that "counts" in the particular individual's life' (Erikson 1980:54).

During the human's first years of life, he or she will rely on the opinions and judgment of others to guide his or her actions. The radius of this influence will expand in accordance

with the increasing motor ability of the young child. Table 1 shows how the individual is constantly affected by the increased exposure to the social environment throughout the various stages of his or her life. The reliance on the judgment of others during infancy is a means of survival according to the conditions of both natural and social environments, and therefore necessary in all human beings.

The process that occurs during the early years of psychosocial growth will follow a sequence of introjections and then progress to identifications. Introjections occur in early childhood when one incorporates and views another's image (usually a parent) as one's own self, a process that coincides with learning to trust one's parents. Appropriate parenting techniques are especially important during this phase as the parents' behaviour, values and attitudes will be held as the norm. Children will at this point accept their parents' decision in determining their music involvement, music tastes and appreciation. These decisions will be supported or rejected by the interests of the extended family.

As the child grows older and comes into contact with members of the extended family, he or she will begin to realize that many other values, attitudes and opinions also exist. In the event that these examples differ from what he or she once held as the norm (his or her parents' values, beliefs, mannerisms, etc), the child will begin to choose role models they wish to "be like".

The process by which children begin to make associations between themselves and other people is known as forming identifications. It differs from making introjections in that the child now chooses aspects of people's behaviour that appeal to him or her, rather than accepting his or her role model as being entirely perfect. Children begin to act according to an ethical code that they feel is deemed appropriate by society, but not one that is yet internalized.

Childhood in particular contributes to identity formation in that children learn to be autonomous, trust others and strive to be an individual. Children begin to develop more goals, their language is perfected and imagination expanded. As their independence increases, they become more reliant on other children to define their sexuality and role definition. Choices in music taste and involvement will now be subjected to the judgment of the children's peers. Erikson (1950) refers to Freud's Oedipal theory to explain why children are drawn to the same sex groups. Implications of gender in the choices made by

children in music will become critical to determining their acceptance in peer groups. In the school age and task identification stage, children begin to imitate and identify with appropriate gender roles in preparation for the reality of life within a community.

It becomes apparent in Erikson's work that the young child's social environment becomes the range from which they will choose what values, attitudes and behaviours they will adopt as their own, and the basis of decisions made by children in music. This provides an explanation of what occurs in the first four stages of psychosocial development.

The fifth stage presents the opportunity for increased abilities in physical, psychological, emotional and cognitive capacities. The capability of rational thought and the knowledge gained through a history of experiences lead adolescents to question who they are in relation to their social sphere. Childhood identifications are selected and absorbed into new configurations dependent on the processes by which society identifies and recognizes the young individual. This is known as identity formation. Identity formation is a process of simultaneous reflection and observation in which the individual critically evaluates the attributes assimilated into the identity by comparison to what he or she believes will be accepted by society, while remaining true to his or her personal history of experiences. 'At one time it [identity formation] seemed to refer to a conscious sense of individual uniqueness, at another, to an unconscious striving for a continuity of experience and at a third, as a solidarity with a group's ideals' (Erikson 1968:208).

Once the individual has developed his or her identity, including all significant identifications and personal experiences, he or she is subjected to the judgment of his or her society. Disapproval may lead the individual to conform willingly. In the case of a sustained indifference on the individual's part, the community may expect readjustment of the identity, regardless of the individual's personal history of experiences, or cause a defiant individual to form a negative identity. The community may unfortunately underestimate the restrictions that a personal history places on the identity formed. The difficulty which a social group experiences in accepting different or contrasting identities (in terms of socially accepted norms and behaviours) has important implications in relation to the musical behaviour of male adolescents.

1.2.2.2 Criticism of Erikson's theory

As with any theory, there are those who support or criticize it. Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development was received with both praise and skepticism, though the general reaction to his ideas has been positive. There are three major areas of criticism according to Welchman (2000), namely:

Category 1: Those who accept the outline of the development scheme but question the details. Among various things these critics question the particular characterization and attribution of crisis to each stage, as well as the order of the stages and the need for sub-stages.

Category 2: Criticism that has introduced radically different development concepts: such as those of Jung and Ken Wilber (transpersonal schemes). Erikson differed from these theories as he continued to consider the influences of biology, sociology and psychology in the life cycle, which the researcher believes cannot be ignored when studying the human in his or her entirety.

Category 3: Criticism that challenges the validity of *any* developmental scheme. Erikson however, reminds us that problems do occur in life and that a development scheme is useful in a variety of disciplines that require the analysis of such problems in order to help others or better understand human behaviour. Welchman (2000:123) states that 'some consideration of development and growth, and some narrative element, seems indispensable to the student of human nature and society, linked as they are to the seasonal cycles of growth and decay.'

These issues need consideration when applying Erikson's theory in the field of education. Although the theory has provided educators with valuable insights to the development of the child, their behaviour and needs, it must still be applied through use of critical interpretation.

1.2.2.3 The cross-cultural applicability of Erikson's theory

Erikson accepted that his theory could be class and culture bound because his theories were based on his clinical work in Europe and America. He attempted to remedy this problem by means of anthropological studies and seminars to compare patterns of the life cycle in

societies other than Western ones. Erikson (1950) believed that psychoanalysis could not produce a thorough description or diagnosis of a person's state of ego identity without investigating the influences of culture and social organization throughout the stages of ego development. All cultures have 'their own adult normality...their own brands of neurosis and psychosis and, most important, that they have their own varieties of childhood' (Erikson 1950:95).

His emphasis of cultural significance in maintaining the capacity to unify conflicts adaptively is evident in his choice of terms in naming the ego identity, the psychosocial identity. Erikson (1950:108) stated that the cultural differences in child training techniques influenced the identity of the individual from that culture, as even 'small differences in child training are of lasting and almost fatal significance in differentiating a people's image of the world, their sense of decency and their sense of identity.'

Erikson differed from Freud in that he believed that the environment provided support and guidance for the individual making successful life choices. We need support from significant social groups to form a positive identity. Our inborn capacities can only develop and maintain an ego if interaction with cultural groups take place.

1.2.2.4 The relevance and applicability of Erikson's theory in this case study

The researcher believes that Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development is valid to this case study of adolescent males in the selected school, as it encompasses the biological, social and psychological processes of human development within a specific environment. Erikson's theory is still highly respected in the field of psychology, though it has been refuted as a male centred approach. Fortunately this gender bias does not influence this case study, as no female subjects are involved. Roazen (1976), Stevens (1983) and Welchman (2000) agree that Erikson's work in psychosocial analysis and identity development has relevance in our modern society.⁴

Erikson's Stages of Psychosocial Development is considered to be his most original contribution and 'is generally acknowledged as one of the most influential (theories) in the twentieth century' (Welchman 2000:127). It was the first time that Western psychology

⁴ A discussion of the validity of Erikson's psychosocial theory in the twenty first century is included in the Appendix on page 113.

looked at the full range of the human life cycle to account for the development of identity. Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development in the life cycle became highly influential and popular in the field of education because it provided an understanding of human behaviour. The theory of psychosocial development is remarkably inclusive of all the important elements of human life, presented in a comprehensive manner that allows it to be applied with success in education. In comparison to other schemes, Welchman (2000:127) writes that:

Erikson's scheme is remarkable for the way all the stages of human life are linked and included in a coherent scheme through the concepts of crisis, identity formation and human strengths. His concepts integrate individual and social development, taking into account both subjective and objective phenomena. Erikson's achievement was to extend developmental psychology from the psychoanalytic emphasis on childhood sexuality and the pathology of the inner world to a truly psychosocial development.

The researcher believes that Erikson's theory has value in contemporary society as it provides an understanding of human behaviour through an explanation of psychosocial and ego-identity development. The theory also raises important questions regarding the methods by which we educate young people, and forces us to consider the influences that society and culture have on developing identities. Erikson's theory is relevant to this case study as it explains:

- how socio-cultural ideologies and practices are incorporated into the ego-identity during its formation in adolescence, especially through our educational institutions. Erikson (1950:108) states that even 'small differences in child training are of lasting and almost fatal significance in differentiating a people's image of the world, their sense of decency and their sense of identity.'
- that the ego-identity cannot be formed in isolation from its socio-cultural environment. Attempting to go against the norms presented in socially accepted ideologies, presents an internal struggle for all learners, but the male Music learners in particular if music is considered an irrelevant, feminine or unpopular activity. 'No ego can develop outside of social process which offer workable prototypes and roles... The healthy and strong individual, however, adapts these roles to the further

processes of his ego, thus doing his share in keeping the social process alive' (Erikson 1950:368).

- that society, either consciously (examples of extremist social groups may be considered) or sub-consciously, makes an attempt at ensuring its survival through the guidance of its youth, by promoting its expectations of a healthy ego-identity and rejecting what it perceives to be an unhealthy ego-identity: '...societies create the only condition under which human growth is possible' (Erikson 1950:237). Members of the learner's social radius will attempt to guide learners to make appropriate choices in music practice and educators may employ methods or make suggestions that support the status quo.
- that communication takes place between the individual and his or her community on an ego-level, meaning that values and ideologies need not be verbalized in order to be understood by the individual. Erikson (1968:220) explains that society is able to project its ideologies without making any verbal or visual statements. Communication between individuals and their *umwelt* (environment) takes place on the ego level, where information is tested through the senses, linguistics and subliminal messages. It is therefore possible to sense rejection or approval by society without physical confrontation or explicit verbal communication. The learners may assume that their choices are entirely their own, but they are influenced by others, and may sense rejection from their peers on an ego level.
- how the internalised ideologies, values and expectations of society can affect the decisions made by the individual, whether the society is aware of its influence or not. For example, a male, who behaves in ways considered to be feminine, may feel rejected by his community because he assumes that they would condemn his behaviour, even if there has never been any physical evidence of this rejection made by society. 'If society devalues the role one chooses, the person feels vulnerable... An individual feels isolated and barred from the sources of collective strength when he (even though secretly) takes on a role considered especially evil in his group, be that of a drunkard or a killer, a sissy or a sucker, or whatever colloquial designation of inferiority may be used in his group' (Erikson 1950:32).

- why members of a group may feel the need to correct, manipulate or oppress others who are different as a means of defending their group identity. This includes the rationalization for stereotyping, prejudice and racism. Humans ‘even in the most advanced state of rationality and civilization’ may act out against others who do not share their identity ‘with the conviction that they could not morally afford not to do so’ (Erikson 1968:234). Most of the subjects interviewed in the case study claimed that they felt that they were ‘different’ and that the school had placed pressure on them to adhere to the school ideals.

Although explanations of the problem of why male adolescents do not participate in school music activities as readily as their female counterparts may seem commonsensical, Erikson’s theory provides a psychological explanation for the decisions made by male learners who perceive a negative attitude towards the participation and study of Music in their socio-cultural environment based on the points raised above. Music education is affected by ideologies that label music styles, genres, instruments and processes as being gendered, related to social grouping or class and race distinction.

1.3 Methodology

Informal interviews and observation were the principal methods of data collection. Observation of the case study’s subjects and the school environment took place from June 2002 to December 2006 during which time the researcher was able to observe the subjects in class and during extramural activities. Eleven learners from the school were selected as subjects for a case study by the researcher. The subjects were all involved in music activities currently offered at the school.

The learners of the school had the option of taking part in the school’s band or choir, and the Performing Art’s Academy (offering hip hop, rock and alternative forms of music styles and performance studies.) Although the school did not offer Music within the curriculum, the learners were allowed to take it as, what the researcher will refer to as an “additional subject.”

It must be made clear at this point that although learners were allowed to study Music, the results and progress they made in this “subject” were not reflected on their progress reports

and was not considered part of the school curriculum. The Music Theory lessons offered at the school were provided through the initiative of the Music teacher for the learners who were interested in progressing in their personal study of Music. The term “additional subject” has been loosely used to refer to these academic sessions that were offered during free periods, with the consent of the Head of Academics at the school, on the school premises.

Only fourteen learners attended Music Theory lessons at the school during the course of this study. These learners will be referred to as the “Music learners” within this study. The eleven subjects interviewed were selected from the fourteen learners who attended the Music Theory lessons because they also participated in school music activities, namely the band, choir and/or the school’s Performing Arts’ Academy, at the time of the study. The sample was culturally and ethnically representative of the learners at the school. Learners were interviewed individually, in pairs or in a group of three during the period of October to November 2006.

Interviews were informal in order that subjects could contribute information and opinions that provided an interesting and truly reflective dimension to the study. Information received from the learners was organized into categories of agreement and the replication of information provided, verified its authenticity. Erikson’s theory of psychosocial development and identity formation provided insight and a basis of understanding the learners’ responses within their educational and socio-cultural contexts. The responses of the subjects interviewed showed both conscious and sub-conscious reactions to their immediate social environment’s apparent or perceived expectations of acceptable male adolescent behaviour.

Questionnaires were used to gather information from what Erikson’s theory deems as two influential groups of people in the Music learners’ educational environment, namely their parents and peers. The purpose of submitting the questionnaire to parents and peers was to gain as much information from these groups so as to ascertain what their general attitude and opinion was. Due to the fact that the majority of learners at the school were not involved in music, it was decided that the use of a questionnaire was more accurate in obtaining a wider cross-section of the school population’s opinion.

Two questionnaires⁵ were distributed. The first was given to parents of the subjects interviewed regarding their views on their child's involvement in music activities and what they believed the response of those within their child's social sphere was. This also allowed parents to give their honest opinion regarding teacher involvement and support for music activities. These questionnaires were distributed to the parents prior to the interview process, in the period of August to October 2008.

A second questionnaire was provided for all learners of the school and given to their counseling teachers for administration during the learners' Life Orientation and Counseling Lessons. The learners' questionnaire was administered during the school's fourth term (October to December 2006) and returned at the end of the year. This questionnaire asked the learners to provide information regarding their choice of extramural activities, subjects and future careers, in addition to who they believed influenced their choices in all of the above categories (peers, teachers or parents) and to what extent. The questionnaire particularly asked if the learners participated in music activities, both in the past and present, would give reasons for continuing or quitting such activities. Learners were also encouraged to make suggestions that could lead to the improvement of cultural activities in the school.

The junior section of the school, grades eight and nine were provided with questionnaires by their counselling teachers during Life Orientation lessons in the final term of the school year. Although the school was provided with sufficient questionnaires for all the learners in the third term of the school year, the counselling teachers said that they were only able to administer the questionnaire to all grades eights and nines, a total of sixteen classes. The senior classes were apparently not provided with the questionnaires because the counsellor stated that there was insufficient time to administer questionnaires to the older learners. This was disappointing, as the researcher had been told via email that the questionnaires had been administered to all the learners, but were not ready for collection until the final day of observation. The counsellors were unwilling to submit the questionnaire to learners after the final observation date as the learners were writing examinations. A copy of the questionnaire has been included in the Appendix.

Two hundred and eighty two questionnaires were returned, twenty-six percent of the questionnaires that were distributed.

⁵ Questionnaires, Appendix, Page numbers 143 & 146.

1.3.1 Brief character profiles of the subjects interviewed

The information concerning each of the subjects interviewed was gathered through observation and the interaction the researcher had with learners over a year or more, depending on the length of the time that they had spent at the school from 2002 to 2006. The researcher tried to maintain objectivity in the interviews, while attempting to gain trust from the subjects to attain their true feelings on the topics presented.

The descriptions of some subjects are more detailed than others due to the level of trust placed in the researcher and the quality of the relationship. Subjects Four and Eleven for example, were rather quiet and generally preferred not to speak about themselves. Information from their personal school files was not included, nor consulted by the researcher for the purposes of this dissertation; as the researcher believed that it was more ethical to relate only what the subjects themselves had shared.

The subjects were all quite different, in that some were introvert (Subjects Three, Four, Six and Eleven) while others were extrovert (Subjects One, Two, Five, Seven, Eight, Nine and Ten) in personality; some were well-behaved at school and excelled in academics (particularly Subjects Three, Four and Six) while others seemed to remain at odds with authority figures at the school and struggled to maintain their grades (particularly Subject Nine). Some subjects excelled at sports (Subject Five for example) while others could not participate in sports due to physical conditions (Subject Three's asthma, for example).

Despite their differences, all the subjects felt that they were stereotyped as musicians.

1.3.1.1 Subject One

Subject One was aged fifteen, grade nine at the time of the interview. He was a male adolescent of Zulu origin. He was slightly shorter than the average height of his fellow learners and of heavier build. Subject One had a slightly high-pitched voice with a tendency to talk much, at a rapid pace. This led the other learners to think that he had a feminine tendency. He started to partake in music activities after he failed to get any recognition for Drama at the school. The year in which the interview took place was his first year of school at the school featured in this study; he had previously attended another neighbouring high school. Subject One left his previous high school because he experienced difficulties in

participating in music activities at the school. Subject One chose to be transferred to another school at the end of the year of this study.

Subject One sang and played both the side drum and the tenor drum. Subject One participated in the school brass ensemble and the Performing Arts Academy during school hours. After hours, he played the tenor drum in the 1st Medical Battalion Pipe Band (a Scottish pipe band that forms part of a local SANDF regiment) and sang in musicals such as *The Wiz* (2006), *Fiddler on the Roof* and *Bravisimo Opera* (2005), these being productions organized by a company known as Unilever Young Performers. Subject One also auditioned for *The Sound of Music*, but did not make the cast due to his operatic vocal style. Subject One did not participate in school sports; he added that, “This school just drains you.” He did however participate in figure skating as a weekly activity.

Subject One stated that his mother and father were his role models. He seemed to have a great deal of fear and respect for his mother, while his father was always supportive. “If it’s reasonable, my dad will get it... no matter how broke he is.”

His interview was conducted as a group interview with Subject Two, a close friend and classmate.

1.3.1.2 Subject Two

Subject Two was of average height for his age but of slight build and of Zulu origin. He was also fifteen years of age and in grade nine at the time of the interview. He wore thick glasses that had been mended with plasters, and generally sat at an angle on his face. Subject Two sang in school choir. He was also a member of the Performing Arts Academy. Subject Two also played “a bit” of flute and piano. He said that he could not explain his choice in playing the flute, “I have no idea... the next thing I saw a flute in my hand...”

Subject Two also avoided any participation in school sports. He had an intense fascination with medieval fiction, displayed in his choice of horse riding, fencing and archery as his favourite pastimes. He often addressed the researcher as his “fair lady” and attempted to carry out informal conversations in a register that he deemed medieval. Subject Two enjoyed reading and writing. In all conversations held with the researcher, over a time span of two years, he showed to be of high intelligence and had excellent manners. He generally

attempted to portray himself as a callous person, but seemed quite sensitive. This was evident in the very violent essays and poems he had written for school, that had horrified both his teachers and fellow learners. The plots of Subject Two's writing generally focused on extremely explicit descriptions of torture and murder, with no mercy for the victim. Subject Two enjoyed the reactions his work had on other people and it seemed to be a form of retaliation against his peers.

Subject Two stated that both his Music teacher and his mother were his role models.

A group interview was conducted with Subjects Three, Four and Five. The interview was successful as all three allowed each other to express his views, and were highly supportive of each other.

1.3.1.3 Subject Three

Subject Three was fifteen years of age and in grade nine at the time of the interview. He is Caucasian, of English and Afrikaans descent, was shorter than his peers and slightly overweight. Subject Three was always very neat in appearance, highly mannered and well spoken. He was a member of the school band, but quit when he felt frustrated that he could not learn to play the trumpet fast enough. He then became a member of the school choir, which he enjoyed because he loved singing and his friends were also in the choir. He used to play the guitar and the piano, which he started about three years prior to the interview, but he had quit them both.

“It just wasn't going anywhere, I just wasn't practicing, ja, just cos I was lazy and didn't want to practice.”

His other interest in the school was being a library assistant. His father was a very influential figure in his life, who had preferred his son to partake in sports activities.

Subject Three stated that he was forced to take part in Physical Education at school before he had chosen to attend Music Theory lessons, despite his physical condition (asthma). He claimed that the teachers were not concerned about his asthma and Music was his only option to elude Physical Education.

1.3.1.4 Subject Four

Subject Four was a fifteen year old, Zulu student in grade nine at the time of the interviews. He was also shorter than his peers and slightly over weight. Subject Four was rather quiet, very intelligent and always approached situations with a mature sense of logic. His parents supported his participation in Music, but did not want him to follow a career in music, as they preferred that he should follow their example and enter a medical profession. Subject Four took part in the school choir and attended Music Theory lessons at school. He used to play the piano but was forced to stop due to a lack of time. His mother was very supportive of him playing the piano. He did not participate in any sporting activities at the school.

1.3.1.5 Subject Five

Subject Five was a fifteen year old, Caucasian student, of English descent in grade nine at the time of the interview. His father was an English teacher at the school and a proficient guitarist. His father was very keen on his son's involvement in music activities but very sceptical about the school's attitude towards Music and culture in general. Subject Five studied Music Theory at school, sang in the school choir and used to take private guitar lessons after school. He stopped taking guitar lessons because his teacher had taken a break from teaching, as he was a professional musician. He had a great deal of admiration for Beethoven, whose music he was introduced to at primary school. Subject Five excelled at long distance running and trained with his father. They seemed to have an excellent relationship. Subject Five was never afraid to voice his opinion on matters to anyone, even his other teachers.

1.3.1.6 Subject Six

Subject Six is a Caucasian learner, of English descent and was in grade eleven, aged seventeen at the time of the interview. He was rather tall, wore glasses and was well spoken. He came from a close Christian family of strong principles and highly involved parents. His time at school was devoted to assisting in the library, his academics and Music. Subject Six was the chief library monitor. While the one librarian commented that Subject Six was her reason for coming to work, her co-worker remarked that Subject Six had the attitude of "a very old man" and she wished that he would just "liven up." Indeed, Subject Six was always very serious and appeared rather mature for his age.

Subject Three, who was friends with Subject Six, said that he felt that Subject Six had a difficult time at school. He said that although the Music learners had a reputation of being “wimpish”, Subject Six was considered the worst of them all. This was due to his choice of instrument and his conservative attitude.

Subject Six’s music activities consisted of performing in the school band on clarinet, playing the bagpipes and attending Music Theory classes. He attended private lessons for clarinet with a teacher at a local private school.

Subject Six and Seven said that their role models were some of their teachers.

1.3.1.7 Subject Seven

Subject Seven was a thirteen-year-old, grade eight learner at the time of the interview, of Indian origin. He had only started to get involved in music at high school, though he admitted that he had always been interested in music and admired people who are able to play music instruments. He claimed that it is against his religion to perform music, as he was a Muslim. His father was very supportive of his interest in music while his mother was very uncertain as to whether this may conflict with their religious beliefs. This did appear to make Subject Seven feel slightly guilty about his love of music. Subject Seven took part in the school band, playing the trumpet and desperately wished to play the French horn. He one day hoped to also play the piano and guitar. His father used to play the guitar and the recorder, but no longer took part in any music activities. Despite their beliefs, Subject Seven’s father intended to buy his son a trumpet of his own. Subject Seven was involved in canoeing as an extramural activity at school but found it difficult to participate in sports while he was fasting.

1.3.1.8 Subject Eight

Subject Eight is a Caucasian of both Afrikaans and English descent. He was a thirteen-year-old grade eight learner at the time of the interview. He wished to play both the guitar and drums. He was a member of the school’s Performing Arts Academy where he was learning to play the guitar, drum kit and the piano. His father used to play the guitar, and Subject Eight was given his first guitar at the age of three. He had stopped playing the guitar, but had resumed playing it since he started high school. He hoped to join the 1st Medical

Battalion Pipe Band, as a snare drummer. Subject Eight did not participate in sports at the school; he did however practice karate privately, three days a week for an hour and a half after school hours. Subject Eight said that his parents were his role models.

1.3.1.9 Subject Nine

Subject Nine was a grade eleven learner of seventeen years of age at the time of the interview. He is of Zulu descent. Subject Nine made much effort to portray a “gangster” image among his peers. He seemed to take pride in being at odds with authority and had been the subject of disciplinary action during his school career. Subject Nine participated in rugby at school and in the school band, as the tuba player. Although Subject Nine was not academically strong, and generally did not do his work, he had an immense dedication towards his Music studies and many of his teachers had noted that when Subject Nine was involved in music, he was “an entirely different person”. Subject Nine wished to have a career in music and therefore volunteered to work at a community radio station as a producer.

Subject Nine said that he occasionally participated in sport:

“I do sports... I play rugby part time...social rugby...when I want to...when I see Saturday is going to be a big game, I go and practice.”

Subject Nine said that he had many role models, most of which were radio presenters and DJ's.

1.3.1.10 Subject Ten

Subject Ten was also in grade eleven and seventeen years of age at the time of the interview. He was a coloured boy and often made jokes that stereotyped coloureds and the other ethnic groups of South Africa. His friends were of mixed ethnic groups but accepted his jokes with good humour. Although he attempted to portray a hardened image, he was a very polite and reliable learner. Subject Ten performed in the school band and was a member of the school's Performing Arts Academy. In his spare time, he played the piano (though most of friends did not know this), guitar and the drum kit. He also taught others to play the drum kit, both at school and in his church. His parents were very involved with his interests.

Subject Ten: “I have drums at church you know, so then there’s quite a few people who want to learn, so on Friday nights before Youth, I come there twenty minutes before Youth and I teach them drum kit. I taught myself, it’s very hard though.” Subject Ten attributed his grandmother for his interest in music.

Subject Ten said that sports were “a waste of time and energy” so he preferred to take part in the school band and the drama club. “I used to play club soccer since I was five, and stopped it at twelve and I’ve actually never gone back again.”

Subject Ten did not wish to pursue a career in music because he wanted to be a pilot in the national air force, but added, “I’ll do it part time”. He said that the fact that “Music teachers work hard and don’t make a lot of money” made him think twice about making Music a career.

1.3.1.11 Subject Eleven

Subject Eleven was a grade eleven learner of seventeen years of age at the time of the interview. He is of Zulu descent. The passing of his father and his uncle had affected him deeply. He lived with his mother. He was a very quiet, but would speak when there was something important to be said. He was friends with Subjects Ten and Nine and attended Music Theory classes with them. Subject Eleven played the piano and used to sing in the school choir. He occasionally attended band performances to support his friends.

CHAPTER TWO : THE SCHOOL AS AN ARCHETYPAL PSYCHOSOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

In order to understand the choices that adolescent males make in their participation in music activities, Erikson's theory (1950, 1968, 1980) reminds us to consider the influences that the individual's social environment has on his or her perception of what is acceptable, as this is deeply rooted in his or her identity. This chapter seeks to present the school that the subjects of this case study attended as an archetypal psychosocial environment and provide an explanation of the influence that this environment has on the learners' choices regarding music participation.

2.1 The importance of the school environment in adolescent identity formations

In the application of Erikson's theory, the researcher views schools as a microcosm of their associated societies, reflecting the same principles and systems as those societies, in which the learner needs to gain recognition. A school requires its members to apply themselves to both the code of conduct and the ethos of the school. Morrel (2001b:50), on reference to schooling in KwaZulu-Natal, states that:

To understand the importance of schooling, we can employ Pierre Bourdieu's concept of cultural capital. Children [are] sent to school to get cultural capital... Cultural capital in one of its forms is cultural 'background', a relationship to the dominant culture that is passed along by the family. If those who inherit this form of cultural capital enter the school system, they have a very high chance of obtaining valuable credentials, which in turn will give them access to favourable occupational and social positions.

In other words, the social principles "taught" at school will ensure that the learner has an understanding of what is expected by their society, and their place in society. This knowledge, as such, enables the learner to attempt progressing within the hierarchy of their

society. The choices that the adolescent makes must therefore be acceptable to society in order to achieve a respectable position within it.

A school that seeks to uphold its traditions throughout many generations will require both staff and learners to adhere to these traditions in order to maintain its reputation in the community. The methods used to achieve this may vary, but ultimately pose the threat that an individual who does not fit the status quo will not receive acceptance. The deviant individual may be punished by staff members or rejected by their peers. Erikson's theory (1950, 1968, 1980) suggests that this will impact identity formation, particularly during stage five (adolescence) during which the individual's identity is in the crucial process of formation, and negative identities can emerge. In the case of a male Music learner who is not accepted, he may not necessarily form a negative identity, but may suffer from a sense of rejection throughout his subsequent development stages.

2.2 A description of the school environment

Every school has an image, or legacy in the case of older institutions, to maintain. This is achieved through guiding learners to adhere to the school code of conduct, ethos and ideals. In order to understand the expectations placed on the learners at the school in this study, a brief account of the social legacy and the ethos, image and ideals of the school will be presented.

2.2.1 The social development of the school

The school was founded in the early 20th century. The concept of the school was, and continues to be, modelled on British private secondary education institutions known as "public schools". Morrel's opinion (2001b:17) is that the people of KwaZulu-Natal behaved 'more English than the English' during the early 1900's, a trait that is now synonymous with the elite schools of KwaZulu-Natal. Most of the headmasters who have worked at the school were originally from the United Kingdom and sought to maintain the ideals of British traditional education. The ethos celebrated by the British education system at the time was muscular Christianity.

The belief that the ideology of muscular Christianity would develop the mind, body and spirit equally, inspired its introduction to the public schooling system in Victorian Britain. Thomas Hughes' book, *Tom Brown's School Days* (1857) is said to be responsible for this introduction, as it promotes the use of sport in the development of a boy's character. The tenets of muscular Christianity became an integral part of the public schooling system during the mid 19th century. 'Edward Thring (1821-1887), headmaster of Uppingham between 1853-1857, sums this up when he states, "the whole efforts of a school ought to be directed in making boys, manly, earnest and true"' (Rawnsley 1978:12). The ethos of muscular Christianity appeared to be valued at the school as a tried and tested norm of education.

2.2.1.1 The school's historical and social position as a typical school in KwaZulu-Natal

The school is a typical former "Model C" single sex secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The school's history shows how it has aspired to achieve the status of the English grammar schools, through the rigorous application of the British schooling system.

Morrel's study on colonial schools in KwaZulu-Natal (2001b:52) categorizes the schools into three groups that reflect the social status of their families and community. The three groups are as follows: the oldest schools that resemble English grammar schools, such as Durban High School (DHS) and Maritzburg College (MC), that 'commanded a special and prestigious place in the secondary schooling area of Natal'; the private schools of Hilton, Michael House and Weenen County College and a third group consists of government schools that were established after KwaZulu-Natal became part of the union of South Africa.

The first two groups mentioned; that of the grammar schools and the private schools are considered as the elite schools of KwaZulu-Natal, while the government schools 'followed the pattern set down by the elite secondaries. They adopted the house and prefect system and competed determinedly in sport. From time to time under exceptional headmasters, they challenged the pre-eminence of the elite secondaries in sports or academics' (Morrel 2001b:54).

The school described in this study can be placed into the second category of those mentioned above. The school was originally intended to serve the needs of the less affluent members of the colonial community whose sons could not afford to study in Britain, but now rivals the

more affluent public high schools in reputation. This status is upheld by a concerted effort from a very proactive Governing body which has ensured that funding is obtained to supplement the less than adequate annual Government subsidy to achieve an affluent image.

2.2.2 The school's ethos and the ethos of muscular Christianity

A school ethos is the ideals, values and principles held as important in the creation of the school's image and reputation in the community. The school's ethos contributes to and influences the atmosphere of the social and educational environment of the school. Learners are encouraged to behave in a manner that reflects the ideals of the school and much of their behaviour is in fact a product of the school environment.

The school appeared to both value and maintain the ethos of muscular Christianity in that sport was implemented as a prominent part of the education of young men. Muscular Christianity preached the spiritual value of sports, with a great emphasis placed on team sports. Competitive sports and Physical Education were therefore added to the curriculum of schools in order to improve morality, physical fitness and a "manly" character. According to Bloomfield (1994:174) the advocates of muscular Christianity, Charles Kingsley and Thomas Hughes, viewed sports as a 'counterbalance' to '...education and bookishness.' Kingsley also stated that 'in the playing field boys acquire virtues which no books can give them; not merely daring and endurance, but, better still temper, self-restraint, fairness, honour, un-envious approbation of another's success and all that 'give and take' of life which stand a man in good stead...' (Kingsley cited in Haley 1978:119).

The school sought to attract learners of more affluent families and those who excel in both sports activities and academics. The school did not reject those who did not fit these criteria, and indeed could not reject learners who could prove that they lived within the suburb, but individual interviews with all learners who wished to attend the school ensured that the quality of learners was maintained. This was part of the school's marketing strategy, as producing top achievers ensured the school a competitive edge in attracting learners who may otherwise go to private schools. The school's marketing team was responsible for finding talented learners by attending primary school events throughout the country (even as far as Namibia) and offered bursaries to those who showed potential. An extract from the school website confirmed the value of sports in the school's marketing strategy:

Sports contributes substantially to the marketing of the school, and it is a fact that a school is often judged by its results on the sports field...Taking sport will always create enthusiasm and interest in the vast majority of the pupils at the school, and it is often in these activities that long lasting friendships are cemented (School Website, accessed in November 2007).

The headmaster, in a documented speech for the 2001 prize giving (The [name omitted] School Magazine 2001:5), stated: 'let me assure you that our motto at [the school's name omitted] is that "we lead and others follow" and that we urge our youngsters, particularly during the rugby season to stand back for none.'

The headmaster often explained to the staff and learners during the researcher's observation at the school that the school badge was modified from the original three trees (a symbol of the local suburb) to include a particular bird of prey. This bird, he explained, is a predator that is both swift and strong – it shows no mercy to its prey. This attitude appeared to encourage a competitive atmosphere at the school.

In discussing the school ethos, a brief analysis of the school's code of conduct is included. The code of conduct of a school embodies the principles valued by the school and the behaviour expected by the school. Learners sign a declaration on beginning attendance at the school that stated that they both understand and pledge to uphold the school's code of conduct.

The School Ethos, according to the Code of Conduct booklet (2006:15) distributed to all learners, was as follows. Please note the emphasis on sports:

1. The learner should at all times conduct himself in a manner that demonstrates self respect and he shall uphold the dignity of his peers and pride in the School.
2. A learner shall at all times, in the classroom and on the sports field, strive to achieve excellence for himself and for his school.
3. A learner must be at all times courteous, helpful and sportsmanlike in all facets of school life.
4. A learner should protect and enhance the School's reputation and ethos.

In this particular instance, the word “sportsmanlike” is used to replace “gentlemanly”. The ethos implies that a sportsman is courteous and helpful – everything that a young man ought to be. This term and other references to ideal behaviour, tends to exclude learners who are not sportsmen.

The cover of the Code of Conduct booklet showed the school badge on the front and the school mascot, a decidedly muscular, four-armed insect known as “The Green Machine”, dressed in rugby kit and carrying a rugby ball, on the back cover. The mascot, as well as the way in which the school is referred, as “The Green Machine” by the headmaster is revealing of the macho, aggressive image that the school sought to promote. The symbols and values of the school all implicated the maintenance of the ethos of muscular Christianity.

2.2.2.1 The historical significance of sport at the school

In the early years, the school attracted learners who intended to enter a trade while the sons of more affluent families in the area attended Durban High School (DHS), a neighbouring school. DHS was an older institution, founded in 1866.

Typical of pre-war British secondary education systems, sport and cadets were important aspects of educating young men. Music and art were only introduced at the school in 1953 and the school employed its first female staff members in 1964. A.S. Langley, the headmaster of DHS during the early 1900’s, introduced rugby as a replacement sport for soccer in 1910 and promoted rugby throughout the province, but refused to allow his school to play against the school due to their “inferior” social class. Langley allowed interschool rugby for the first time in 1918, but the school was only allowed to play the DHS second team, until they could prove their “worth”. This of course was a reference to the school’s inferiority of social class. Rugby was the key to proving that the learners of the school were able to aspire to a higher social order. The school’s team made every effort to prove itself, and finally beat the DHS second team in 1920.

While cricket and tennis satisfied social functions at the school (it has been noted that the cricket captain of 1921 had a wooden leg), rugby was taken more seriously. The idea that victory in rugby matches proves superiority and social dominance created such intense competitiveness, that despite the fact that learners of similar standing in society now attend both schools, the school has remained focused on achieving a high level of status almost

entirely through rugby. This has resulted in a social imbalance in the development of other sports and cultural activities. The social environment created by this situation has had an immense effect on the learners and has highlighted the need to investigate the paradigm that the school aspires to in order to initiate change.

2.2.2.2 The school's ethos and ideals reflect South Africa's perceived value of sport

The school's main focus appeared to be sports. This was not unique to the school, but typical of many South African traditional boys' schools. Sport is considered to be an important part of the South African identity and its social practices. Many South African authors have attempted to explain the influence of sport on South Africans of all ethnic groups, such as Morrel's (2001a:40) statement that 'In South Africa, sport has been integral to hegemonic masculinity...' and Nauright's (1997:21) claim that 'Sport in South Africa was a central bodily performance in learning of identification and social place... In addition, white and black men learned much about being men through sport.'

The South African climate suits outdoor activities, but sport is far more than a recreational activity to the interested South African. It is an activity that seems to bear notions of class, ethnicity (therefore politics) and gender. Nauright (1997:22) suggests that the effort made by Mandela and the Sports Minister of the time, Steve Tshwete, to support former white dominated sports in 1995, was a political move that managed to forge a united national identity in a time that some white people were suspicious of his intentions in government.

The majority of sports played in South Africa originated in Britain, and are also played by other common wealth countries, such as New Zealand and Australia. Traditional schools, such as the school described in this study and others, valued sports as an important part of education:

English-speaking [former] white schools in South Africa took up British games and used them to instill values of British elite culture. These games took on a greater significance in a colonial context where whites were a small minority of the population. Educationalists and elites equated civilization with Britishness and whiteness (Nauright 1997:25).

Competing in British sports was one of the only means that South Africans could gain a measure of equality with Britain itself. Cricket and rugby were the two dominating sports of the 1900's, but rugby was found to be more popular. Cricket had become synonymous with elitism; it was the epitome of British culture, meaning that it alienated both the Afrikaners and the blacks. South Africans were also unable to win cricket matches against the highly skilled British team, which left them feeling despondent. On the other hand, rugby thrived as a contact sport that epitomized masculinity. It was popular with the English, Afrikaans and Africans to such an extent that the national team easily defeated its international opponents.

Rugby became a means for men to fulfil the ideals of masculinity:

In the late Victorian period, definitions of masculinity changed from emphasizing earnestness, selflessness and integrity to stressing Spartan toughness. The change was captured in the expression 'muscular Christianity' – a description which became synonymous with the public schools of this period (Morrel 2001b:52).

Rugby appealed to schools as 'school teachers recognized the need for such toughness, and both Muslim and Christian teachers stressed the significance of rugby as a game that created physical and mental toughness and group solidarity' (Nauright 1997:49).

KwaZulu-Natal was particularly interested in maintaining a British culture:

The ideals of the English public school system took root in Natal primarily via the exportation of its old boys to the colonies. From the outset, Natal's schools were staffed by men from Britain, normally public boys' schools (Morrel 2001b:57).

English public school ethos in rugby transferred to colonial Natal and became embellished with notions of white cultural superiority and white masculinity in a hostile and remote colonial setting. In white schools, rugby promoted a sense of group identity and sublimated individualism.... Rugby, success and identity became enmeshed in the education of white Natalian boys in the early part of the century (Nauright 1997:96).

Not much has changed since the early 1900's. The traditional boys' schools remain highly competitive in sports, particularly rugby, in order to maintain their image of superiority and attract "quality" learners to their schools.

2.2.2.3 The school's value of the game of rugby

The game of rugby was considered particularly important in achieving the goals of muscular Christianity in British education as its physical demands on the boys were considered to prepare them for leadership in both industry and the military. According to Brian Dobbs, the game of Rugby was favoured by those who endorsed muscular Christianity because it is:

[A] game that exhausted boys before they could fall victims to vice and idleness, which at the same time instilled the manly virtues of absorbing and inflicting pain in about equal proportions, which elevated the team above the individual, which bred courage, loyalty and discipline, which as yet had no taint of professionalism and which, as an added bonus, occupied 30 boys at a time instead of a mere twenty-two... (Dobbs 1973:89)

Rugby has always had a traditional place at the school, becoming an extramural activity only two years after the school was founded:

[School name omitted] has produced six rugby Springboks in its 92-year history, a feat that many older South African Schools have yet to achieve... [School name omitted] is able to field more rugby sides on a Saturday than any other school in Durban and is the only school that is still able to run a full U/13 age group (The School Website, last accessed on 16 August 2007).

Rugby dominates the winter calendar, with approximately twenty-three teams playing matches each week. The rugby season begins in March and ends in August, but selected learners who excelled in the sport were placed in the Sports Academy, which took place twice a week during school hours in addition to their extramural practice times. The rugby team generally enjoyed far more support from the school and parents than any other activity offered by the school. While Music learners complained that their teachers and fellow students never attended their performances, the school website boasted the following about the school rugby team:

No other team (that I could see) enjoyed the same level of support from Staff and Parents like the [School's name omitted] Team did (The School Website, last accessed on 16 August 2007).

In the June 1913 copy of '*The Magnet*' (the magazine of the Durban Technical Institute, the founder institution of the school), the following was written about rugby:

It brings individuals together, improves fellowship, teaches self-control, quickness of decision, loyalty, great pluck, tenacity, broadmindedness, patience, unselfishness and grit to play a losing game. Besides inducing health, happiness, temperance and clearheadedness, it helps a man to keep his wits about him and to use his powers wisely. No man who is addicted to over-indulgence in bad habits, can hope to hold a high place in sports (Jordan & McCabe 2000:75).

JR Sullivan, the school rugby coach from 1924-1927, further explained the benefits of rugby in the school:

What a lesson in life! And if I may venture an opinion, I would dare say it was not lost on the first and second fifteens of those days; for if I had space, I could narrate the after-school proud records in the big game of life which those I have named, and others of equal merit, have achieved. They are scattered far and wide, I meet them wherever I go. Almost without exception, as Ronald Tungay, now News Editor of the Daily News, said once to me, "They are rugger players in a vaster field with the same principles." He is right. The team is everything; it is the team spirit that develops the virtues, which make for greatness of character (Jordan & McCabe 2000:77).

True to the ideology of muscular Christianity, rugby at the school was attributed with instilling values and ethics while other extramural activities were not perceived to have the same results. In upholding the tradition of playing rugby at the school, the environment makes the learners who did not wish to play the sport begin to feel isolated⁶.

Subject Ten: "I think it's [music and sports] kinda opposite because you never see a big staunch guy playing drums and then go play rugby on the rugby field. He thinks he's a man and he thinks men don't play instruments."

⁶ Subject Five: "[The School's name, omitted] is rugby based and hates music. That is all it comes down to. It gives them that sense that the school has all rounded boys that are good at academics and rugby. They're trying to say that the academics is brilliant, so that they can focus on sport."

The preference for rugby at the school was obvious to the learners who attended this institution due to a number of reasons. Firstly, the headmaster and certain members of staff, both past and present, claimed that promoting rugby as an extramural activity promoted the image of the school and maintained a reputation for excellence. In 1927, the rugby coach of the time, JR Sullivan commented that ‘The School had a high place in sport generally, also largely due to its Rugby prowess’ (Jordan & McCabe 2000:77). This “rugby prowess” was said to attract learners who would otherwise have chosen to attend other, more affluent schools in the province.

Secondly, in order to ensure success in rugby and other sports, budget allocations tended to be more favourable towards the sporting codes, than academics or cultural activities. The learners become aware of the amount of money made available to the various budgets, as there was generally a lack of equipment and resources in other activities as compared to sports⁷.

In addition to the funds made available for equipment and resources, bursaries were awarded for rugby and sports players. There were more sports bursaries available than academic and cultural bursaries. A good rugby player could have been awarded a full bursary, up to R17 000 for hostel dwellers, while an academically or musically gifted child might have been offered between R2 000 – R3 000 off their school fees, at the time of the study. This was common knowledge among all the learners, though it was considered to be information that they were not meant to know about⁸.

A fourth reason mentioned by the learners was that it was compulsory for learners to attend rugby matches hosted by the school. They were taught to sing war cries for these events

⁷ Subject One: “This school would rather spend R20 000 buying rugby balls than getting curtains where we really need it.” Apparently the classrooms have been fitted with “Smartboards” but the learners cannot read the screen because the room cannot be dimmed.

“The school band is neglected big time. I’m sorry but that is the honest truth. The school would rather look at rugby, squash, tennis, soccer and cricket and leave everything else aside and make another gym, when we have a perfectly good one downstairs. They can spend half a million rand on gym equipment. Pathetic.”

⁸ Subject Five: “I don’t mean to be rude, but they buy rugby players. They don’t really buy as many academics as they do rugby players.”

Subject Nine: “In this school, if they find you and you can play rugby, they’ll give you 100% bursary, but if you break your leg, they’ll forget about you. Ja, it’s no more about school rugby, now they’re taking it to a professional level.”

during their breaks and occasionally during assembly periods for up to a week in advance of the event. Learners were not asked to attend the matches, competitions or events of any other extramural activity⁹.

And finally, the learners said that teachers tended to influence the learners' choices in favour of rugby¹⁰. This was apparently done through both verbal commands and the manner in which learners are treated both in the classroom and on the sports field.

2.2.3 The school as an archetypal school

The researcher believes that the school which forms the focus of this case study is typical of single sex, male secondary schools in the KwaZulu-Natal region for the following reasons:

- Most single sex, male secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal were established by former members of the British Empire during the late colonial period, and place value in upholding traditions that are deemed typical of British “public” schools. Maintaining these traditions is in fact considered, and used as, a marketing strategy to promote these schools to more affluent families. A school with ties to traditional British schooling ideologies and practices is generally considered to be a better institution than one that does not.
- The schools appear to be run on similar systems. All have headmasters and governing bodies, and are highly influenced and supported by the parent body and former learners of the institution. Prefects still hold significant positions within the school. All the learners of each school are subdivided into “houses” for interhouse competitions, and “war cries” (mostly passed on through the history of the school)

⁹ Subject Eight: “You get a sense of it because of the way the school reacts more to... like that make compulsories for rugby, they make you support rugby all the time. They make you watch rugby, but even with sport it’s lopsided. Because they concentrate more on rugby than they do on cricket as well, because rugby is compulsory to watch but cricket isn’t.”

¹⁰ Subject Six: “Instead of complaining to people to take part in extramural activities, telling them to join rugby, they could tell them to join band instead... there is definitely a push for rugby. Not a push for sport in general... rugby is forced more.”

are sung during sports events. The school blazer is an important element of the school uniform and worn at all times in public during the winter months.

- It was discovered that all the headmasters who have held this particular position of authority in the recorded history of the school researched for this dissertation; either attended, taught at or were headmasters of other single sex, male secondary schools modelled on the “British public school system” in the area, or in the United Kingdom itself. It is clear from the recorded history of the school that its links to Britain were highly celebrated throughout its history (Jordan & McCabe 2000).
- The school’s competition with a local high school of similar origins in the area has had a significant impact on the school’s history. The staff and learners of both schools often mention the interschool rivalry; and both the announcement of interschool matches and the results thereof are often reported in the local press.
- Rugby is highly valued at most South African schools, but performs an important social function in single sex male secondary schools. These schools place a great deal of value in achieving a high ranking above other schools for rugby match results. Most single sex male secondary schools in the area make it compulsory for all learners to attend interschool rugby matches and important interschool match results are published in local newspapers or may on rare occasions be broadcasted on national television.
- Most of the schools in the area offered the same choices in sports and cultural extramural activities to the learners. Although many interschool rugby matches were arranged, the schools seldom performed music together and rarely held music events that brought learners of the different schools together.
- All of the single sex, male secondary schools in the area have an Old Boys Club for former learners of the school who continue to show their loyalty and support for their former school. It was noted that the opinions of the members of the Old Boys Club at the school researched in this study were still considered important by the school and its present learners. It was often found that these club members complained if a change in school practices was considered or noticed. On several

occasions, the “Old Boys” rebuked the current school band for not knowing certain tunes that were played by the school band of a previous era.

2.2.4 Music at the school

The following music activities were offered at the school: Choir, Band and the Performing Arts Academy. Music Theory lessons and class singing lessons, in which the grade eight learners sing, were also offered. The basic elements of music and the recognition of instruments were taught in Arts and Culture, as required by the curriculum set by the Education Department. The music style focused on at school was Western classical music, although popular music was played by the school band and favoured by the Performing Arts Academy. An attempt was made to begin a club for rock bands at the school, but this was not successful, as the learners did not attend practices. There was also an effort to introduce an African drumming circle as an activity, but only one learner responded positively to this suggestion and African ensembles were not considered appropriate by school management at the time.

Music Theory lessons, in which learners may prepare to write examinations by the Trinity College of London, were offered by the Music teacher of the school on her own initiative. These lessons were given in place of free lessons or Physical Education. Music was not recognised as an official school subject but rather an activity - the results of examinations did not appear on the learners’ academic reports and there was no classroom allocated for lessons. Lessons took place on the mezzanine level of the library or the teachers’ conference room if it was not in use. A learner would be able to send the results that they had achieved in their graded examinations to the education department in order to achieve a Matric result in Music. Music was not included in the list of subjects chosen from for the FET phase at the school. The head counsellor said that she was told by school management not to include Music in the list of subject choices.

Learners were encouraged to choose subjects that would enable them to pursue a wide range of careers. Physical Science was therefore compulsory at the school. A learner who did not show promise in Physical Science was advised to study Drama instead, despite the Drama teacher’s advice against this. It was believed that this would ensure that the learners would have less difficulty in achieving better results in their final examinations. Prior to the introduction of Drama as a subject, it was suggested that Music be used as an alternative to Physical Science in future. It was however too difficult to provide teaching for both the

practical and theoretical aspects of Music, as the learners may play a variety of instruments and would require individual instruction. All grade eight classes had an allocated class singing lesson in every two-week cycle, although the amount of actual singing that took place and the seriousness with which it is approached are questionable¹¹. Learners who attended the school also had the opportunity of singing in the choir, performing in the school band and becoming a member of the Performing Arts Academy.

2.2.4.1 The Performing Arts Academy

The Performing Arts Academy was an initiative by a prominent local performer and actress, and the Head of Culture at the school. The objective of the academy was to teach skills in all areas of theatrical performance and create performance opportunities for learners who may choose to follow a career in the performing arts.

Learners were auditioned at the beginning of the year, 2006. Those who showed promise in Drama, Music or Dance Performance, were accepted. There were thirty-five members in the academy at the time of the researcher's inquiry. Sessions consisted of an hour, during the first period of the day. Learners had to pay an additional fee to be a member and had to achieve satisfactory results in their school subjects in order to continue. It was the learner's responsibility to catch up on the schoolwork that was missed during the academy sessions.

Lessons were taught on the mezzanine level of the library, and often caused disruptions if other classes were in the library for their reading lessons. Learners, who attended the academy sessions, were taught by teachers, external tutors and their peers. At the time the research was being conducted, Music was taught on Mondays, Thursdays and Fridays. During the Monday sessions, Subject Ten taught the drum kit to his fellow learners. An external coach taught guitar lessons on Thursdays and the learners had singing lessons on Fridays. Members were introduced to the concept of music notation and encouraged to write their own songs, using their knowledge of notation and guitar tabs. A piano and drum kit were provided by the Academy organizer and were available for teaching. Dance lessons

¹¹ Subject Seven and Eight were asked how their class responded to taking the compulsory singing lessons at school in grade eight. Subject Seven replied, "I don't actually think they actually sing. He [the music teacher] talks for half the lesson and then they sing for ten minutes... and so they don't actually sing."

Subject Eight agreed with Subject Seven but added that "I think they find it a little bit boring, except for some people who enjoy singing... other people find it a free lesson to get away from work."

were introduced in the third term of the school year. Hip-hop, break dance and basic ballroom dance skills were taught. Learners who showed promise in music, drama or dance were provided with opportunities to perform in public. Rock bands were encouraged to perform at clubs or “open mike” evenings and the dancers gave a performance at the Greyville Race Course in 2006.

The academy was very popular among its members, at the school. The organizer arranged opportunities for the learners to perform in public and informed the learners of interesting events occurring in Durban.

Subject Nine said that he loved the academy. “It gives you opportunities, I mean what you do they give you a chance to go and show it to the people outside. She [the teacher] gave us an opportunity to write our own songs and it was good.”

Subject Ten said that: “You get a lot of opportunities in academy,” but quickly added that, “I wouldn’t come after school.”

Subject Ten also explained that dancing in the academy was not considered to be a feminine activity. This was on the grounds that no partner was needed, hip-hop was used and some of the learners were invited to dance at the local racecourse. The subjects felt that the Performing Arts Academy was an excellent initiative by the school, but added that the academy was still in a process of development and the organizer had more plans for future improvement. The general feeling among the boys who did not participate in the Performing Arts Academy was that the learners who did were effeminate. The researcher often overheard comments made by boys, who were either in the library or who peered through the windows during a Performing Arts Academy session, that the Academy members were acting “gay” or “ridiculous.” The Performing Arts Academy members performed in arranged events and concerts, but rarely performed for the school. Few learners, who were not part of the academy, knew what was being taught or achieved there at the time of observation.

2.2.4.2 The school band

The school band consisted of twenty-one members in 2006. It was a brass and percussion ensemble formed from the instruments that remained at the high school after their cadet band

was disbanded in 1998. The brass ensemble had competed at the annual provincial competitions from 2003 – 2006, with an exception in 2005, when the school was unable to provide transport to the provincial competition as the event coincided with a sports meet. The ensemble, however, performed at the South African Championships in 2005 on invitation from the hosts. The ensemble's repertoire included popular music, film scores and early rock. The brass band has performed in Durban and the surrounding communities throughout its existence.

The band had become increasingly popular during the last three years of the observation period, recovering from a particularly difficult period between 1999 and 2002. The quality of the band had reached an all time low after their Music teacher immigrated, leaving the band without instruction in music and instrumental technique. Only a few functional instruments remained, with most having been taken by leaving members or broken. In 2001, the band could only play one tune, most of which was improvised by the learners. The rugby coach who had taken control of the band tried to retain the band's original number of members, but this only encouraged additional learners to attend practices during assemblies with the distinct purpose of avoiding uniform inspections and led the headmaster to believe that band members were all mischievous learners.

With the arrival of a new Music teacher, attendance was more strictly controlled, new music was given and instrumental technique improved. The band began to perform for all major school functions. The performance of popular songs at rugby matches ensured approval from peers, teachers and the supporters. Drum solos were also a novelty for school performances. Public performances and the band's repertoire increased dramatically over the next few years.

The budget however only allowed for nine instruments to be purchased over a period of four years during the observation period. This was despite a claim made on a school promotional video by school management that R65 000 was both approved by the governing body and spent on music instruments in the year 2003. The lack of instruments meant that neither reserves nor the training of younger learners could take place, so replacing musicians was difficult. Practice times always seemed to clash with sports practices, and performances tended to coincide with sports events meaning that band members were expected to fulfil their sporting requirements instead of music, and transport was not always available for the band, even if bookings had been made prior to the sporting codes.

The band was only allowed to practice in the band room, a storage room situated beneath the new block of the school with a single door that opened onto the rugby field. The room was used for both the storage and teaching purposes, measuring 3.88m x 7.10m. The room contained two large wooden tables, covering an area of 93cm by 2m, and a shelf that filled the back wall for storage purposes, 60cm by 2m. The remaining area was used for teaching the twenty-one band members, including both brass and percussion players. A single desk fan attached to the wall was the only form of air circulation available, as the headmaster would not allow the band to practice with the door open. This made practices stifling during the summer months. The headmaster said that he did not want individuals to practice on their instruments outdoors. He occasionally arrived to chase learners back into the band room if they had stepped outside to practice a difficult passage in the music on their own.

The school would occasionally use the band room as a medical aid station during important rugby festivals, during which time the instruments were removed and kept in whatever office space the band teacher could find. The school had turned the previous band room into a sports bar for the Old Boys Association.

2.2.4.3 The school choir

Information regarding the history of the choir is not available in the school's records. The choirmaster had a good knowledge of voice training techniques and sang with the learners during performances. The repertoire of songs tended to focus on songs from the early forties and the World War II era to a collection of popular Lloyd Webber songs. These songs were taught to the learners during their first year of high school in their singing classes, during which time the choir master would ask promising learners to join the school choir.

The school choir performed for school prize-giving functions and parents' evenings. It also had an annual concert for a local home for the aged. Learners were not encouraged to join the provincial youth choir as the choirmaster said that there might be clashes in performance dates and that the learners usually quit the school choir once they had joined the youth choir. The only awards available to the learners were those of long and diligent service, as learners who performed for public or neighbouring school events were achievements not recognized by the school.

There were approximately thirty learners in the school choir at the time of the study. There was no fixed number because the numbers continued to fluctuate as the year progressed. Choir practices took place during school assemblies. This unfortunately prompted learners who did not want to attend assemblies, or wished to avoid uniform neatness checks, to temporarily join the choir. Both the members of the choir and the other learners were aware of this problem.

Two learners who were not members of the choir commented:

Subject Nine: “I know for a fact that some people go to the choir just to run away from assembly. We talk about this from time to time. They don’t really enjoy choir.”

Subject Eleven: “The choir is terrible, terrible, terrible. It’s shocking because people go there because they want to bunk assembly, not because they really like the music or they really like to sing. That is terrible. I love singing, but I wouldn’t go to that choir.”

2.2.4.4 School rock bands

The Head of Music wanted to introduce ensemble playing in the school in 2005. She had hoped that woodwinds, orchestral string players and pianists would come forward, but there were an overwhelming number of guitarists and drummers in the school. It was then decided to attempt to form rock bands from the musicians available, and introduce this as an extramural activity. Learners were asked to take leadership within their own bands, share ideas and even create their own music.

A “battle of the bands” contest was suggested, but the learners were asked to perform for the teachers involved before such a contest would be allowed to determine if there was enough potential to arrange such a contest.

The learners were reminded at assemblies to attend practices and they were told that if they showed promise, prizes would be arranged. The learners however continued to arrive late for the practices, and without instruments. They claimed that they would rather watch the others play, than perform themselves.

A total of four meetings were held before the activity dwindled completely. The learners did not wish to bring their instruments to school, nor wished to practice at school or said that they had other engagements. Many learners had fallouts with fellow band members, or were unable to maintain a band. Only one, of more than twenty bands, remained consisting of two guitarists and a keyboard player. The band performed a jazz number of their own creation at a school prize giving, but no longer performs for the school. The learners were asked why this activity was unsuccessful:

Subject Ten: “You can’t just go up there and say ‘Guys, come and play guitar and drums... I wouldn’t have gone.’”

Subject nine: “I think that you [the teachers] didn’t show them what you have to offer.”

The researcher found that the learners’ attitude was that the teachers were not doing enough to tempt them into performing. Subject Nine seriously suggested that paying the learners would be the best option.

2.2.4.5 Performing for the school

Music groups generally performed for the school at prize givings, speech evenings and parents’ evenings. A huge display was arranged for promotion evenings held in the beginning of each year to promote the school to prospective parents and grade seven learners. The band performed for rugby matches hosted by the high school. In 2005, the then Head of Culture, arranged performances during assemblies and proposed the idea of lunch hour concerts. The lunch hour concerts were popular, but this meant that the band had to sacrifice practice time during lunch breaks in order to perform for the school. The learners did not feel that the school appreciated music performances unless music was played as an accompaniment to sports events¹².

¹² Subject Six: “Sometimes they’re [school learners] quite nice and supportive. I think the main difference between playing for the school and playing for the public in general is that we force the school to be there and they don’t run away and sometimes, especially if we play at the rugby matches it is very very nice support out of the school... um for some of them... I think them winning at the rugby makes a big difference to their mood.”

2.3 The attitudes of those within the school towards learners involved in music

Now that the school ethos, legacy and ideals have been established, it is necessary to study the influence that the Music learners' social sphere will have on their choices.

2.3.1 The reactions of learners of the school to the subjects' participation in music

The junior section of the school, grades eight and nine were provided with questionnaires by their counselling teachers during Life Orientation lessons in the final term of the school year. Although the school was provided with sufficient questionnaires for all the learners during the previous school term, the counselling teachers said that they were only able to administer it to all grades eights and nines, a total of sixteen classes over a period of almost three months. A copy of the questionnaire has been included in the Appendix, page 145. Two hundred and eighty two questionnaires were returned, twenty-six percent of the questionnaires that were distributed.

The following information was discovered:

The ratio of participation in cultural and sports extramural activities, at the time during which the research was conducted, was as follows:

- 27% participated in cultural activities
- 73% participated in sports

When asked to give an explanation for the choices made in participation: 44% of the above mentioned 73% of learners stated that they were unable to participate in cultural activities due to their sporting commitments, while the remaining learners stated that they were either not interested in culture, did not have sufficient time available or made homophobic references which were implied as answers to the above question.

Subject Ten: "I don't want to play in front of the school, eh. I want to play for people who really actually appreciate it."

With regards music, the learners were asked if they had played a music instrument, and if so, whether they continued to play this music instrument.

- 55% admitted to having played a music instrument prior to attending the school.
- 45% stated that they had never played a music instrument.

However these statistics changed once the learners started to attend the high school:

- 20% stated that they continued to play a music instrument (either at home or at school).
- 80% stated that they no longer played a music instrument (either at home or at school).

With regards a career in music:

- 24% stated that they would consider becoming a professional musician. Most learners specified that their preference were in popular music genres.
- 76% stated that they did not want to follow music as a career.
- 63% stated that their parents would prefer them to be involved in sports as a career than music.
- 37% stated that their parents would not react differently or discriminate between options, if they made a decision to follow either sports or music as a career.

The learners were asked to notate who their greatest influence was with regards their extramural choices and then their subject choices. The researcher wished to determine whose opinions and attitudes the learners of the school would consciously consider vital in making decisions regarding choices in music as a subject/career and/or music activities. The results, in percentage form, were as follows:

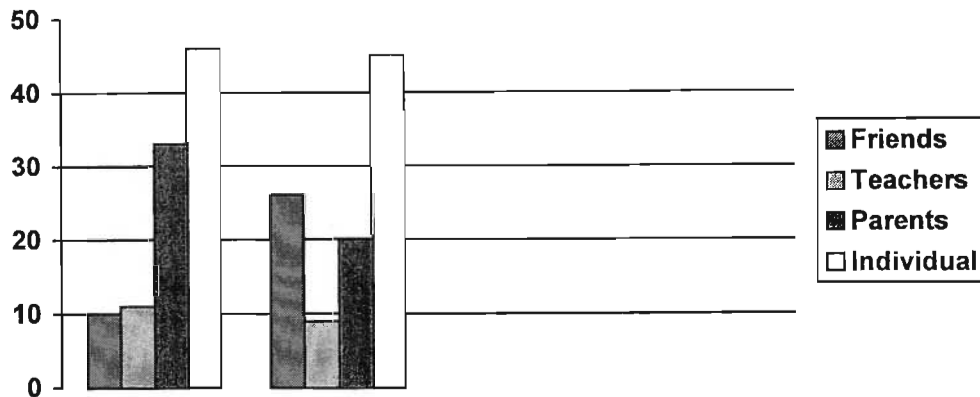
Degree of Influence of Social Sphere in Choices of Extramural Activities

| Friends | Teachers | Parents | Individual |
|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 26% | 9% | 20% | 45% |

Degree of Influence of Social Sphere on Subject Choices

| Friends | Teachers | Parents | Individual |
|---------|----------|---------|------------|
| 10% | 11% | 33% | 46% |

These results can be compared as follows:



Subject Choices Extramural Choices

In addition to these questions, the questionnaire posed questions that required the learners to explain why they did or did not participate in “cultural” extramural activities, how such activities could be improved and what they believed would or could make an extramural activity popular. Many of the responses that were given indicated that learners felt there was a clear social distinction between sport and music. There was evidence that the learners labelled both themselves and others according to which extracurricular activities they took part in. Some learners described sports and music as opposing forces, using words like “enemies,” “collide” and “battle” to express the co-existence of these activities at the school, as portrayed by school staff and learners¹³.

Examples of some of these comments are as follows:

Grade 9 learner: ‘I do sports therefore I don’t do cultural activities.’

Grade 9 learner: ‘I do cultural activities because I’m not good in sports.’

Grade 8 learner: ‘I do not [participate in music] because I play sport.’

Grade 8 learner: ‘Sport is on the same day, so I play sport.’

¹³ Subject Three: “I think it’s always a battle between sport and culture. Everyone wants to do the sport and no one wants to do the culture.”

Subject One : “You could actually put them as enemies.”

Grade 11 learner: 'I think they [cultural activities/music] are for gay people and I do sports which collide.'

Grade 8 learner: 'Sport is better.'

Grade 9 learner: 'No, cause I'm a sporty person.'

Grade 8 learner: 'I enjoy and prefer sport.'

Grade 9 learner: 'I'm more of a sporty guy.'

Grade 8 learner: 'Music is not as important to me as your [the school's] sport, so I play sport.'

Grade 9 learner: 'Because sport and school work is more important.'

Grade 9 learner: 'Just get rid of them all. Cultural activities don't help you anyway, Cultural activities are for kids too weak to play sports.'

2.3.2 The learners' perceived attitudes of the headmaster and teachers

The headmaster had, on occasion, encouraged staff members during meetings, to discuss sports with the learners in the classroom in order to maintain interest and provide the learners with a break from heavy concentration on subject matter. It was assumed that the learners would respond well to sharing interests with the staff, but those who do not have an interest in sport seemed to interpret the situation as a hostile psychosocial environment.

Most teachers had a positive attitude towards those learners who participated in cultural activities, but did not always attend performances after school hours, as it was not considered a compulsory duty required of them. The learners involved in music activities interpreted this as the teachers not having an interest in them. The majority of teachers did however attend sports events, as this was required by the school, for the purpose of providing necessary assistance at the event. They were therefore more aware of the achievements of those learners, who participated in sports activities, and valued the time that these learners had spent at school for these activities, interpreting this as loyalty to the school. The learners who participated in music activities complained that the headmaster rarely attended their performances because he tended to support the events of other sporting codes instead.

The headmaster was found to be eager to promote music at the high school, as he felt that it was an asset to the school. He also hoped that Music as a subject could be used to replace Physical Science for those learners who are unable to excel in the sciences in the FET phase.

His suggestions for the implementing of Music as a subject and as extramural activities however did not always prove to be successful. The area allocated for the Music rooms would allow unnecessary disturbance for the rest of the school and was soon abandoned with no further suggestions. The headmaster was also interested in investing funds in music groups if he could be shown proof that the investment would be worthwhile beforehand. Unfortunately this caused difficulties, as it proved impossible to increase the numbers of learners participating in music groups if no instruments could be bought for them and most of the learners were unable to provide their own.

Some staff members mentioned that they were cynical of the headmaster's support of cultural activities at the school and implied that he made impossible suggestions to ensure that these activities would not succeed. This cannot be verified, but the distrust of staff members involved in cultural activities led to a number of resignations, from the duty of organizing these activities or the school itself. The learners were either unaware or doubtful of the headmaster's intentions of promoting music at the school. A friendly conversation the headmaster had had with one Music learner unintentionally resulted in making the learner feel insulted. The headmaster had allegedly asked the learner why he had chosen to quit playing water polo for the school and decided to become an "arty farty" instead. As innocent as the comment may have been, the learner assumed that the headmaster was showing his disapproval for his participation in music activities.

The headmaster had also allegedly made comments that led those who were involved in cultural activities to feel affronted. In preparation for the first prize giving of the year, 2006, the headmaster had announced in a meeting for all staff that if he had to listen to both the band and the choir perform on the evening, he would "need a paper bag" because it was apparently too time consuming for his liking. He made an official apology to the staff the following day.

2.3.3 Results from the interviews regarding the reactions from peers at school

The subjects had mixed responses to this topic. Most claimed that they felt their friends supported their decision to be involved in music activities, which was encouraging. Others claimed that they kept their attendance of Music lessons or activities as a secret from their friends to avoid any confrontation.

The subjects interviewed believed that their peers in classroom situations often felt it necessary to appear as though they disapproved of the subject's music participation in order to avoid condemnation by association with the Music learner. In the presence of others, the Music learners' peers voiced their disapproval openly but tended to show an interest in music activities when alone with a Music learner. Subject One said that his class mates were afraid of the group's disapproval and therefore ensured that they were seen to be disgusted by the concept of taking part in a "feminine activity". Subject One said that his class mates call him "queer" but then commented that:

"Some of them find it quite interesting when I sit and do Music Theory and read music... Normally when they are alone they are inquisitive, but when they are with a group of friends, they are too hectic, big time. Like ja, "That's scary, that's queer, don't do that, ah girls do that kind of stuff," and so forth. When they're with other guys they actually worry about what the other guys think, but when they're alone they actually tell you the truth. None play instruments themselves. They don't understand anything that is going on."

Subject Three and Four had similar experiences. Their friends admired them for their ability in Music, but were unwilling to make their opinions known to their peers.

Some friends were however very understanding and supportive. They tended to support the performers of popular music styles rather than those who performed Classical Western or Indian music. It appeared that those who chose to perform Classical Western or Indian music preferred to keep this a secret from their friends. Subject Seven and Eight were open about their participation and enjoyment of music, they had no feeling that their friends were not willing to support them.

Subject Nine said that "Most of my friends are in the same school and when they hear the school band performing in the hall they like it, they say 'that was good' and stuff like that. They do support."

The interviewer asked Subject Nine if his friends knew that he was considering a career in music.

"I haven't told them I'd like to take it as a job but I think they'd say that's good cos it means free tickets for them and they'd support me."

Subject Six said that although most of his friends were involved in the school band, he did not tell his other friends that he was involved in music and he claimed that they either did not know or did not notice. Subject Three was the only learner interviewed who admitted to being physically bullied by other learners because he was involved in music activities:

“My one friend does [bully me]. He punches me every day because I do Music. Every time I talk about it...because I talk about Music, he doesn't like Music. My main friends are okay with it.”

2.4 Chapter conclusion and summary

This chapter seeks to characterise the school that the subjects attended as a psychosocial environment that maintains its image through the implementation of its norms and values. The school was shown to be a product of the province's social history. It was found that the school used for this study was typical of traditional boys' secondary schools in KwaZulu-Natal, as it valued the ethos of muscular Christianity. The reverence for this ethos was obvious in the school's regard for sport, which unfortunately tended to have a negative impact on the promotion of Music and other music activities. Influential figures within the school environment were found to be generally indifferent to active music participation and at worst, hostile to it.

The chapter then showed how the dominant ethos of the school is reflected in the perceptions of learners and staff members with particular reference to the learners' music participation. The results of the questionnaires were presented, which revealed the attitudes of the learners at the school regarding music participation. The majority of learners who took the questionnaire answered that they made choices independent of friends and family, when directly asked who influenced their decisions. It was however evident that their friends and parents were highly influential in the decision-making process when asked why certain choices were made. It was revealed that the learners wished to appear independent, but were still subject to the opinions and attitudes of their social sphere.

The main reason given for choosing an extramural activity was the perceived popularity of the activity and the recognition awarded for achievement in that activity. An overwhelming response to the question, which asked the learners to give suggestions on how to improve

cultural extramural activities, included the acknowledgement of achievement and the improvement of its image in the school.

These findings correspond with the psychosocial situations Erikson attempted to explain in his theory (Erikson 1950, 1968, 1980). While an adolescent strives for autonomy, he or she remains under the influence of their social sphere, namely educators, parents and peers. The school becomes the most important psychosocial environment in the adolescent's stage of life, as the adolescent spends most of his or her waking hours under the influence of this institution. The attitudes and values of the institution, both real and perceived, have a definite impact on those who are members of that institution.

It was clear that more learners were involved in sports than cultural activities at The school before the questionnaire was conducted, due to the numbers of sports teams able to compete in each age group category at interschool sports events. (There are in fact eight teams for every age group from under thirteen to the open age group in rugby alone.)

The questionnaires showed that the learners who were not involved in music tended to have a negative view of those who did participate in music. Erikson's theory (1968) states that once humans become part of a social group (in this case, a sports team), they will defend their society against anyone who does not conform, as they are perceived as a threat to their society's identity and therefore their own. In our belief that our social group is superior to all others, humans 'even in the most advanced state of rationality and civilization' may act out against others who do not share their identity 'with the conviction that they could not morally afford not to do so' (Erikson 1968:234). The sense of opposition between sports and music activities seemed to have developed due to a number of reasons. Time constraints due to increasing academic work meant that learners were forced to choose between music and sport. Considering that sport received more recognition and accolades for achievement, most learners chose sport¹⁴.

On analysis of the learners' responses to the questionnaire, it became apparent that learners perceived sports and cultural activities as something that defined their identity for both

¹⁴ Grade 8 learner: 'Last year I played the guitar, recorder and choir because I had time. This year I don't have time. And it is not very worthwhile to play an instrument in this school.'

Grade 9 learner: 'Sport occupies all my time.'

Grade 9 learner: "My time is very scarce, I would love to join [a cultural activity]."

themselves and their peers¹⁵. The extramural activity or activities chosen by learners at the school also seemed to encourage stereotyping by their peers and teachers. Learners, in general, appeared to choose their extramural activity according to how they wished to be perceived by their peers.

Many learners described themselves as sportsmen or “sporty”. When asked why they did not participate in music or cultural extramural activities, many learners simply reasoned that being athletic or popular meant that music activities were not suitable activities for them to participate in. Learners who chose to participate in cultural activities occasionally mentioned an inability to participate in sports due to physical issues or a lack of talent in sports as the reason for their choice. This seemed to affirm the belief held among the sports orientated learners, that the cultural activities were something learners settled for, rather than chose. Very few learners were able to participate in both sports and cultural activities due to a shortage of time.

In addition to this, stereotyping implicit in the learners’ questionnaire responses implied that Music learners were less fit, but more intelligent with feminine tendencies (if they performed Western Classical music) in comparison to sportsmen, while sportsmen were considered more loyal to the school, self-disciplined and competitive. The studies of Adler (2001) and Harrison (2003) raise the concern that sports is often perceived as masculine, while music is perceived as feminine. This is also evident in a number of other gender studies.

Boys... are taught the importance of appearing hard and dominant whether they feel like it or not. At school and in the media, boys are steered towards competitive sports, and are often under heavy pressure to show their toughness (Connel 2002:3).

The school placed a high value on sports and those who participated in sports. It did not place a high degree of value on cultural activities as these were perceived to be effeminate. Learners, who made discriminatory remarks about music activities at the school and those who participated in these activities, valued the opinions of their peers and also wrote highly favorable comments about their school and their loyalty to the school.

¹⁵ Subject Five: “When he [the first team rugby captain] comes in, everyone looks at him. Some guy gets up and gives him a seat and someone takes his blazer from him. Cos he’s a god. The first team captain is a god. Like he’s the king in the social thing. He’s way higher than the head boy.”

CHAPTER THREE : CHOICES MADE REGARDING MUSIC

This chapter is dedicated to presenting the factors that influenced the choices made by the selected subjects who chose to be involved in music activities at the school. The chapter includes the stages at which the selected subjects first made their choice to participate in music, what their reasons were for attending Music lessons at their high school and the influences on their choices in music participation and enjoyment.

The interviews and questionnaires revealed reasons why the learners of the school either chose to participate in music, or actively avoided it at school. The interviews conducted in this study were aimed at determining why the selected adolescent males chose to participate in music activities at school and what influenced these decisions. The context in which the learners were educated and ultimately made their decision regarding music participation has already been discussed in chapter two. It was discovered that the school environment did not necessarily promote participation in music activities or encourage male adolescents to attempt any involvement in music. It is interesting to discover why learners were able to make the difficult decision of participating in school music activities after considering why so many learners readily quit music upon attending the school.

3.1 Reasons why learners avoided music at high school

Most learners who attended the school were involved in music activities during their primary school years. It was found in the questionnaire that fifty-five percent of learners in grades eight and nine played a musical instrument in primary school, but only twenty percent of the same survey group still continued to play instruments. The following reasons as to why there is a decline in the number of learners taking advantage of the music opportunities offered at a high school level of education were inferred from the responses given by the learners of the school:

- Music was seen as something the learners had out-grown. Taking part in a musical or performing in front of others was something they associated with being in primary

school. Learners were keen to abandon anything that linked them to primary school, on entering high school.

Subject Seven: “I think that people’s interest change as they develop, when I was in grade three I took part in the choir... I would sing my heart out, but if you asked me to sing now I wouldn’t. So I suppose people’s interests do change.”

- Learners were also in a more assertive position during adolescence to abandon the interests that they no longer shared with their parents. If the young adolescent males’ participation in Music was due to extrinsic motivation from their parents, they may gradually begin to consider the approval of their peers as more important than their parents, and decide to do what appears popular at high school. In this instance, a learner who once felt that his parent’s choice in music or their desire for him to take Music lessons was what was right for him, may now decide to quit Music lessons or listen to his friends’ choice in music.

Subject Eleven: “It’s [singing] gay to us because we’re in grade 11. To us the best music now is hip-hop and house.”

- Students became more self-critical in their high school years. They tended to get frustrated when having to practice on a regular basis, and most students preferred to play less difficult instruments (or those perceived to be less difficult) or instruments that could be played in a group. Practicing, for the majority, was only enjoyed when it became a social activity. There were many “garage bands” formed by students of the school but few who were willing to perform for others.

Subject Three: “I get frustrated when I don’t do it right and the reason why I’m not doing it right is because I’m not practicing.”

- There were a proportionately larger number of female teachers at the primary school level in the area, who promoted “feminine” activities, while an increase in the number of male teachers at the high school level provided the male students with role models who did not promote such activities. The school had a majority male staff complement, some of which were in the teacher-in-training program and

therefore rather young. These young male teachers had an immense influence on the adolescent learners at the school. Music was viewed as a feminine activity, and “homosexuality” was linked to it.

Subject Three: “What turns people away from Music is the teacher, their parents who don’t think it’s cool and the people they hang out with. I don’t think I’ve heard a teacher go “Let’s go and do some cultural thing.” Okay, there are some teachers, like [name omitted]; they’ll speak about music and everything and sports as well, but you find teachers like [names omitted], who just talk about sport.”

Subject Ten: “Singing in grade eight is gay. It is gay to sing at high school”

Subject Four: “Peer pressure is involved”

- o Playing music was no longer promoted within the young adolescent male’s social sphere, namely their family, friends and teachers. While a young boy singing in the nativity play at the age of six was considered cute, a young man with a breaking voice was encouraged to pursue more “masculine” forms of activities.

Subject Six: “I’ve never gotten the impression that there were a lot of musicians at this school. It might be a slight timidity and fear of what the opinion of the other boys might be... um... by their playing... You probably find it’s quite a common thing with most schools.”

Subject Seven: “I suppose many people like to impose their personal taste on others, I suppose it gives them some reassurance and so I actually agree with that. People around you actually do influence what you do.”

Subject Eight: “ I think it also has a role to do with people around you that influence it. When you go from a primary school, people are almost at a balance. They think that people can be individuals. But when you go to high school, people think you should have to do this and you should have to do that.”

- High schools were considered to be more competitive and demanding than primary schools. Learners at the school were encouraged to do what they were good at and maintain a commitment to that activity until the end of their school career. Learners tended to focus their energy on one or two activities rather than make an attempt to try something different, or be involved in something they did not excel at. This “all or nothing” attitude did not encourage learners to experiment with music, unless they were phenomenal players.
- More specifically, the school’s code of conduct forced a learner to participate in one winter and one summer extramural activity. No music activity was recognized as fulfilling these criteria. The learners were therefore forced to take part in a sport, which would inevitably limit the learner’s time.

A first year learner, who did not participate in music activities, commented in his questionnaire:

‘Start encouraging instead of discouraging them [music learners] as we hear in assemblies. Instead of making pupils do one sport a term, they should make them do one sport and one cultural activity.’

- There were increasing time constraints placed on learners at high school, as contact sports became more popular and time consuming. Coaches did not allow their players time off to attend cultural extramural activities after school, or for weekend performances. Seventy-three percent of the learners said that they would not even consider participating in cultural activities; most used the fact that they were on a sports team as an excuse. Another time-consuming issue cited by the learners was that the academic workload also increased in high school, with greater demands for achievement from both parents and their community. Adolescents were forced to choose activities that will gain them more recognition. One learner in grade nine wrote that he quit music because, ‘It interfered with my sport and academics.’

One first year student at the school wrote in the school questionnaire:

‘Last year I played guitar, recorder and sang in the choir because I had time. This year, I don’t have time. And it is not very worthwhile to play instruments in the school.’

While more than half of the fifty-five percent of learners who played instruments in primary school quit, very few of the forty-five percent of learners who had never played instruments wished to become involved in music. For some learners who expressed a reason for this, it was apparently due to upholding their image. It was seen as embarrassing for some to start playing an instrument during adolescence when a younger learner may be better. Subject Five said that is too difficult to start playing music in high school when there may be other learners who are younger, yet have more experience than the beginner. It was assumed that once a skill was attained in primary school, it was either improved on, or completely abandoned at high school. Other reasons included time constraints, lack of finances, or a lack of interest in making music. A grade eight learner who was accommodated in the school boarding establishment said that he had no place to practice and did not know how he could arrange Music lessons for himself.

3.2 Reasons why learners chose to participate in music activities

3.2.1 Extra-curricular socio-cultural influences and their impact on the learners' musical involvement

The information used in the discussion of the adolescents' social sphere has been collected by conducting informal interviews with the selected subjects and analysing the two questionnaires, given to parents and the learners. The subjects were asked to discuss the reactions of their friends, fellow students, teachers and parents to their participation in music. The support or hindrance of each group and their influences were discussed. In general, it was found that the learners felt a great deal of support from their parents, sometimes also their friends, but were generally feeling rejected or being bullied by other learners in the school. In one case, there were claims of a serious degree of discrimination taking place by teachers.

3.2.2 The influences sited by the subjects on their decision to begin participation in music

The learners who were interviewed first became involved in music activities for a variety of reasons. There appear to be three stages at which the subjects became involved in music, the pre-school, primary school and secondary school phases, which coincided with Erikson's stages three, four and five. Different social groups initiated music participation during these stages. During the pre-school phase, extending to the primary school phase, parents appear to be the greatest influence. In primary school, learners were encouraged to participate by teachers and extended family. During the high school phase, learners acknowledged peers as the most significant influence in making their decisions. It was clear from the responses that the support of parents and extended family definitely encouraged music participation throughout all three phases, and often were the acknowledged source of motivation during difficult times. Positive early-life involvement in music increased the prospect for continued involvement at a later stage.

The primary factors motivating the subjects taking up music activities have been tabulated below. The subjects have been arranged into the phase at which they began their music involvement, and their acknowledged source of motivation is shown in the accompanying column:

| Preschool Involvement | Acknowledged Influence | Primary School Involvement | Acknowledged Influence | High School Involvement | Acknowledged Influence |
|---|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Subject One | Parents | Subject Two | Teachers | Subject Seven | Freedom of choice at school |
| Subject Eight (Started music then quit) | Parents | Subject Three | Teachers | Subject Eight | Parents, opportunities at school |
| | | Subject Four | Teachers | Subject Nine | Friends, uncle |
| | | Subject Five | Teachers and father | Subject Eleven | Friends, opportunities at school |
| | | Subject Six | Parents | | |
| | | Subject Ten | Church, friends, parents | | |

3.2.2.1 Beginning to take part in music activities in the pre-school phase

The subjects, in general, did not recall any particular music activities or involvement in Music prior to attending school, although they often spoke about the music that their parents enjoyed listening to in the subjects' earliest memories. Subject Eight was encouraged to play the guitar at a young age, but quit before attending primary school. Subject One was the only subject interviewed who recalled performing in public at a very young age. He was forced to sing at a wedding at the age of four or five, an experience which he described as being both "embarrassing and scary" because he began to cry and wet his pants. The interviewer asked Subject One why he described the experience as embarrassing, since it seemed obvious that performing in front of people might make one nervous. He claimed that:

"I didn't want everyone to know I could sing and having all those beady eyes look at you...(ends off with awkward silence)"

Subject One said that he felt awkward singing when he was young because he did not think that boys should sing, at that time. He said that he felt he had a talent for singing but he did not want his extended family and strangers to disapprove of him. The interviewer asked him whether this experience had affected how he felt about music at the time of the interview; he said that it had all changed:

"Now I can't wait for a person to hear me, I just can't wait."

He attributed this confidence to the support and encouragement of his parents and mentioned that he had received positive feedback from the various auditions he had undergone. If his parents had not continued to support and motivate their son to pursue his singing, it would have been very likely that he would have quit. Subject One was fortunate to be a member of the Performing Arts Academy at the high school where he was often provided with opportunities to sing and notified of auditions.

3.2.2.2 Beginning to take part in music in the primary school phase

The subjects stated that most of the learners at the school were both exposed to and participated in music at primary school in the form of plays, musicals, choirs and compulsory singing lessons. Most of the local primary schools that were considered "feeder

schools” for the school offered Music lessons or class Music lessons. The primary school that Subjects Three, Four and Five attended, offered recorder and guitar lessons to interested learners. Subject Two also became involved in music at a young age. He said that his first experience of music was as a grade one learner in primary school. He sang in the school choir for a musical play. Subject Two however, was adamant that he volunteered to perform in the choir of his own free will and was not forced by any teacher to join the musical. His first music experience was therefore a positive one. The only negative experiences the subjects could recall from this stage was being forced by teachers or parents to participate in musicals or plays that did not appeal to them, or because the adults were too critical of their performances.

3.2.2.3 Beginning to take part in music in the high school phase

The subjects who were only able to participate in music at the high school level tried to convey that they felt music was already a part of their lives and that their experience of music was not any less meaningful than those who had had the benefit of prior learning.¹⁶ There seemed to be a greater deal of intrinsic motivation attached. Subject Nine said that he did not have an opportunity to play music before attending high school as his mother could not afford lessons and his particular primary school did not have instruments for the children to play. Subject Seven’s parents did not allow him to make music, but he had taken the opportunity of participating in music activities in high school.

3.2.3 The influences of the family

All subjects could attribute a preference for certain specific styles of music, and/or the instruments the subjects chose to play, to a parent or an adult family member. Their explanation for particular choices usually included a reference to a particular memory or shared experience that made an impression on the subjects’ views. The researcher shall briefly elaborate on this by using Subject One as an example:

Subject One: “My father loves jazz and Louis Armstrong the trumpet player and some kind of funny jazz music. I don’t know who it is... Abdullah

¹⁶ Subject Nine: “Music has always been inside me, music has always been a part of me from a young stage... I’ve always loved music.”

Ibrahim? Ja, he plays the piano. My father bought me a piano, for some odd reason and he put it at home... I was about nine, ten-ish... there was nothing to do with the piano, so we would just open it and mess around with it. My father said, 'One day when I'm sitting in a wheel chair, I'd like you to play me a piece of music...'"

Subject One stated that his father's love of piano music and African jazz had led Subject One to appreciate the music of Alicia Keyes and he had a firm desire to play the piano. He stated that no one else in the family played music, but they all had a firm love of music that he had found to be both inspirational and a source of support.

All the subjects received support and encouragement from their parents. Only Subjects Three and Seven did not have the complete approval of their parents. Subject Three's father wished that his son was more involved in sports and Subject Seven's mother felt that his involvement in music was against their religion.

The subjects described their parents' attitude towards their participation in music during the interviews. The subjects' descriptions of their parents' attitudes towards Music lessons and activities were as follows:

3.2.3.1 A parent's skepticism leads to support: Subject One

"My parents are actually very supportive, hey, that's one of the first things ever, you know... like the first time I showed my mom theory notes and the letter that came from [teacher's name omitted] saying that we were doing Music Theory, she was like 'And this is exactly what?' and I said Music Theory... we had a family meeting cos of Music Theory. She was very different about it at first... like... you're not doing this subject... and father was like Music Theory all the way."

Subject One's mother remained sceptical of her son taking Music Theory lessons, so he made a conscious effort to take his Music Theory to the kitchen table while his mother was reading her mail when she came home from work. She would take interest in his activities and gradually began to ask him questions about the work he was doing.

Subject One added that his relationship with his sisters was strained and that his involvement in Music seemed to make matters worse because they were jealous of the attention he got for performing. He said that this was an excellent form of retaliation for him. As no one in the family could read music notation, Subject One found that by doing his Music homework, when he wanted to separate himself from his family, worked perfectly. He said that he even took his Music workbook to relatives' homes to avoid having to talk to cousins whom he did not wish to spend time with.

3.2.3.2 A lack of communication: Subject Two

Subject Two never mentioned his father during the interview, and all comments about his mother seemed to suggest that they did not really communicate on the topic of his Music studies¹⁷. His brother lived in Pietermaritzburg, and his sister lived in Johannesburg, some distance from both him and his mother. Neither of the siblings was aware that Subject Two was musical. The only other family member who was aware that Subject Two took part in musical activities was one of his aunts. His other aunt and uncle and grandparents were all unaware that he took lessons in Music. He seemed to have no intention of letting his extended family know of his involvement in music.

3.2.3.3 Parents who required “balance”: Subjects Three and Six

Some parents believed that their sons needed to participate in sports, if they chose to participate in music activities or actively study Music, to ensure balance in their lives. Subject Three's father was particularly concerned that his son did not participate in sports. Some parents felt that sports ensured social acceptance and health benefits.

Subject Three: “...My dad would want me to do more sports. He wants balance and says, ‘You can do all the Music you want, but you’ve got to do sports as well. You’ve got to have exercise.’ ”

Subject Six said that his parents were very supportive. His grandparents were very pleased when he started to play the bagpipes and they asked him to perform for them before family

¹⁷ “She’s neutral, she said nothing bad, nothing good... makes me feel neutral... My mom just asked me how much and the next day she gave me the money... with no comments.”

dinners. He was however forced to take up swimming training in order to achieve balance with his music.

3.2.3.4 Parents who raised concerns of a religious nature : Subjects Six and Seven

Subject Six's mother seemed to feel that although her son's participation in music activities was a very necessary part of his development, the music industry did not uphold the moral values of Christianity in her opinion. Becoming a professional musician was therefore not a career option she would have considered for her son. Subject Seven, a Muslim, experienced support from his father and the reluctant permission of his mother. He said that he did not understand why his religion did not approve of performing music.

“My mom doesn't exactly agree with me doing music but she hasn't done anything to stop me. My dad is very open with it.”

3.2.3.5 Continuous, non-judgmental support

The remaining subjects stated that they received complete support from their parents. Subject Eight felt that his parent's support was vital to taking part in Music:

“My parents actually embrace me taking Music cos like I said my mother played piano and my father played guitar and they never had the chance to study Music so they wanted me to do something.”

Subject Nine described his mother's attitude towards his music participation:

“She's very supportive, because I remember the first time I brought my instrument home from the school band, I was playing outside and ah it was terrible and over time I kept coming back with my instrument at home practicing and she saw that I'm improving.”

3.2.4 Results of the parents' questionnaire

All the subjects' parents were provided with the option of completing a questionnaire, which formed an attachment to the letter of consent. The questionnaires for Subjects One, Two, Three, Five, Eight and Nine were returned completed. The questionnaire together with the specific responses has been included in the Appendix, on pages 143 to 145.

The results confirmed the subjects' claims of their parents' strong support. They were uncertain of the school's support for their children's participation in music activities and although there were mixed responses to the question on negative comments from people in the subjects' social sphere. There was a general agreement among the parents that the other students were probably the most negative towards their child's music participation. Subject Nine's mother was concerned about her son's allegations of negative comments from teachers at the school.

3.2.5 Cultural and religious influences

The school was traditionally a Christian school, but was willing to recognize and accommodate the religions of others. The school had a Christian club and did at one time have a Hindu Society, at the time of the research. Hymns were seldom sung at assembly and other music of a religious nature was not generally played at the school. Most learners said that religion did not significantly influence their choices in the music that they played, though some said that they felt that popular music did not promote the values that they and their families shared. These learners preferred listening to Western classical music or Christian rock groups. A few learners, some of whom were in the school instrumental ensemble, performed music in their churches or temples. Subject Seven was a practicing Muslim, and said that he was forbidden to perform or participate in music making. He did however begin to play an instrument in high school, but felt torn between his love of music and a sense of guilt at the thought of not adhering to the expected religious conduct.

Subject Seven: "... I'm a Muslim and in the Muslim culture, music is a big "no no," but my parents have been very supportive. Dad, as I said, used to play musical instruments. My mom doesn't exactly like it. It's not like she dislikes music, I think that she would rather that I didn't participate in music."

3.2.6 Cultural and ethnic influences on music choices

The school is a multicultural school. The students showed a great deal of respect for each other and racism was seldom an issue at the school. Both English and Zulu war cries were used by the learners to support their sports teams at inter-house and interschool events, and Zulu and Afrikaans were treated equally as second languages at the school. The Performing Arts Academy, choir and band had members of all cultures and ethnicities. The learners' social groups were also mixed. The fourteen learners who chose to study Music at the school were of the following ethnic groups:

| African | Caucasian | Coloured | Indian |
|---------|-----------|----------|--------|
| 6 | 6 | 1 | 1 |

In the discussions with the learners, they did not seem to feel that ethnicity influenced their choice in participating in music at school, but did believe that other learners allowed ethnicity to influence the ways in which they stereotyped Music learners.

A member of the school band raised the question of whether it was more difficult for white or black learners to be involved in music at school. In general, both black and white learners seemed to believe that those who were not involved in physical sports were more feminine, or even "homosexual". The African learners, who participated in music as an activity at school, said that white learners were more accepting of their interest in music than their fellow African learners. Subject One, an African learner, commented:

"It's more socially acceptable for white guys than blacks. Black guys - they actually mock you more and they actually... they think it's unmanly, un man-like to do music. White people, compared to African people have actually been quite understanding, they've actually understood, you know, and actually accept that you do it. But the black people, they just don't stop. It's, ag, gay all the way... they just don't stop."

3.3 Reasons given by subjects for taking part in music activities at school

Most of the subjects expressed an enjoyment of participation in music. Only two subjects (Subjects One and Nine) wished to pursue music as a career, while the others said that they would consider music as a career option or had already considered it, but found it financially unviable. Their reasons for participating in music were personal enjoyment, parental approval and recognition from external institutions or social groups to which they belonged outside the school. All eleven of the subjects interviewed were preparing for Music examinations with the Trinity School of Music at the time of the interviews. All of the subjects commented on the lack of encouragement they perceived to be coming from the school. The interviews were used to determine if the learners were influenced by extrinsic motivation at school, but it was discovered that the selected learners had a personal enjoyment of studying Music.

Additional reasons given by the subjects for taking part in music activities were as follows:

3.3.1 Studying Music to fulfill future aspirations

While Subjects One and Nine stated that Music would assist their career preparations, the other students said that studying Music at school would assist them in their personal enjoyment of music throughout their life. Some subjects reasoned that having grades in Music through external examinations was a positive attribute on their CV, irrespective of which career they intended to follow. Music participation, especially the successful completion of graded examinations through internationally recognized music institutions, was believed to show self-discipline, perseverance and a wider range of interests, which of course would be in the learner's favour.

3.3.2 Music as a pastime

Four of the subjects interviewed took private lessons in Music while the rest were provided with lessons at the school through the initiative of the Music teacher. All subjects expressed a desire to continue with music as a pastime, if not a career, in their adult life.

3.3.3 Learners taking Music lessons to avoid sports

The learners were asked if they experienced any benefits from participating in music at school. The results of the questionnaires and the interviews reveals that the general assumption at the school amongst the learners was that their peers who participated in music were neither physically fit, nor sporting and would try to avoid sports at any costs.¹⁸

This attitude was supported by the fact that Music Theory lessons took place during the Physical Education (PE) periods, due to lack of time during the school day. Although most subjects said that they did not mind taking part in Physical Education, they preferred not having to take part in these lessons. Subject One explained that missing Physical Education at school was considered a benefit. He explained that he enjoyed sport but that taking it at school was not enjoyable:

“When you do Physical Education at school, they drain you dry. I like Phys Ed and I miss it lots, especially since my class is now doing water polo. Phys Ed is quite nice, but Music Theory is better. It’s a beneficial way of spending an hour.”

He continued to state that if he had a choice, he would gladly take both Physical Education and Music Theory as school subjects. Most of those learners interviewed did not wish to avoid taking sports, although some said that they were relieved to miss Physical Education at school.

Subject Three: It’s [Music as a subject] for both things... because I like it and because I want to get out of PE, because I know that I’m not in top shape.”

Subject Five: “At our old school, you could either do PE or Music, so most of the guys did Music, because it was easier than PE, and then they started saying that you have to do both, and it was brilliant. You could play a game of golf, have a shower and listen to some music, or study Beethoven or something and it was brilliant. When I started, [at this school] I did not want to do PE because they would boss the guys

¹⁸ Subject Three: “They put it as if you don’t do sport, you’re just doing music because you’re lazy.”

around and make them do four hundred laps of something and Music is like a thing you can use later on and you can't use sport later on.”

A few (Subjects One, Two, Six and Eight) were involved in sports activities at private clubs, while Subjects Five, Seven, Nine and Ten, were involved in sports at the school itself. Only Subjects Three and Four did not participate in sports at home or at school.

3.3.4 Influence of teachers and friends

Subject Six said that he chose to study Music at school because he enjoyed lessons with the Music teacher. He joined the band because a fellow student “forced” him to come along in the beginning, after which he started to enjoy Music. When the interviewer asked him if there were any other things that influenced his choice of studying Music, such as missing Physical Education, he said: “Yes! But that was a bonus!”

3.4 Choices made by the subjects in music participation and enjoyment

3.4.1 Choices made in extramural activities at the school

The choices made in school music activities, by the subjects interviewed, were as follows:

| Band | Choir | Rock bands (When in existence) | Performing Arts Academy |
|---------------|-----------------------------|--|--------------------------------|
| Subject One | Subject Two | | Subject One |
| Subject Six | Subject Three | | Subject Two |
| Subject Seven | Subject Four | | Subject Eight |
| Subject Eight | Subject Five | | Subject Nine |
| Subject Nine | Subject Eleven (later quit) | | Subject Ten |
| Subject Ten | | | |

There were numerous factors that influenced the number of members of extramural activities that involved music. The situations of the band, choir and the Performing Arts Academy were discussed in chapter two.

Of the one thousand one hundred and eighty students at the school: twenty-one were band members, there were approximately thirty members of the choir (the number of members fluctuated) and thirty-three members of the performing arts academy. Most of those members of the Performing Arts Academy were also members of the choir and the band. Learners were not allowed to participate in both the band and the choir. The interviewer asked the learners to explain why music activities in the school were not popular among the learners at the school.

Subject One: “This school, they want us to do two extramural activities, and then drama and band doesn’t count.”¹⁹

Subject Five: “The principal and the deputy are very small minded about it, they don’t look at it from anyone else’s point of view. Some teachers do support this, while [teachers’ names omitted] support choir and band. The school just doesn’t take notice in it.”

¹⁹ According to numerous questionnaire responses and interview statements, this was announced at either one or many school assemblies.

3.4.2 Choices made in the instruments played

The choices made in the music instruments played by the selected subjects, has been tabulated as follows:

| Subject | Choice of Instrument | Acknowledged Influence of Choice |
|-----------------------|--|---|
| Subject One | Vocals | Parents |
| | Side and tenor drums | Friends in school band |
| Subject Two | Vocals | School choir |
| | Flute and piano | Own interest |
| Subject Three | Vocals, (quit guitar, piano and trumpet due to impatience) | Friends who are members of the choir |
| Subject Four | Vocals (quit piano due to shortage of time) | Friends and parents (especially his mother) |
| Subject Five | Vocals | Friends who are members of the choir |
| | Guitar | Father (father plays guitar) |
| Subject Six | Clarinet | Mother (uses father's instrument) |
| | Bagpipes | Music Teacher |
| Subject Seven | Trumpet (wishes to play French Horn, piano and guitar) | School band and father |
| Subject Eight | Guitar | Parents |
| | Piano and drums | School Band and Performing Arts Academy |
| Subject Nine | Tuba | School band |
| Subject Ten | Drum kit | Church |
| | Piano | Grandmother |
| | Guitar | Friends |
| Subject Eleven | Vocals and piano | Friends (for both) |

Various studies, for example Adler (2001) and Harrison (2003), offer compelling evidence that instruments imply a certain gender and that the gender implications of an instrument influence the choices learners will make when becoming involved in music. It was discovered that flute and violin, for example, were considered feminine and that brass and percussion, for example, were generally considered masculine.

The association of gender with musical instruments can, as can stereotyping of any kind, serve to constrict behaviour and thus the opportunities of individuals, Abeles & Porter (1978:65), in Harrison (2003:89).

In the interview with the older selected learners, Subjects Nine, Ten and Eleven the interviewer asked what they thought the most popular music instruments among male learners at school were. The researcher was surprised by their answers as it contradicted the information the researcher had read, namely Abeles and Porter (1978), Griswald and Chroback (1981) in Harrison (2003) which states that drums and trumpet are preferred by male students, while piano and voice are avoided. The older learners were interested in portraying their masculinity through what they considered to be instruments that would improve their image with the opposite gender. Despite the fact that Subject Ten was a drummer, he still did not think his instrument popular, and though these three learners generally projected a 'gangster image' promoted by the popular hip hop culture at school, they considered any instrument that could be used for serenading as popular.

This is a short excerpt of their conversation on the image that instruments played have on the person who plays them. They were trying to determine amongst themselves which instrument/s was/were the most popular for young men:

Subject Ten: "Guitar and piano, I don't think a trumpet... because you know..."

Subject Eleven: "When you play a piano, it's more romantic."

Subject Nine: "You can sing along."

Subject Eleven: "You can't sing and play drums to a chick [reference to girls] now."

The younger learners, Subjects Three, Four and Five were asked to explain which instruments were more popular and considered a good choice for social approval. Their answers were different to those of the older subjects, as they did not consider the use of instruments in impressing young women. The younger learners' preferences in music instruments were similar to those mentioned in the above studies (Harrison 2003). The following points were noted from their opinions on the subject of instruments and the image projected on the person who plays it:

- Percussion instruments were considered the most popular.²⁰

²⁰ Subject Three: Like for example, you're in the band, like the person playing the drums, there are more people wanting to do it.

Subject Four: From the outside, it looks like the person who plays the drums is the cool person.

- Any instrument that was perceived to be difficult to master was considered as an unpopular choice. The learners preferred conveying the image that they were naturally talented - rather than that they were well studied.²¹
- Any instrument that was not commonly seen in the media or public performances was considered unpopular to play.²² In fact, contrary to the popular notion that the instruments that male learners prefer are those that are generally louder and therefore considered more masculine,²³ the learners stated that this was not the case.

Subject Five: “[It is] more important that the instrument *is seen* than that the instrument is loud.”

- The learners explained that the instrument one played placed the performer within a social hierarchy.

Subject Three: “Like for example, you get the drums on the top, the trumpet, cos you see people playing it and enjoying it and then the woodwinds, you see it’s even harder to play, like the clarinet and all those thingies.”

- Family could influence the choice of instrument

Subject Eight said that his family influenced his choice in music and music instruments.

“Yes, I think that my family background because as I said, my father played guitar and my mother plays piano and they’re the people who influenced me and helping me try go further with my music.”

²¹ Subject Three: Like the trumpet. The harder it is to play, the less cooler it is. [...] From what the school sees, [Subject six] is the lowest of the low. [Subject six plays the clarinet.]

²² Subject Five: The guys who play the bagpipes are the lowest of the low. It gets worse depending on the foreign nationality of the instrument.

²³ ‘Soft gentle music is shunned and males avoid the instruments on which such music is performed,’ (Harrison 2003:124).

Subject Six was also forced to participate in music activities by a parent. Apparently, it was his mother's decision that he should play the clarinet once he had started playing the recorder.

“We had a clarinet, it was my dad's clarinet, he being able to play clarinet obviously... It was an easy choice. He occasionally complains that he hasn't heard me practicing.”

His sister was often forced to play the flute in front of strangers, but Subject Six was not regularly asked to perform for people. His mother was responsible for choosing the flute as his sister's instrument.

3.4.3 Choices in music listened to

The subjects were asked to discuss their favourite styles of music. This referred to the music that the learners listened to and would wish to perform. All learners were able to attribute their taste in music to a particular person or group. It was found that learners were greatly influenced by the taste of their parents or friends. Most of the learners seemed to have similar taste to that of their peers, although they admitted to enjoying styles of music that were not appreciated by their friends. Subjects remarked that the young male teachers also promoted popular music styles in classroom discussions, and did not think highly of other less popular styles of music.²⁴ The boys felt that this was to maintain a masculine image.

Learners who were involved in music activities had a wider range of music they enjoyed listening to than other students. They were asked whether their friends' opinions influenced their own choices in music and most of them agreed that their friends did influence their choice in music, but that they also listened to styles that their friends did not like and which they did not necessarily tell their friends about. Subject One said that he loved jazz, rhythm and blues, and opera music. When Subject One was asked what made him like opera, he said:

²⁴ Subject Three: “If the teachers would talk about music, the kids would think they're a bit of a poof. And if they do talk about music, it has to be rock.”

“I used to watch Luciano Pavorotti. My dad has two or three cds of his. It’s very powerful... you just sit there and really feel a part of what he’s saying, especially if it’s in English... when you understand it, you actually become part of the picture, it’s thrilling.”

When he was asked if his friends share his taste in music, he gave a resounding and repeated “NO!” Some of these people knew that he liked opera, but he stated that he did not tell them. He said that his friends might find out if they arrive at his house unexpectedly, because he usually had a pipeband, RnB or opera recording playing from his hi-fi. His friends usually asked him, “What you listening to this for?”

Subject Six was in a similar situation to that of Subject One as his music taste was not typical of his milieu. He said that his favourite type of music was classical music, which he enjoyed discussing with his Music teacher. His peers did not share his taste in music, but he stated that this did not bother him or influence his choices, as he did not spend any time with them after school.

The remainder of the learners who were interviewed shared a similar taste in music to their peers, but added less popular genres to their list of personal favourites. Subject Seven, for example, enjoyed popular music, rock, rave, chamber music and Celtic music. Subject Eight enjoyed pop, rock, popular music and “a few old songs.” He said that music had “always been a part of life [at home, throughout his childhood]” with his favourite artist as Billy Joel, a sentiment shared by his father. Subjects Seven and Eight were asked if the music taste of their friends would influence their choice in the music that they listen to. Subject Seven said that he would never hide his taste in music and if they disapproved of him:

“I’m a pretty strong willed person, so I wouldn’t let it affect me. But if they did display it in a, you know, more open way, then I suppose I’d retaliate accordingly.”

Subject Nine enjoyed listening to house music, “as I am one of the upcoming DJ’s. One of my friends has hooked me up with a job at the radio.” He said that his friends shared his taste in music. Subject Nine admitted that his friends had a great influence over him, but he still listened to music even if they did not like it. He mentioned that he also listened to music from the 1960’s with his uncle, and that his friends did not like this era of music.

3.4.4 Choosing music as a career

Two of the subjects expressed a desire to follow a career in music, notwithstanding that all eleven music learners were concerned for the future of the South African music industry.

Subjects Three, Four, Six, Seven and Eight said that their parents would be decidedly disappointed if they chose to pursue a career in music. Subjects One and Nine said that they wished to have a career in music. Subject One said that he would consider starting a music career in South Africa but hoped to move overseas if the South African music industry would not support him. He said that it was probably better to study something in the field of Biology or Accounting, although his heart was set on performing.

Subject Nine had a desire to become a producer or a DJ, but was concerned about the viability of these career options in South Africa.

“You can’t really rely on music you know. You’re the most popular person and then next minute you’re not.”

3.4.4.1 Concerns raised regarding careers in music

The subjects, their parents and fellow learners raised the following concerns:

- A lack of financial stability.²⁵

Subject Eight: “I don’t think I would suggest someone taking music. Not everyone who goes out there actually makes a living out there... only a few... and they get into it by luck. South Africa’s industry is a bit small and because we’ve got a bad history...”

- The perceived immorality of the music industry.
- The competitive nature of the music industry.

²⁵ This is especially influential as the financial support of a family has been the traditional social expectation of males in most cultures.

- Parents' disapproval or misgivings about a career in music.

Subject Six, on a career in music: "My parents for one wouldn't like that idea. I don't think they have a very high opinion of careers in music and I don't think music has a lot of money in it. We are in South Africa and that's what counts. Music is a very... it seems... competitive world and not particularly Christian... so that's something to look out for."

- The popularity of international artists prevents the rise of South African artists in our own country.

Subject Seven: "The majority of the population doesn't enjoy chamber music... they enjoy kwaito and RnB and things like that and for those sorts of things, international artists hit the records even in SA... so ja. I wouldn't say there's no place for our guys, just the place is very small and not many people first of all know about these things and second of all want to listen to these types of things."

- The need to leave South Africa in order to become popular in our own country.

Subject Eight: "Like Just Jinger [a popular band at the time], they weren't doing so well in SA, so they went over to America and they're a world renowned band now."

3.5 Chapter conclusion and summary

The subjects selected for this study provided reasons for the choices they made in music and acknowledged the influences of these decisions. Influences on the choices made included family, ethnicity, religion, issues of gender and career prospects, but a prominent and recurring factor was the influence of the school environment.

Learners who chose to study Music or participate in music activities generally did so because they were intrinsically motivated and/or had encouragement from family and friends. Learners who chose to quit music did so because they stated that they did not have sufficient

time, were otherwise occupied with sports and academics or did not believe that it was an activity that would be beneficial to gain recognition in the school.

The learners who studied Music tended to have very supportive parents who were able to encourage their children to continue in their interests. It would seem that these learners might not have had the psychosocial support necessary to defy the norms of the school, had their parents not provided them with encouragement during adolescence. They were able to provide approval when it appeared that the school did not.

Learners who chose to participate in sport had the approval and acceptance of the school, parents and peers. The opinions of peers did not seem to have a large impact on the learners who chose to participate in music, but seemed to be more important to learners who did not choose to participate in music. While the Music learners, in general, tended to feel that their parents' support for Music was sufficient encouragement to continue, the learners who did not take Music lessons at school seemed to be more concerned as to how their peers would respond to the extramural activities they had chosen and therefore chose the more popular activities or academic subjects. It is the researcher's inference that the support and encouragement of the subjects' parents has proven sufficient in motivating the subjects to continue being involved in music activities, either by the subjects making the choice to participate in music themselves or for their parents.

The learners did not appear to be very knowledgeable or even aware of the current strengths of the South African music industry, but mostly relied on the perceptions and judgments of their parents, who according to the questionnaire completed by the learners, are the main influence on the learners' subject choices at high school. The counselors, with whom career choices were discussed at school in Life Orientation classes, stated that most parents encouraged their children to enter careers in the fields of Science and Technology, and did not promote a career in music to the learners themselves. Other commonly popular careers were medicine, accounting, business studies or law. It is safe to assume that the main reasons for such choices were the desire for financial stability, greater career opportunities and social status. Erikson (1950) stated that it was his opinion that the human society only values behaviours that are competitive and subject to the laws of time, gravity, fate and causality, social reality and bodily drives. 'The adult is a commodity-producing and commodity-exchanging animal, whereas the child is only preparing himself to become one'

(Erikson 1950:186). Thus activities such as music making do not hold relevance, unless performed for competitive means or commercial gain.

The responses of the interviews revealed a widespread belief that South Africans were not as willing to support local performers and culture in comparison to other 'first world' countries. Some learners cited their Performing Arts Academy teacher as an example of a talented, hardworking actress who was not sufficiently rewarded for her efforts. They said that she did not earn the money that she deserved for the hours that she spent teaching in the day and performing in the evenings.

According to Erikson's theory (1950, 1968, 1980), choosing a career, in addition to determining one's sexual orientation, are the main crises of development in stage five, adolescence. The way in which both these crises are dealt with will have an effect on identity development at this stage. It is therefore important that parents or a knowledgeable and trusted adult assist in providing information and guidance in the choices that adolescents make. The interviews revealed evidence of a severe lack of consideration of the developing identities of the learners who attended the school. Not only was it difficult for the subjects to continue their enjoyment of music activities and involvement at the school, but the lack of advice in career choices in music and support in these choices also contribute to increasing concerns for identity development.

CHAPTER FOUR : NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES AND COPING MECHANISMS

This chapter documents the psychological difficulties experienced by the subjects who participated in music activities at the school, during the time of this study. All the selected subjects interviewed in this case study claimed that they were acutely aware that there was a stereotype for male adolescent learners who participated in or studied Music at the school. Evidence or reports of stereotyping and prejudice were also evident in both the learners' and the parents' questionnaire responses. The school's psychosocial environment, presented in chapter two, in which the selected subjects of this study made their choices in music participation, was an environment in which Music learners were generally compared to the more athletic learners – or learners perceived to be more athletic.

This chapter shows that the application of the ethos of muscular Christianity in educational institutions can, and does, have a negative effect on the learners who do not fulfil the requirements of the “ideal” male learner. Male adolescent learners who chose to take part in or study Music experienced stereotyping, prejudice, insinuations of “homosexuality” and verbal abuse by both peers and allegedly by some teachers.

4.1 Responses from the subjects regarding stereotyping at school

All subjects said that they experienced labelling at school, with the exception of Subject Ten who said that no one would dare to label him under threat of physical confrontation. The interviewer asked the subjects what sort of things people tended to label them as:

Subject One: “It depends on who’s stereotyping you, sometimes it’s boff²⁶, sometimes it’s gay, sometimes it’s retard, sometimes it’s like, ‘Ag, you need a life...’ But mainly, most of the time it’s: ‘Boff! How can you cope with all twelve subjects and an extra one?’ ”

²⁶ “Boff” is a slang term derived from the word ‘boffin,’ which was frequently used among the learners of the school. Although this term is considered a negative form of labelling, Subjects One and Two stated that this term was preferred above the other labels usually given to them.

Subject Two agreed that he had experienced stereotyping and name-calling. He said that he did not mind being called a “Boff” because it implied that he was more intelligent, but being called “Gay” was the most negative form of harassment.

4.1.1 Insinuations of “homosexuality”²⁷ in Music learners

The main tendency for the learners at school was to label the Music learners as being “homosexual”. It was apparent in the questionnaires and interviews that learners who participated in sporting activities were considered masculine and the participation in music rendered a learner as effeminate. When the interviewer asked the subjects if Music learners were stereotyped at school, Subject Seven replied:

“They do call the people [Music learners] ‘gay’ and a ‘homosexual sort of thing’ and they are frowned upon and I suppose many people take that to heart because, well, I wouldn’t succumb to that sort of thing... I wouldn’t allow it to affect me. I’m sure it hurts some people.”

Subject Three: “I got “gay,” even at my old school, even like all the way down to grade three because they have no word to like... there’s no word in the English dictionary to explain us [Music learners]. They can’t think of anything else [other than “homosexual”] to describe it.”

In order to determine what learners understood by the term ‘homosexual’, and why the term ‘homosexual’ was used to collectively label learners who did not participate in sports, the interviewer proposed the following statement: “A man could be homosexual and be a weight-lifter or a wrestler as an occupation.”

It was found that the learners battled to grasp this statement as a possible truth for any individual who participated in sports.²⁸ The statement aroused much debate among the subjects. The learners realised that the term “homosexual” was used at the school to

²⁷ There appeared to be a great deal of misunderstanding and misconceptions regarding the use of the terms “homosexual,” “gay” and “homosexuality” among the learners of the school. These terms were used to describe the learners who did not fit the status quo, with regards their curricular and extracurricular choices. These terms were not used to imply any form of sexuality or sexual preference but were used as a form of ostracising individuals/groups.

²⁸ The data strongly suggests that labels of homosexuality were intended as euphemisms of effeminacy rather than accusations of homosexual behaviour.

describe anyone who was not accepted by popular social groups. Due to the social hierarchies that existed among the learners at the school and their value of sports, the term “homosexual” was generally used to stereotype learners who did not participate in team sports.

In the interview with Subjects Seven and Eight, both learners laughed at the revelations of the misuse of the word “homosexual” among the learners. Subject Seven finally commented, “People are very narrow-minded in that sense!”

While Subject Eight remarked, “People find it [occupation and personal activities] as an excuse to stereotype. If you look at women weightlifters, most men would consider those women to be lesbian. They would rather picture her as a man in a relationship. To some people that [a male homosexual wrestler] would seem weird because they think that weight-lifting and rugby²⁹ is more of a manly type of sport, something to do with er... an imbalance with music.”

The interviewer asked the subjects to explain, in their opinion, what makes music so unmanly. The subjects were unable to think of a clear reason for this, but seemed to feel that it was nevertheless more feminine than rugby.

Subject Nine: “People just think that everybody that does Music... I used to get a lot of this back in the years... people would think he’s a fagg like everyone who does Drama, people would say he’s a fagg.”

The interviewer discussed the misconception of “homosexuality” being linked to musicality, with the subjects. The interviewer attempted to discover how the learners’ rationalization behind the connection made between being musical (having a certain talent) and being homosexual (having a certain sexual preference).

²⁹ The researcher found it interesting that Subject Eight referred to rugby while the interviewer had mentioned wrestling and weightlifting as a possible masculine ideal. Despite redressing the masculine ideal as a wrestler or a weightlifter, the subjects continued to place rugby players in the position of “the masculine ideal”.

Subject Five: “They’re too caught up in their own sports, they can’t even think for themselves to find out what a word [to describe males who participate in music] would be.”

Subject Four: “In other words, if you’re not like them, you’re gay.”

Interviewer: “Where do they get these insults from?”

Subject Three: “Parents, teachers and everyone who they hang out with. They don’t know what ‘gay’ means; they’ve just heard someone else say it. If they don’t like you, they call you gay.”

Subject five: “That’s basically the way of the world for being out of turn, odd... you immediately get given gay qualities.”

It was discovered that some boys were stereotyped as being “gay” while a small minority seemed to avoid any form of negative judgement for being involved in music activities. Learners who participated in both sports and music were generally not considered to be “homosexual”. Subjects were asked if personality types could cause someone to be picked on rather than simply because they took Music lessons at the school. The subjects agreed that personality was a contributing factor, but that any involvement in music could encourage other learners to stereotype the individual as effeminate.³⁰

4.1.2 The alleged use of “homosexual” labelling by teachers

The learners interviewed, especially the younger learners said that they felt rejected by their peers and some of their teachers. The learners tended to generalize that most of their

³⁰ Subject Seven: “I think Music assists people in building up opinions because I mean if... as we mentioned before... if guys who take music are seen as gay or feminine... um actually enforces [reinforces] these things.”

Subject Eight said that boys were judged according to both their music participation and their personality: “A balance between the two, because people’s personalities are different to other people and some people come from a very religious [conservative] background and some people have a very feminine background and that’s just... with a mixture of music, that’s an excuse to call someone something.”

teachers were disappointed in their choice to participate in music.³¹ Subject Nine said that he had only experienced stereotyping when one of his teachers, a person of authority at the school, called him a “fagg.”

The learners interviewed seemed to have grounds to suspect such prejudices on the part of a few young male teachers.³² These younger male teachers tended to use a similarity of interests between themselves and the learners to encourage a more informal teacher-learner relationship in the classroom. This however, made those who did not share the teacher’s interests, feel excluded, as they could not contribute to class discussions. Being ignored or sensing rejection from these young male teachers had a great impact on the adolescents who had other interests.³³

An email was sent to all the staff of the school (the researcher included) in the year of this study, it reads:

Good afternoon. Two weeks ago one of our gr 11 boys left the school because he was mocked and teased and some teachers allowed that and did not intervene. Please make sure boys feel accepted here if they are not the sporty type and please do not allow other boys to continue with the whole “you are gay” story! I met with the mom and this youngster this afternoon for two hours to try to persuade him to come back. Failed. Can we try and let that be the last one we lost! Thanks, [name omitted] (Dated: 2006/09/11)

³¹ Subject Seven: “Yes, I don’t think there were any comments made to me particularly but I think people in this school have had some experiences um with negative comments from teachers.” He continued, “I suppose music in this school is not exactly embraced in the kindest heart. You know, not a lot of attention is paid to that but you can expect that from a school where rugby is very staunch.”

³² Subject Five: Ja, [name of teacher omitted]. He’ll sort of say that you’re not really a man. Cos like if you do cultural stuff, you’re seen as a bit of a poofie. Cos like most of them [referring to the teachers] are muscle heads, who can’t really do it so they think that others are weird... they [the teachers] stereotype.”

³³ Subject Three: It’s like, they don’t speak to you, they just speak to people who listen to their music and their sort of things. Like you’re aren’t really worth it. Any cultural thing, you’re seen as less of a person.

Subject Five: It’s the other way around if you did sport and you got a low C in academics, you’re more acceptable. If you do good at music, you’re more like a chess person. [A chess player is viewed as a “nerd” at school. While musicians are viewed as being homosexual, chess players are seen as being awkward intellectuals.]

The Music learners tended to minimize or disbelieve praise that was given to them by some staff members but harboured the insults that they received from staff and peers on isolated occasions. It was also discovered throughout the interviews that the insults directed at particular learners who participated in music caused a sense of rejection that was assumed and shared by other Music learners who witnessed these incidents.

4.1.3 Peer insinuations of music participation linked to “homosexuality”

While the subjects generally experienced support and encouragement from their friends, they seemed to have experienced discrimination from their fellow students. Learners of the school who did not participate in music made the following comments in the questionnaire about Music and those who participated in music activities:

‘I think it’s just not write.’[sic]

‘Cultural activities are lame.’

‘Music is full of gay bobs / *izitubane*’ [sic]

‘It’s gay.’

‘I am a cool person, not a geek.’

Many questionnaires contained negative comments about learners who participated in cultural and or music activities. Most were references to “homosexuality”.

The interviewer asked the subjects to mention what names they were given by the other students, explain why they were being called those names and how it made them feel. Subject One immediately answered the question posed with an outburst of “Gay bob! That’s the reaction.” When the interviewer asked what this name meant, he explained that it means “homosexual”, and generally tended to be a term used by learners of Zulu origin in the school. In general, the other students tend to refer to those who study or participate in music as being “homosexual” or effeminate. Insults that referred to “homosexuality” were reported in every interview.³⁴

³⁴ Subject Five: “They [teachers and students] think you’re a poufter” [another term for an effeminate male].

Subject Eight agreed that the other students did not approve of his involvement in music.

“Some people do say that type of stuff... like music is just an excuse to bunk lessons, or ‘Oh that’s not right, that’s not right for a guy to do Music,’ and stuff like that.”

Subjects Nine and Ten were asked if they experienced any negative stereotyping because they are in the school band but they explained that the band members did not receive as much harassment since the standard of performance improved and more modern music was played. They said that the negative remarks they once received were now aimed at the school choir instead.³⁵ They were asked to explain why it was considered better to participate in the band than in the school choir. They tried to explain that singing was a feminine activity and did not seem at all manly because boys could sing better prior to puberty, and an adolescent who could sing was therefore considered under developed.

4.1.4 Reports of negative experiences allegedly involving teachers

Subject Nine claimed that he had experienced some negative reactions from two staff members while at the high school. When he was in grade eight, he once forgot his sports clothes at home and was therefore unable to participate in a Physical Education lesson. The teacher allegedly took Subject Nine to see a person of authority about this. Subject Nine claims that he was questioned as to his sporting activities and dedication to the school and according to his testimony, was told that he was a worthless learner because he did not participate in sport and only participated as a tuba player in the school band. One of the comments allegedly was: “You can shove your flute up your ass.”

Subject Nine later told his bandmaster about the incident. On reporting this to the Head of Music at the school, a query was submitted to a person of authority. The teachers claim that they were asked to take a light view of the incident.

The interviewer asked Subject Nine if he still experienced difficulties with these teachers:

³⁵ “It’s changed, it’s shifted to the choir guys... they’re faggs now.”

“Every now and then he does say I must do some sports, and I say, ‘Ja, don’t worry Mr [name omitted], I’ll do it.’ I think he wants me to do them both [band and sports], I’m not sure hey, because if he wants me to quit music, he better think again...”

On arriving late for school one day in the fourth term, which seemed to be a constant issue with Subject Nine, he was allegedly punished by being suspended from an important band performance, as opposed to the usual practice of administering a detention slip. According to Subject Nine, he was warned that if he arrived for the event, he would be in further trouble. The researcher asked the particular staff member about this incident in the presence of the headmaster, but he denied doing this, although other learners claimed to have witnessed the incident reported by Subject Nine.

Subject Nine seemed to have had the most trouble from an influential staff member in the sports department during his first years at the school. He seemed to feel embarrassed that he had felt intimidated by this man and wanted the interviewer to understand that he was no longer afraid of him because he had “become a man”.

“Mr [teacher’s name omitted] told us that we should play some Dutch music [sarcasm insinuated in remark] and stuff like that and he told me the same thing... that I should play sports and that band is for faggs ...”

4.2 Coping mechanisms

4.2.1 The subjects’ methods to avoid stereotyping and harassment

The subjects used a range of coping mechanisms to deal with the discrimination from other students. The subjects were asked to suggest how other Music learners could deal with being stereotyped or feelings of rejection. Subjects One and Two claimed that any negative comments should be regarded as signs of jealousy and that they generally focused on the belief that they were more intelligent than learners who were more athletic, thus relying on another stereotype for sense of comfort.

Subjects Three, Four and Five made suggestions that music activities should be referred to as “cultural sports” in order to avoid stereotyping. They believed that by changing the ways in which extramural activities were categorized, learners would receive less harassment from others.

The older learners were more cynical, claiming that nothing could be done to avoid or minimize the effects of stereotyping.³⁶ They said that the feelings of rejection should either be ignored or accepted, if the learner simply could not avoid it. The more mature subjects said that the only way to survive a hostile psychosocial environment was to remain confident in their own convictions. Learners who did not feel confident enough to ignore the criticism of their peers claimed that remaining secretive about their participation in music was the best option of those given. Most subjects said that their parents were their greatest source of motivation and support in their involvement in Music lessons and activities. It was clear that this support gave them the confidence to overcome the negative experiences they had had at school. The most negative comments generally seemed to come from fellow students.

4.3 Chapter conclusion and discussion

4.3.1 Stereotyping and prejudice: a necessity for group identity

The interviews made it abundantly clear that the subjects had suffered from negative psychosocial treatment as a result of their participation in the school’s music activities. They were aware that there was an ideal form of masculinity at the school and that they did not fulfil the criteria to achieve this ideal.

Stereotyping is a natural part of forming an ego identity according to Erikson’s theory (1950, 1968 and 1980). In order to define who they are, people sometimes need to contrast their ideal to who they are not. Adolescents are primarily concerned with making comparisons between themselves and those within their social environment. This is because they have to form their own ego identity within the bounds of occupational and sexual prototypes

³⁶ Subject Six said, “I don’t think there’s a blanket technique, as it were. People are going to pick on you anyway... if they see you as someone worth picking on they will... that’s life.” I asked him what he felt the criteria for picking on someone were, he stated, “I think it’s not sharing common interests... or not being particularly violent and picking on them.

presented to them by their society in the form of role models and the skills taught during childhood. This is the first time in the psychosocial development scheme in which an individual seeks approval from a group beyond their extended family and it is therefore a highly stressful task to gain and maintain acceptance within a new social group. The individual's identity becomes one with the group, and it is therefore necessary to protect the group's identity in order to protect one's own identity. A group that defines themselves as competitive, athletic and physically superior will not allow someone perceived to be weak or effeminate to enter that social group and possibly confuse the general community's perception of that group's identity.

A pro-machismo group may believe that they cannot afford to allow feminine displays to go unchecked. The victim of this situation may take one of three paths, they may assume the stereotyped identity allocated to them, conform to the group identity thus abandoning their own unique self, or they may rebel against the suggested norm despite difficulties.

Uncertain adolescents will be eager to gain affirmation from their peers and society by adhering to the ideologies held by their culture. Erikson (1968:132) warns that although young people may find solace in their group, they can become 'remarkably clannish, intolerant and cruel in their exclusion of others who are "different", in skin colour or cultural background, in tastes and gifts....' Adolescents therefore seem to wish to conform in order to escape rejection from society. It would seem that adolescents are therefore able to commit more harmful acts of prejudice and discrimination than at any other time in their upbringing.

Discrimination, according to Erikson (1968), may be both experienced and understood by the victim without verbalization. Erikson (1968:220) explains that society is able to project its ideologies without making any verbal or visual statements. It is therefore possible to sense rejection or approval by society without physical confrontation or explicit verbal communication. This is evident in the remarks made by Subject Seven.

"Some people do have these little issues that they um...ja...with people who take part in music. They think it is not manly to take part in music. They think it is not manly to take part in music and that sort of thing. It's just a vibe. I haven't had any bad comments from people. You can just sort of sense that someone doesn't exactly like what you're doing."

Not only will the individual use stereotyping in order to define their identity, but the social group will use prejudice in order to define its own identity as different to other groups. ‘The reflection of the prejudices of the dominant group in the mutual discrimination of subgroups is, of course, universal’ (Erikson 1950:107). Learners at school will therefore find a person or group who can be marked as “different” in order to distinguish themselves as dominant, and find meaning in themselves.

Males who choose Music as a subject or an activity that is considered as a “female” gendered activity will expose themselves as opposing the masculine norm, in this case the ethos of muscular Christianity, and in so doing become an easy target. This may be affected by the style of the music, personality of the musician and the instrument played.

[We have] an outlook characterized by prejudiced values and dogmatic divisions; here everything seems to be clearly delineated and compartmentalized and this by “nature”, wherefore it must stay forever the way it has always been. By thus relying on preconceived notions the prejudiced frame of mind creates a rigidity which can become uncomfortable; but it has the advantage of permitting the projection of everything that feels alien within one’s own heart on some vague enemy outside – a mechanism which makes for a certain limited stability and standardization, until a catastrophe endangers the whole brittle structure of preconceptions (Erikson 1950:372).

4.3.2 “Homosexuality” linked to music participation

The main form of verbal abuse at the school for Music learners rose from insinuations of “homosexuality”. The learners were unable to explain why Music learners were referred to as being “homosexual”, other than explain that it was a term that embodied their difference to the norm or ideal. The inference of the researcher is that the term “homosexuality” does not refer to a specific sexual orientation in the minds of the learners at the school.

One of the main categories of differentiation in life is gender. Children learn to categorize and value everything according to the gender attributed to it. The perception of the female gender is that it is weaker and more easily dominated than the male gender, which fears loss of power, failure and restriction. Historically, males have always referred to objects of possession as female, which leads them to use this as an insult for other males. Young boys

fear the female title most of all childhood insults, and therefore an activity considered to be feminine will be highly avoided in adolescence. 'The use of the term "sissy" with regard to music, musical styles and instruments is quite common' (Harrison 2003:88).

Boys and men who depart from dominant definitions of masculinity because they are gay, effeminate, or simply wimpish, are often subject to verbal abuse and discrimination, and are sometimes the target of violence... By fourth grade, homophobic insults such as calling another boy a 'fag' – are becoming common among boys, most of whom learn that this word is a way of expressing hostility before they know what its sexual meaning is (Connell 2002:6).

Music appeared to assume a feminine gender at the school, while sports were perceived as masculine. A music activity, it seems may appear feminine for a number of reasons. It is an activity that does not engage in reckless physical, possibly violent or dangerous actions but requires intellectual self-discipline and the expression of emotions. Practicing music is an indoor, and often a solitary activity that can, on achieving a level of skill, allow equal competition to take place between males and females with no need to distinguish between genders. Sports encourage boys to take part in teams that easily evolve into a social group because team sports promote a sense of loyalty and group solidarity through shared goals. Sport also requires gender divisions, as male teams are generally physically superior to female teams of the same age group, which is a fact that generates a sense of pride or even power for some young men. There are also few male role models for young boys who begin their involvement in music, but more male role models for those who take part in sport.

Children who pursue music into and beyond adolescence were found to be in possession of the kind of personal androgyny, which enables them to disregard socio-cultural expectations. They also possessed the necessary high motivation towards music, which allows them to continue regardless of social and personal cost, maintaining that creative people exhibit more of the characteristic traits of the opposite sex than is usually considered normal. Despite an erroneous association in popular culture, androgyny does not imply homosexuality (Harrison 2003:119).

In other words, male Music learners will have a tendency to be more feminine than those who do not participate in music, irrespective of their sexual orientation. Considering that stage five of Erikson's theory (adolescence) is a critical time in the determination of the

individual's sexuality, it can be stressful for young males to understand that having feminine tendencies does not make them homosexual. Self-acceptance is made more difficult for the adolescent male Music learner to cope with as they must also deal with the judgment, prejudice and stereotyping of their peers who have a heightened interest in their own sexual development, as well as the orientation of those within their age group. This stress is increased by the muscular Christian ethos of the school, which shuns any form of effeminacy in order to preserve the ideal of pro-machismo masculinity. The psychosocial environment of these Music learners does not support their psychological development, but rather hinders it.

4.3.3 Homophobia in South Africa

South Africa is 'a very homophobic society' according to Morrel (2001a:272), despite our constitution which establishes that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is legally not to be countenanced. Morrel (2001a:233) claims that homophobia has been used in the construction of male identities throughout the centuries 'through constant policing and the repudiation of versions of the subordinate and effeminate other'.

There are many definitions of masculinity in South Africa, but they do not earn equal status in our society. According to Sandra Swart (in Morrel 2001a:76), there are many dynamic hierarchies of masculinity, with some that are 'actively dishonoured (like homosexuality), some are exemplary (like sporting heroes) and some are socially marginalised (as in the case of ethnic groups).' This social problem is mirrored in the school's psychosocial environment, as there is a hierarchy according to which different groups are located.

The ideal or "hegemonic" masculinity is promoted in the media and social interactions but does not necessarily portray the majority of men who value this identity. This hegemonic masculinity is 'always constructed in contrast to subordinated femininities as well as various subordinated masculinities, such as homosexuality' (Connell, R. in Morrel 2001a:184). This form of hegemonic masculinity is considered Western, but according to Crispin Hemson's *Ukubekwezela or Ukuzithemba* (in Morrel 2001a:58), the traditional hegemonic masculinity of the African, particularly the Zulu culture, values 'physical prowess, courage and endurance.' The modern Zulu hegemonic masculinity is said to have built on this: 'the emerging masculinity draws strength from ... a political context in which career progression and financial security are now possible.'

Music learners are perceived as feminine or “homosexual” because music was not considered a highly physical or potentially violent activity, sportsmen are idealised in this country above musicians and learners tended to place a premium on career prospects on their perceptions and valuing of school subjects.

4.3.4 Coping with stereotyping and the label of “homosexuality”

The subjects interviewed had a variety of coping mechanisms to deal with the rejection of others in their school environment. All copying mechanisms suggested by the learners with the exception of supportive role models did not seem adequate in preventing emotional strain and feelings of rejection. Erikson’s theory (1950, 1968, 1980) explains that as adolescents, the ability to remain positive about an identity that may not conform to the expectations of the psychosocial environment will require the support of appropriate role models.

Defense that takes place when the ideals of the individual are challenged is by making associations with an appropriate role model to provide morale support. ‘Roles protect coherence in our personality and act as a defensive system’ (Erikson 1950: 31). This means of defense is positive as it does not infringe on the rights of others and can be beneficial to the individual if a worthy role model is chosen.

The Music learners of this case study had experienced a sense of rejection and discrimination. These negative experiences were fueled by the ethos of the school, with what appears to be little resistance from the staff and learners of the school.

CHAPTER FIVE : RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The interpretation of the data collected in this case study has led the researcher to conclude that there is a necessity for a change of paradigm at the school. It is the researcher's opinion that the school could easily offer enriching opportunities for music development for a larger number, if not all of its learners, based on the resources and social position of the school. Although the school currently offers music activities, it has become clear that these are not achieving their full potential due to a psychosocial environment that counters the promotion of music involvement by the learners. This hostile psychosocial environment is created through alleged teacher and learner discrimination and what seems to be a preference for the promotion of sports at the expense of music participation.

It would seem that a change of attitudes and social hierarchies maintained among the learners could easily create a psychosocial environment that would allow music and sports to flourish equally at the school.

5.1 The necessity for change

This case study indicates that the psychosocial environment of the school needs to be more supportive of music activities and those who participate in them. It is however difficult to bring about change in a social situation where the apparent sports mania appears to be popular yet remains destructive. A rigorous challenging of the assumptions and mind-sets that schools, such as the school, manifest will need to take place and the ethos of muscular Christianity will need to give way to more appropriate educational values.

The emphasis of physical strength being the foundation of moral character, and the aversion of all things feminine, lead one to question the value of muscular Christianity in modern education systems. The ideology of muscular Christianity has been criticised as it encouraged '...a deeper belief in the class system and in the bourgeois hegemony' (Allen 1994:120) and created men with 'well-developed bodies... and underdeveloped hearts' (Foster 1936:5). It places homosexuality and femininity as the antagonist of morality, and breeds intolerance among our young men. The only value that muscular Christianity could

have in a modern society is if it is used to encourage a healthy lifestyle and combat the pandemic of obesity in Western Societies.

5.2 Recommendations for change

The following recommendations for change have been made by the researcher and based on the data collected from the interviews and questionnaires conducted in this study. The recommendations are made in consideration of insights gained from the psychosocial theory and works of Erikson (1950, 1968 and 1980).

5.2.1 Support from learners and teachers

Social acceptance is important in the making of decisions. The general support of teachers and learners is of great importance to the individual learners of any school. An interpretation of Erikson's theory (1950, 1968 and 1980) highlights the necessity for providing learners with positive role models and a supportive psychosocial environment. Erikson (1950:368) states that 'No ego can develop outside of social process, which offers workable prototypes and roles...'

The well being of the individual's ego-identity is placed in jeopardy if that individual's socio-cultural sphere does not accept the decisions that the individual makes in staying true to his or her character. Four important aspects of Erikson's theory were raised in chapter one³⁷ and are of relevance in the motivation of providing meaningful support and acceptance: The individual cannot develop their identity in isolation of his or her socio-cultural environment (Erikson 1950:368). The individual and society communicate on an ego-level and are therefore able to influence each other on a sub conscious level (Erikson 1968:208). The internalised ideologies, values and expectations of society can affect the decisions made by the individual (Erikson 1950:32). And, lastly, members of a social group regulate the choices made by its members in order to defend the group identity (Erikson 1968:234).

The Music learners interviewed claimed that they found it difficult to feel socially accepted at school. Their claims and allegations of verbal abuse, a general perceived sense of

³⁷ See chapter one, page 12

rejection and prejudice experienced at school were related in chapter four of this dissertation. The general opinion of learners (as reflected in the questionnaires) was that the interests of the teachers swayed the general level of acceptance from the school at large. A shortage of teachers who openly displayed an interest in music in comparison to those who readily shared their passion for sport made the learners think that music was of less importance to the school.

The approval and support of teachers and peers was a very important source of motivation for the learners. The learners suggested in the interviews and questionnaires that in order to improve the image of music and cultural activities in the school, teachers and learners would have to become more positive towards those who are involved.

Learners made the following suggestions in their questionnaire:

Grade nine learner: 'Pay more attention and give more time available for it.'

Grade nine learner: 'Maybe get more teachers involved and to help in the activities.'

Grade nine learner: 'The headmaster must influence it on our school...'

Grade eight learner: 'Make the headmaster support the activity.'

Grade eight learner: 'No more mocking of the Performance Arts Academy and to treat cultural boys as equally as a rugby player. More funds for cultural activities.'

Grade eleven learner: 'Encourage boys to do cultural activities.'

The learners interviewed stated that though they received support from some members of staff, they believed that the situation could improve. They said that the encouragement from staff and their peers would make their participation in music more enjoyable and recognition of achievements would give them more satisfaction. The learners who completed the questionnaire mentioned the need for visible support from the teachers as well as a change of attitude towards music and cultural activities at the school.³⁸

³⁸ Grade nine learners made the following comments:

"To take it as serious as you take rugby cricket, etc."

"This is because you don't realise the importance [of cultural activities] because not that popular at [name of school omitted]."

A grade eleven learner who referred to himself as “sportsman” stated: ‘I think things like drama should be taken seriously because I know that drama actors here in [name of school omitted] are talented.’

5.2.2 Music established as a recognized subject

The Music learners suggested that Music as a subject should be given equal status to other subjects at the school and offered as an option in the FET subject packages presented to learners at the end of grade nine. This would then present music as a recognized career³⁹ option.

Offering Music as a recognized academic subject with equal status to the other subjects offered in the school curriculum would need careful planning and could pose some difficulties for the school. The proposed syllabus for Music as stipulated by the Department of Education is rather extensive and would require learners to be taught subject matter in the areas of Music Theory, Practical, General Knowledge and Aural. This would require far more time allocation than the school was willing to make available for Music lessons at the time of the study: one period of 50 minutes in every two-week cycle. It is however fortunate that the Department of Education accepts the results of external examination institutions of Music, which could then be converted to form the learner’s Matric result for Music. This would mean that the school would only have to offer Music Theory and Music Practical lessons. This would require less time than the syllabus proposed by the Department of Education, but would still require the school to allocate time for Music Practical lessons each week.

Another difficulty that Music as a subject presents is that in the provision of lessons for Music Practical, individual attention is needed in the instrument chosen by the learners. This may require more teachers specialized in the instruments of choice and it will certainly

³⁹ Subject Seven said: “Music should be given an equal status with other subjects like Business Economics... and if it is, more emphasis will be placed on it. It is a subject, but more emphasis should be placed on it as well as an equal with every other subject.”

Subject Nine had a similar response to that of Subject Seven. “I think they should treat it like other subjects, you know at school, cos I’m sure a lot of guys would like to take music and make it available as a seventh subject... advertise it on our school packages... they should start in grade eight.

require the allocation or building of one or more sound proofed music rooms. Instruments would need to be purchased and stored in a secure room. This would require the allocation of funds to Music, which may not be considered beneficial to the school at large, as Music as a subject cannot cater for large groups, due to the need for individual instruction.

If however, Music were introduced as a recognized academic subject rather than the status it held at the time of the study as an academic activity that takes place in free periods on the school premises, it may claim more respect from the school at large.

It is the Music teacher's responsibility to present Music as a viable career option and a beneficial field of study. Music teachers should advise learners of the variety of career options in the music and entertainment industry, in commercial and educational fields. Most learners were unaware of what career options are available for those who study Music and had a very negative view of the South African music industry. The learners had also been encouraged to follow careers that could offer a higher income. Erikson (1950) stated that it was his opinion that the human society only values behaviours that are competitive and subject to the laws of time, gravity, fate and causality, social reality and bodily drives. 'The adult is a commodity-producing and commodity-exchanging animal, whereas the child is only preparing himself to become one' (Erikson 1950:186). Thus activities such as music making do not hold relevance, unless performed for competitive means or commercial gain.

5.2.3 Recommendations for the improvement of music activities offered at the school

The Music learners and the learners at large made various suggestions, in the interviews and questionnaires respectively, for the improvement of music activities that were offered at the school during the time of the study. The Music learners suggested that the school should show that these activities are valued by encouraging more performances by learners and by providing more funds for the improvement of equipment and resources.

Subject Nine offered a variety of suggestions:

"We should expect more commitment from the kids. All the people who play music should be given more opportunities to play in front of the school. The teachers should know more about music, and they should encourage local

musicians to come. Get youngsters to take part in music. Offer a variety of instruments and have more people because I'm sure there are a lot of guys wanting to take part in band but then they get chased away because we don't have enough instruments..."

Five main points were consistently raised in the data collected:

- The equal recognition of participation and achievements attained by the learners in all activities offered by the school.
- Fairness in the allocation of bursaries, funds and resources for all extramural activities.

The learners voiced strong opinions in the questionnaires regarding the allocation of funds to various activities. They felt that funds were not allocated fairly because they had noticed that certain extramural activities were able to host more extravagant events, had better equipment, resources and appeared to be given preference when applying for transport assistance from the school. Some learners stated that the visible favouritism in the division of funds influenced their choice in extramural activities. Learners said that they preferred participating in an extramural activity that appeared to be valued by the school.⁴⁰

- Freedom of choice in the attendance of sports and cultural events hosted by the school.

The learners indicated that the compulsory attendance of rugby fixtures hosted by the school made them feel that rugby was the most valued extramural activity. The learners who played rugby enjoyed the recognition that this offered, but those who had an interest in other activities offered by the school seemed to feel that this was unfair. In order to create a balance in the events attended, more music events would have to be hosted and supported by the school.

⁴⁰ A grade eight learner: "More emphasis by people higher up should be placed on cultural activities and more funds provided. By doing this people would be more aware and take part in these activities."

Subject Nine: "[Name of the school omitted] doesn't invest a lot of time and money on music so I think they must if they make people realize that music is the way to go, like rugby, there would be a whole lot of musicians coming from our school."

Members of the choir and the band agreed that they should be allowed to perform more often. They wanted to have more event times open for these groups with available transport from the school.⁴¹ Sports teams were unfortunately given precedence over cultural groups in the provision of transportation at the time of the study.

Subject Nine suggested that the school should follow the example of neighbouring schools, by promoting the attendance of all extramural activities according to the learners' interests.⁴² Learners would have to sign in or receive a stamp as a proof of attendance at each extramural event attended until a total predetermined by the school had been achieved.

- The opportunity to participate and perform in both sports and music activities without jeopardizing the position a learner may hold on his sports team.

Some learners who were not involved in music activities made the following comments in the questionnaire:

'I would say that everyone in the school should do both cultural activities and sport.'

'I would make it compulsory for at least each pupil to do one cultural activity, if not sport.'

'Make it easier for sporting people to get involved [in music].'

- The introduction of more modern genres of music at the school.

A wider range of music activities should be provided at schools. These activities should include more contemporary, or what the learners would consider more "relevant", genres of music. More modern music genres needed be represented in the music sung and played at the school at the time of the study.⁴³ The inclusion of modern popular genres in music activities was being initiated by the Performing Art Academy at the time of the study, but did not appear to be known by the general student body of the school. This may have been

⁴¹ Subject Four: "But there are not enough cultural events because the sports take up so much time."

⁴² Subject Nine: "They should give you a choice to go attend stuff. You don't have to go to rugby compulsories every time. They [should] say, go watch nine activities here at school, signing and stuff. They do that at other schools so they develop the other sports and cultural activities...um... and so I think they should actually consider doing that and actually encourage people to take part in cultural activities."

⁴³ Grade nine learners:

"Get more activities"

"Modern activities like hip hop and break dancing and pay more attention to it."

"You should include rapping and break dancing and stuff."

because the members of the Performing Arts Academy tended to perform in public, but had not performed for the entire school body during 2006.

Subjects Three, Four and Five were members of the school choir. They enjoyed the repertoire of songs offered, particularly "Old Man River." They said that most of the choir members enjoyed the songs, and could not think of any other songs that they would like to include into their repertoire, although they admitted that their repertoire had been the same for a number of years.⁴⁴ This complaint was being addressed at the end of the data collection and observation period.

5.3 Initiatives suggested by the school to improve music

The headmaster and members of staff had intentions of improving music activities at the school, but were reluctant to invest more funds. At the end of the observation and data collection period, options of improving the school choir were being discussed.

The headmaster planned to improve the choir by making it compulsory for the first team rugby to sing in the choir. It would be interesting to see how this initiative will influence the image of the choir. The existing choir members felt that this proposal undermined the necessity of having a good voice, and did not want to be dominated by the rugby team in their activity. This decision confirmed the claims of the learners that the rugby team was perceived to be the more dominant social group in the school by both staff and learners. It reaffirms the school's ethos of muscular Christianity, in that the rugby team's influence was viewed as being able to improve the choir's situation. The rugby team's ability to sing had been ignored, as they were valued for their loyalty to the school ethos and their perceived masculinity.

An attempt was made to introduce rock bands at the school, but despite the initial eagerness of the learners, the activity failed. It appeared that by bringing rock into the school would

⁴⁴ Subject Three: "Cos we're singing songs, okay, I have no problem with it, but you're not singing rock songs or anything. The people of today aren't listening to it. I enjoy it, I like it. You can tell when the choir enjoys a song. It's lively. It's got real feeling with it..."

undermine a vital quality or function of the music for the learners. The musical learners, who wanted to play music of popular genres, tended to feel more confident playing on their own at home, or with friends. Performing for the school seemed to ruin the rebellious nature of their music making, institutionalised their music and involved a need to improve, or even practice to avoid public scrutiny. It is the researcher's inference that these activities could prove successful if careful planning takes into consideration how the activities are presented and who is presenting it. Care should also be taken in the way in which these activities are presented to avoid gender discrimination or any forms of stereotyping.

The Performing Arts Academy is an excellent initiative by the school to encourage the development of Music and the Arts. Although the academy was still in the process of development, it should improve the status of music at the school in time.

5.4 Final conclusion

The social environment of male adolescent learners influences their choices in their participation in music activities. In particular, the school environment, which embodies social ideals, influences the choices made by learners of the school. Erikson's theory (1950, 1968, 1980) provides an explanation for the extent to which humans are influenced by their socio-cultural environment, and even states that humans will form their identity under the influence of society's norms, values and ideals. Stage five of Erikson's theory is the most important for identity development, placing adolescents in a very vulnerable position during this time. It is during stage five that adolescents measure their worth and form their identity on the perception of what they believe their peers and social community think of them. The effect of society is so great that the adolescent male will even resort to punishing himself for any deviations, whether society has shown any form of condemnation or not. Although the opinions and guidance of parents and the extended family remain significant in identity development, the main form of influence will be the adolescents' peers and social sphere.

This case study has shown that the school can and does influence the choices made in music by the learners who attend the institution and that a change in its ethos will be necessary to improve the situation, which was prevalent at the time of the study.

Learners at the school spent an average of thirty-five hours at school involved in academic work, and approximately four to six hours involved in extramural activities per week. This

did not include weekend activities such as competitive events and excursions. It can be argued that a learner spends more of their waking hours under the guidance of the school than their family. This places an enormous responsibility on the school. The school is therefore responsible for creating an educational environment that will nurture the positive development of all learners. Social and moral values are either maintained or introduced to the learners (in the event that the family may have instilled other beliefs and values) and certain behaviours will be promoted by the school ethos.

The school's ethos promoted the values that were perceived to be traditionally British. Learners of the school appeared to be encouraged to conform to the ideals of Victorian hegemonic masculinity or what British writers referred to as "muscular Christianity." This has been proven to be typical of most male single sex high schools of KwaZulu-Natal.

The adherence to an ethos of muscular Christianity in the education of adolescent boys may be implemented with rightful intentions, but its methods may result in the psychological damage of these learners. Modern education systems must consider the reasons for the conception of such an ideology. Muscular Christianity is said to have become popular in the Victorian era due to religious, social and political reasons. It was incorporated into the policies of the British public schooling system because it was believed that it would improve the nation's health, advance imperialism and satisfy both political and social unrest of the time. There had been concerns at the time that the Christian Church had become effeminate - muscular Christianity therefore had the added benefit of acting as an "antidote to the poison of effeminacy" (Newsome 1961:207) and prevention of homosexuality in young men. These factors led to the growth, development and diffusion of muscular Christianity throughout the education system of white, upper middle class English males in the mid-to-late Nineteenth century Victorian England. There needs to be a paradigm shift in male single sex high schools in KwaZulu-Natal if we wish to avoid the harmful effects that this has on learners who do not or cannot conform to the ideals of these schools.

The purpose of promoting a muscular and invincible sense of masculinity in colonial Natal was to ensure survival of the British colonialists. We need to ask ourselves if this ideal is still necessary in the twenty first century? Do our young men need physical prowess in order to earn financial stability and success in life? And should this be at the expense of their sense of self worth? One could even begin to question what the value of single sex education in the twenty-first century is.

Adolescent males need the school environment to support and guide them to achieve the optimum sense of identity. And should they be musically talented, the school should provide them with equal recognition and support. The Music learners' parents have proved to be a valuable support for their sons, but they generally advised their sons not to pursue the study of Music on a tertiary level. Careers in music were avoided due to the poor image of the South African music industry.

This study has unequivocally shown that the social expectations of male adolescents in the school did not create a suitable environment for the education and participation of music. Learners were discouraged from participating in music due to insinuations of "homosexuality", inequality of treatment and intolerance of difference.

6 SOURCES

6.1 Primary sources

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Interview with subject six, 7 November 2006, Durban

Interview with subjects seven and eight, 8 November 2006, Durban

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6.3 Electronic Sources

The School Website, last accessed 30 November 2007

APPENDIX

A1 KEY TERMS AND CONCEPTS

In order to provide a clear explanation of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development, the use and intentions of the following key terms will need to be understood:

Adolescence: The period during puberty when identity formation takes place. This is stage 5 of Erikson's scheme.

Autonomy: Independence from others within the individual's social sphere. Autonomy is achieved in stage 2 of Erikson's psychosocial development theory if the individual is able to maintain self-control over natural impulses and bodily functions, thus avoiding shame and doubt.

Crisis or Developmental Crisis: Erikson states that the term 'crisis' indicates a turning point, or critical period of increased potential and vulnerability, rather than a moment of chaos. Developmental crises are inherent in the life cycle and are said to have both positive and negative effects. If the individual is able to deal with the challenge presented by the crisis in a successful way, their ego-identity will follow a healthy formation progression with increased capacities. However, the failure to overcome conflicts may result in life long psychological problems or the formation of a negative identity.

Critical Periods: The term used to describe each one of Erikson's eight stages of psychosocial development, as each stage presents the emergence of a part of the individual's ego-identity with its accompanying crisis.

Culture: A lifestyle or social grouping in which people share common forms of communication and similar values, beliefs, ideologies, artistic expressions, and patterns of social and interpersonal relations.

Epigenesis: The life cycle consists of stages that overlap and influence each other; the eight stages of Erikson's psychosocial theory are therefore said to follow an epigenetic sequence. This implies an interaction and interdependence of stages. Epigenesis means that although potentials and crises appear prominently at certain stages, they will occur and reappear throughout the life cycle.

Epigenetic Principle: The epigenetic principle was derived from the combination of “epi” (meaning upon) and genesis (emergence). Erikson felt that this term encompassed ‘the embryological model of the uterine growth of organisms’ (Roazen 1976:107). In other words, the ego-identity emerges according to a predetermined growth plan that is innate in the human race. The growth plan consists of stages that are interrelated and contribute to the achievement of future stages.

Identity: ‘[T]he perception of the self-sameness and continuity of one’s existence in time and space and the perception of the fact that others recognize one’s sameness and continuity’ (Erikson 1968:50). In other words, identity is a combination of what is within us, our past experiences and what society expects from us. This definition is important because it emphasizes the contributions that the individual and society make to the formation of one’s identity throughout the human lifecycle. Identity is also referred to as the ego-identity, or the psychosocial identity in Erikson’s work in order to convey the relationship between the ego and society in the formation of the identity.

Industry: An eagerness to undertake various challenging tasks in order to practice skills necessary for functioning in society. Children must explore their sense of industry in order to avoid feelings of inferiority (Stage 4 of Erikson’s theory)

Moratorium: ‘[A] socially sanctioned period in which the adolescent can be allowed to flounder and explore before settling on a more permanent identity, a time of extended play and experiment between childhood and adulthood’ (Welchman 2000:54)

Pseudo-speciation: Humans have a need to form social groups to reaffirm their identities. Pseudo-speciation occurs when the group identity provides its members with a sense that the group ‘represents the sole fulfillment of human possibilities’ causing its members to act ‘as if they were separate species created at the beginning of time by supernatural intent’ (Roazen 1976:160).

Psychosexual development: The process of progressive differentiation during which the expression of a general drive is shaped as a result of the interaction of a biologically programmed timetable of development with the way a child is handled by those who nurture him (Stevens 1983:16).

Role diffusion: The inability to form a clear sense of self from the identifications gathered in childhood during identity formation in adolescence. This is regarded as the failure to achieve a sense of identity in stage 5 of Erikson's scheme. Many works on Erikson refer to role diffusion as role confusion.

Stage: A period during which the individual experiences a growth-specific conflict that will force him or her to master new potentials and therefore develop an increasing range of psychosocial capacities. Stages occur in a predetermined sequence according to the epigenetic principle. They may overlap, or vary due to cultural influences.

A2 TABLES

TABLE ONE

| Stage | Psychosocial Crisis | Radius of Significant Relations | Related Elements of Social Order | Psychosocial Modalities | Psychosexual Stages |
|-------|---|---|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| I | Trust vs Mistrust | Maternal Person | Cosmic Order | To get to give in return | Oral-respiratory, Sensory-Kinesthetic (Incorporative modes) |
| II | Autonomy vs. Shame, Doubt | Parental Person | Law & Order | To hold on or to let go | Anal-Urethral, Muscular (Retentive-Eliminative) |
| III | Initiative vs. Guilt | Basic Family | Ideal Prototypes | To make (going after) or to "make like"(playing) | Infantile-Genital, Locomotor (Intrusive, Inclusive) |
| IV | Industry vs. Inferiority | Neighbourhood, school | Technological Elements | To make things (completing) or make things together | "Latency" |
| V | Identity vs. Role Confusion | Peer Groups, Models of Leadership | Ideological Perspectives | To be oneself & share being oneself | Puberty |
| VI | Intimacy vs. Isolation | Partners in Friendship, sex, competition, Cooperation | Patterns of Cooperation & Competition | To lose & find oneself in another | Genitality |
| VII | Generativity vs. Self-Absorption | Divided labour & shared household | Currents of Education & Tradition | To make be or to take care of | |
| VIII | Integrity vs. Despair | Mankind | Wisdom | To be through having been or to face not being | |

ERIKSON'S WORKSHEET FOR DEVELOPMENTAL PHASES

Reprinted with permission from E.H. Erikson, "Identity and the Life Cycle: Selected Papers," *Psychological Issues* (Monograph), New York, International Universities Press, 1959, In Maier, H.W. 1965. *Three Theories of Childhood Development: The Contributions of Erik H. Erikson, Jean Piaget, and Robert R. Sears, and Their Applications*. Harper & Row: A Harper International Student Reprint

| | | | | | | | | |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| Maturity | | | | | | | | Ego integrity vs. Despair |
| Adulthood | | | | | | | Generativity vs. Stagnation | |
| Young Adulthood | | | | | | Intimacy vs. Isolation | | |
| Puberty & Adolescence | | | | | Identity vs. Role Confusion | | | |
| Latency | | | | Industry vs. Inferiority | | | | |
| Locomotor-Genital | | | Initiative vs. Guilt | | | | | |
| Muscular-Anal | | Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt | | | | | | |
| Oral Sensory | Basic Trust vs. Mistrust | | | | | | | |
| Stages | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |

TABLE TWO : THE LIFE CYCLE

(From Erikson 1965:264) *Childhood and Society* (originally published in 1950)

| | | | | | | | | |
|--------|---|---------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|--|--|--|
| VIII | | | | | | | | Ego integrity vs. Despair |
| VII | | | | | | | Generativity vs. Stagnation | |
| VI | | | | | | Intimacy vs. Isolation | | |
| V | Temporal Perspective vs. Time Confusion | Self-certainty vs. Self-consciousness | Role Experimentation vs. Role fixation | Apprenticeship vs. Work paralysis | Identity vs. Role Confusion | Sexual Polarisation vs. Bisexual Confusion | Leadership/ Followership vs. Authority Confusion | Ideological Commitment vs. Confusion of Values |
| IV | | | | Industry vs. Inferiority | Task identification vs. Sense of futility | | | |
| III | | | Initiative vs. Guilt | | Anticipation of role vs. Role inhibition | | | |
| II | | Autonomy vs. Shame and Doubt | | | Will to be oneself vs. Self-doubt | | | |
| I | Basic Trust vs. Mistrust | | | | Mutual recognition vs. Autistic isolation | | | |
| Stages | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 |

TABLE THREE : THE LIFE CYCLE 2

(From Erikson 1968: 94) *Identity Youth and Crisis*

A3 THE VALUE OF ERIKSON'S PSYCHOSOCIAL DEVELOPMENT THEORY IN CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY: ISSUES OF CRITICISM AND DEBATE

1 Introduction

As with any theory, there are those who support or criticize it. Erikson's theory was received with both praise and skepticism, though the general reaction to his ideas has been positive. Despite the value of Erikson's psychosocial theory, we must always remain critical of its imperfections. Some writers have commented that Erikson's work was 'often met with uncritical acceptance, among social scientists as well as the general reading public' (Roazen 1976:viii). Kovel (1988:68) insists that the world has treated Erikson as a "sacred cow" because they accepted Erikson's theory without critical evaluation. In this essay, the researcher shall present the issues that have been raised by a selection of writers over the past thirty years, regarding Erikson's work and his psychosocial development cycle in particular. The researcher's intention is to provide an objective view of the value of Erikson's psychosocial development theory while remaining conscious of its flaws. The main issues raised in criticism of Erikson's work follow a brief discussion of Erikson's psychosocial theory. The researcher concludes this essay by examining the necessity for understanding psychosocial theory in contemporary society, which was Erikson's intention for his work.

2 Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development

2.1 Erikson's Contribution to Understanding Psychosocial Development

Erikson's stages of psychosocial development is considered to be his most original contribution and 'is generally acknowledged as one of the most influential (theories) in the twentieth century.' (Welchman 2000:127) He has had two major influences on developmental psychology namely, the broad influence of developmental concepts of

identity and crisis and the specific stimulation of the eight stages of the life cycle, which shall be discussed in more detail.

Erikson's theory of psychosocial development in the life cycle became highly influential and popular in the field of education because it provided an understanding of human behaviours. He therefore provided substantial explanations of the theory in his following works: *Childhood and Society* (1950), *Identity and the Life Cycle* (1959 and 1980), *Insight and Responsibility* (1964) and his contribution to *The Humanist Frame* (1961).

2.2 The Theory's Objective: Understanding Human Identity

The main purpose for the development of the psychosocial growth scheme was to provide a subjective and objective understanding of human development, the central importance being the developing self, and how to maintain consistency and continuity in the formation of an identity. Erikson's concept of "identity" consists of four primary aspects: a conscious sense of individual identity; an unconscious striving for a continuity of personal character; ego synthesis and an inner solidarity with a group's ideals and identity. In simpler terms, individuals are generally aware of the existence of their "inner self" (their ego identity) and will attempt to act in accordance with what resonates with that inner self. They are thus able to maintain a consistent set of characteristics, despite the conflicts that occur within the life cycle.

The concept of identity is rather complex and therefore difficult to convey in a single definition but Erikson was able to create a definition that suited his needs. The definition that Erikson provides of identity is the configuration of selected self-representations and identifications derived from psychosocial crises of childhood under the influence of the ideals and aspirations of their social group and roles provided by that group. Identity is also the criterion by which selection and integration are made for the unconscious functions of ego synthesis and the individual's persistent striving for continuity and sameness of experience. In addition to this, it functions as a safeguard against the id, the natural impulses, and the superego or the conscience. The ego-identity is constantly being developed during childhood before emerging in adolescence. It is then adjusted throughout adulthood. The development of the ego takes place according to the epigenetic principle of the eight stages of psychosocial development.

2.3 The “Eight Ages of Man” according to the Epigenetic Principle

The “eight ages of man,” as he originally titled it, embraces the complete human life cycle in a series of eight successive stages in the development of the self. It was the first time that Western psychology looked at the full range of the human life cycle to account for the development of identity. The scheme is said to show a pattern of healthy development, as opposed to focusing on pathological development, which was what his contemporary psychoanalysts were interested in. Welchman (2000:52) states that the life cycle ‘embraces human life in an outline that combines complexity with clarity, subtlety with authority, a coordinating overview with a sense of immediacy and reality.’

The stages are said to follow an epigenetic sequence. Epigenesis means that although potentials appear at certain stages, they occur throughout the life cycle. The epigenetic principle was derived from the combination of “epi” (meaning upon) and genesis (emergence). Erikson felt that this term encompassed ‘the embryological model of the uterine growth of organisms’ (Roazen 1976:107). Each stage presents both the capacity for new potentials and a crisis. By crisis, Erikson refers to a turning point and therefore a challenge that needs to be overcome in order to fulfill the potential presented at that stage. In this sense, a crisis can be both negative and positive to the development of identity. There is a dynamic balance and favorable ratio between the positive and negative polarities, which becomes the central feature of the particular stage that the person is experiencing.

2.4 Triple Book-keeping: The influence of biological, psychological and social processes

Erikson constantly applies a threefold process in the life cycle, which he termed “triple book-keeping” in which biological, psychological and social processes are linked in the formation of human development. Each process influences the other and none can be ignored if one attempts to make a holistic analysis of the human identity. Both the inner ego processes and an appropriate social context are indispensable to the growth of the individual’s identity. Our societies are organized so as to respond to the individual’s growing potentialities, maintaining the pace and order of emergence of each stage of the life cycle.

A society is likely to offer ritualizations and institutions appropriate to the psychological requirements of each stage of human development, in this way making possible a mutual assimilation between individual growth and social process. With this notion, Erikson thus seeks to develop his theme that ego, biological maturation and social institutions interact and interrelate in the process of development (Stevens 1983: 43).

Society is particularly important in providing support for the ego, as culture will provide an early basis for the identity and opportunities for later adjustment. Without this support, the ego may not have the ability to restore itself when negative influences begin to take their toll.

3 Criticism of Erikson's Theory of Psychosocial Development

There are three major categories of criticism according to Welchman (2000), namely:

Category 1: Those who accept the outline of the development scheme but question the details. Among various things these critics question the particular characterization and attribution of crisis to each stage, as well as the order of the stages and the need for sub-stages.

Category 2: Criticism that has introduced radically different development concepts: such as those of Jung and Ken Wilber (transpersonal schemes). Erikson differed from these theories as he continued to consider the influences of biology, sociology and psychology in the life cycle, which the researcher believes one cannot ignore when studying the human in his or her entirety. Erikson's scheme was remarkably inclusive of all the important elements of human life, presented in a comprehensive manner that allows us to apply it with success in education. In comparison to other schemes, Welchman (2000:127) writes that:

Erikson's scheme is remarkable for the way all the stages of human life are linked and included in a coherent scheme through the concepts of crisis, identity formation and human strengths. His concepts integrate individual and social development, taking into account both subjective and objective phenomena. Erikson's

achievement was to extend developmental psychology from the psychoanalytic emphasis on childhood sexuality and the pathology of the inner world to a truly psychosocial development.

Category 3: Criticism that challenges the validity of *any* developmental scheme. Erikson however, reminds us that problems do occur in life and that a development scheme is useful in a variety of disciplines that require the analysis of such problems in order to help others or better understand human behaviours. Welchman (2000:123) states that ‘some consideration of development and growth, and some narrative element, seems indispensable to the student of human nature and society, linked as they are to the seasonal cycles of growth and decay.’

The first category provides the greatest deal of discussion in Erikson’s work. There are a number of issues that have arisen, particularly those that question the sequence and accuracy of stages, the concept of nuclear conflict and the relationship between the individual and society.

3.1 Problems arising from the arrangement of stages

3.1.1 Do the stages occur in a predetermined order that remains fixed for all people?

Erikson seemed to have believed that the order of stages was predetermined and that this was observable in the lives of healthy individuals. There is an interrelationship and interaction between all stages, so the order is present but may exhibit slight differences. It was believed that the stages would vary according to the culture of the individual, but the person’s ego identity would develop at the proper rate and sequence as advocated by both the life cycle and their society. The stages of the life cycle were therefore considered epigenetic.

3.1.2 Is there a possibility for the environment to influence the developing ego identity or improve an unhealthy identity?

Erikson explained that the ego identity developed according to biological, sociological and psychological processes. Therefore it is possible for the individual’s society and culture to influence the developing identity, as well as the physical endowment of the individual. It is however a pessimistic comment as it appears that the ego is dependent on its social realm for

a healthy development, and can therefore not succeed to flourish on its own. This implies a sense of conformism and standardization, if the individual will require social approval in order to achieve a sense of continuity in identity. If one was unable to achieve a sense of continuity and consistency in one's identity, then an unhealthy identity may develop.

An unhealthy identity is also the result of a failure to successfully deal with the challenges that arise during periods of crisis in each stage. Although the intentions of psychoanalysis was to find the sources of problems and help the individual by means of therapy, Erikson seemed to imply that the identity could not fully recover if a crisis or conflict had not been resolved during its allocated time period. It is highly discouraging to believe that the individual cannot overcome past inadequacies.

3.1.3 How much flexibility is allowed within the psychosocial development scheme?

Erikson did mention that there are many possible pathways for development to take place, with variations in the tempo and intensity of growth. There was therefore a degree of flexibility in the growth scheme, but it should follow the same pattern in order to be considered normal.

Continuity theorists have argued that human development does not occur in abrupt stages, rather it occurs within a gradual progression. Erikson's stages appeared too drastic in comparison with the moderate development of the rest of the human being. For example, Erikson places the development of identity as the crisis of adolescence. Studies by Marcia (1966), O'Connell (1976) and Meilman (1979) proved that identity achievement continues into adulthood rather than ending in adolescence, thus showing that identity did not develop in adolescence alone as a separate stage. Erikson however did suggest that stages overlap and that the crises experienced by the individuals would occur throughout life, with one primary crisis in each period. In other words, a person could continue to deal with issues of trust throughout his or her life, but the time at which he or she first deals with this, is in his or her infancy. If this person had had a positive experience in trusting his or her parents, he or she will apply this information (knowing how to trust someone) and the expectation of being able to trust other people in future situations. In the case of identity, the individual first begins to experience true independence of choice in adolescence, with regards their occupation and sexuality - two fundamental areas of adult life. This means that deciding who they are and what they will regard as their own values and beliefs will first become

prominent in this period, but will by no means be completely resolved. Erikson had stated that people would continue to question their own identity well into the stage of generativity.

3.2 Questions arising over the validity and the accuracy of each stage

Erikson's theory of psychosocial development has been questioned with regards the validity and the accuracy of the eight stages and their crises. Analysts have questioned whether the conflicts presented at each stage are truly representative of that stage, how Erikson was able to allocate development crises and whether these crises could possibly manifest themselves in a more dominant form in a later stage of life. The ambiguity of the stage crises also led analysts to question if crises were opposing or complementary to their positive counterparts. For example, does the guilt versus initiative crisis of stage three imply that experiencing feelings of guilt could possibly increase the child's sense of initiative, or does Erikson suggest that experiencing guilt is to have lost gaining the value of initiative altogether? Welchman (2000) argues that it is clear that humans should strive to achieve our full potential at each stage but that negative experiences benefit development by strengthening their character.

There are additional areas of concern regarding the validity and accuracy of Erikson's psychosocial development theory, namely his methods and style, his assumptions of gender and culture, his idealistic nature and the influence of society.

3.3 Did Erikson apply suitable methods in his work and was his style appropriate?

3.3.1 Erikson's Artistic Style

Erikson received additional criticism over the methods he used and his unique style of both his writing and work. He had been an artist before he began his career as a psychoanalyst, studying under the guidance of Freud and his daughter Anna, in particular. His style is said to have been influenced by his artistic nature, rather than being entirely scientific. Freud was known for his unique and almost literary writing style, so we could possibly assume that this may have also inspired Erikson. Although Erikson is not scientific, he has a concern for

understanding the way things are providing an immersion into subject matter, whilst showing a great deal of empathy.

3.3.2 Repetition in Works

It is said by authors such as Stevens (1983), that Erikson's books tend to contain similarities and he often repeated his material. The researcher agrees with this statement, as he does tend to refer to the same case studies in his *Identity: Youth and Crisis* (1968) and *Identity and the Life Cycle* (1980), and continues to elaborate on his psychosocial development scheme throughout his books, beginning with *Childhood and Society* (1950).

3.3.3 Erikson makes assumptions without sufficient evidence

Stevens (1983) wished to know how Erikson was able to develop his theory without going beyond the information afforded to him, and questions whether he had made assumptions based on little or no evidence. This accusation is directed at both Erikson's biographies and his theories. The psychosocial development scheme was based on the work by Freud and Erikson's own findings in psychoanalysis. Erikson had had many patients in both America and Europe. Although his work is based on a multitude of observations and interaction with various people, we can never be truly confident of any theory that provides an explanation of human psychosocial development and behaviours. Welchman (2000) defends Erikson by saying that there are no formal means of evaluating whether Erikson's interpretations are right or wrong and it would therefore be wise to remain critical of the insights that Erikson provides us with without losing the value of his theories.

3.3.4 Erikson's theory appeared vague and ambiguous

The subject matter that Erikson dealt with was of a complex nature and he was criticized by some as being either too vague or elementary in his explanation of certain concepts. One has to admit that attempting to communicate multiple levels of meaning that interpret biological, psychological, social, political, ethical and spiritual fields without ambiguities of meaning or over simplification is an almost impossible task. Perhaps the ambiguities present in any such explanation of the life cycle are what would make it more real.

Erikson's stages of psychosocial development were apparently ambiguous as it could imply that negative aspects of crises were detrimental to the ego-identity or valuable balancing counterparts to the positive potentialities. Erikson was an optimist so the researcher believes that he viewed negative experiences as a means of building character, so long as they did not prevent the person from successfully achieving the goals that their stage of development afforded them. Stevens (1983:114) accounted for Erikson's ambiguous nature as a result of the polemic nature of language itself: 'Psychoanalysis is the study of meaning, meaning can only be expressed in language and language has its own ambiguities. As Erikson puts it, some 'things are hard to say, and wording is not too important, what counts is their spirit.'

Roazen (1976), Stevens and Gellner accuse Erikson of his vague and inconsistent use of definitions. Words like "actuality," "reality" and "ego-identity" seemed to encompass a wide range of meanings. The researcher thinks that providing a rigid definition for concepts such as identity may be too restricting, considering the fact that it is something unique to each individual. While authors such as Craib (1998) accuse Erikson of providing an oversimplification of the notion of ego-identity, Stevens (1983:113) states that Erikson 'resists the temptation to formulate neat laws and propositions precisely to avoid the attendant risks of oversimplification and reification.'

We can only conclude that Erikson attempts to struggle with subject matter of a highly complex nature. He constantly responded to criticism and remained conscious of his own influence on his work as he felt that his work would be used by future generations (*Childhood and Society* (1950) is dedicated "To our children's children").

3.4 Does Erikson support gender stereotypes or even promote sexist assumptions?

3.4.1 Erikson's discrimination through use of the English language

Feminists have criticized Erikson's writing style and his theories of undermining women. Feminists were insulted by the consistency with which Erikson used the male gender when referring to the experience of both male and female. This was 'a commonly accepted visage of his time, but it gave his writing a more masculine tone (Welchman 2000:ix). They believe that this shows his unconscious condemnation of women in a more direct fashion, which

tarnished the presentation of his theory. They were however also critical of the theory itself because it reflected Erikson's beliefs of the mutuality of divided function and supported the status quo.

3.4.2 Mutuality of divided function

Erikson believed that because men and women are created different, they are intended for a mutuality of divided function. In other words, men and women were intended to form a partnership in which their combined potentials make them able to function effectively. He believed that women are intended to be the nurturers, not only due to biological traits but also due to a subconscious need of the feminine psyche. He continued to enforce his triple booking-keeping analysis of the human ego-identity, meaning that biology, social circumstances and psychology all interact to form the ego-identity. Physical attributes were therefore able to determine and influence psychological attributes. He insisted that by fulfilling the role of the nurturer, women were contributing to the unfolding potential of both themselves and their male counterparts. To deny this role, would be detrimental to the unconscious motivations of the female body.

Feminists were angered by this justification of inequality. They reject the notion that the ground plan of the body should determine social functions and political rights. In addition to this, women should not be viewed as a means of completing or serving man, but rather an independent individual that is capable of achieving her own potential. Erikson is accused of distorting biology by applying ideologies of the social realm.

3.4.3 An Improvement on Freud's Theory

Erikson was however not as cruel in his analysis of women as Freud was. Erikson insisted on the autonomy in the development of individuals, irrespective of gender. He also rejected Freud's theories, which emphasized female "penis envy" as the reason why many women were frustrated in their social position. Erikson focused on the female ability for creative power, rather than what made them different to men. According to Roazen (1976:14) 'Erikson admits that: "Freud's general judgment of the identity of women was probably the weakest part of his theory."' Although he had greatly improved on Freud's work, Erikson's development scheme still left much to be desired as far as gender assumptions were concerned.

3.4.4 A male-centered approach

The psychosocial development cycle was apparently based on male growth, without consideration of female uniqueness. Erikson used his development cycle as a tool for analysis in his biographies of Gandhi and Luther, and in his case studies. He also tested his theories on his many patients. Feminists argue that this does not prove validity for the feminine perspective as he uses exclusively male figures in his psycho-historical studies.

Erikson claimed that the development of male and females were similar and therefore did not require separate stages. Carol Gilligan disagreed and created the development chart for females. She advocated that women were more caring and therefore more able to develop morals at an earlier stage. She also argues that identity formation could not precede the stage of intimacy, as an identity could not exist without love.

3.4.5 Erikson's reaction to feminist criticism

Erikson addressed the criticism of the feminist perspective during his lifetime, showing that he was aware of their concerns and wished to explain the intentions of his work. Erikson viewed each person as an autonomous being, and although he appeared to support the status quo by suggesting that social influence was necessary for ego-identity formation, he recognized the evil of oppressive social power structures. He acknowledged and deplored male power, but he believed that feminists react with attitudes of militancy and righteousness to the oppressing forces. He felt that Gandhi's approach of passive, non-violent resistance was the best form of overthrowing oppressive power structures. Any form of outrage would encourage pseudo-speciation and create an even greater divide between men and women.

The researcher does not believe that Erikson was attempting to undermine women, as he wanted equality in an all-human identity, free of all prejudices.

3.5 Did Erikson simply reproduce the work of both Freud and Anna Freud?

3.5.1 The influences of Freud

Freud's influences on Erikson's work include his concepts of resistance, regression, the unconscious, the significance of sexuality, the importance of infantile experience and the therapeutic use of transference. Erikson accepted that the ego-identity was able to resist change if the individual had a positive sense of who they are. Regression occurred if the individual was able to maintain the continuity within their self and had therefore failed to overcome a stage conflict to such an extent that they regressed to a previous stage. Freud's theory of the personality consisting of three components, the id, super ego and ego, is also highly influential in Erikson's psychosocial development theories.

The psychosocial development cycle is based on Freud's notions that development occurs in stages and that the order of these stages are influenced by biological maturation. According to Welchman (2000), Erikson extended and built on the basic psychosexual stages of Freudian analysis to form a complex configuration of more generalized modes of social modalities and of nuclear conflicts between counterbalancing attitudes and responses to life.

He places Freud's libido theory in perspective of the totality of the human life experience, contrasting what is biologically instinctive (impulses that are natural in the body) to what is socially instinctual (the behaviours that we are taught). Erikson's work proved that Freud's concept of the libido and theory was outdated, as it did not 'consider science and morality' (Roazen 1976:16). Freud viewed the development of the identity to be based on the influence of the libido (sexual impulses). He proposed that the relationship between parents and children reached a critical phase during the Oedipal stage in which the children begin to express sexual tendencies towards their parents. Erikson interpreted the Oedipal crisis as a specific phase in personality development characteristic of certain historical periods. The Oedipal stage was used to explain the growth potential of guilt with a possibility of avoidance by the reassertion of a unique identity.

3.5.2 Erikson differs from Freud and Anna Freud

Although Erikson used Freud's ideas to generate his own, he disagreed with certain aspects of Freud's work. Erikson turned from physiological explanations (Freud's libido and psychosexual development theory) to purely psychological ones. Psychosexual development is 'the process of progressive differentiation during which the expression of a general drive is shaped as a result of the interaction of a biologically programmed timetable of development with the way a child is handled by those who nurture him' (Stevens 1983:16). Erikson was able to limit the emphasis on childhood sexuality within the development cycle without losing the valuable insights Freud had made. He proposed that psychosexual development was an aspect of maturation, rather than the sole driving force behind human growth. Erikson tended to support the nurture side of the "nature versus nurture" debate, although he believed that nature was highly influential. This contrasted with Freud. Erikson believed that Freud's emphasis on infantile sexuality ignored the attentive maternal capacities of the parents. He called attention to childhood's particular features and advocated child-training techniques that remained personal and 'unmechanised'.

Freud concentrated his work on studying those who had neurotic tendencies. He based his explanations on the impulses of the id and sexuality, blaming instinctual urges for the irrational behaviours of man. Freud remained negative towards humanity whilst Erikson remains optimistic. Erikson instead believed that a study of the identity and a focus on the ego would better explain the behaviour of humans. He proposed that violent emotions did not occur because of instinct but were caused by a threat to the individual's identity, which rendered them under the influence of infantile urges. Dreams were also analyzed as threats to identity rather than warded off instinctual wishes.

Erikson was convinced that past experiences are transformed through influence and growth meaning that childhood conflicts endure in adulthood, but criticized originology as he believed that instead of analysing the past as a cause and effect relationship to the future, a configuration approach should be used instead. This approach considers all aspects of the patient's situation and context – past experiences and future aspirations, when analysing the problem. Observable behaviour rather than libidinal energies became the focus of his work.

Although Erikson disagreed with Anna Freud's mechanistic outlook, he approved of her work in defense mechanisms of the ego: *The Ego and the Mechanisms of Defense*. This

work explained how the ego is able to avoid the affects of the drives, defend itself against change and avoid anxieties, etc. But he also felt that Hartman's idea of the ego being able to adapt itself to its environment were equally true. He stated that Anna Freud's work explained what might limit and endanger a child's ego and therefore criticized cultural progress and its danger for children in education but he believed that psychoanalytic insight should help education to strengthen and enrich the ego.

Erikson caused a shift in psychoanalysis by changing the attitudes held towards child development, instinct, dreaming, religion and the traditional view towards the social processes. An emphasis on psychosexual growth in the analysis of people would not be sufficient in understanding human behaviour. He challenged psychoanalysis to study the human in its entirety, promoting the inclusion of social and cultural influences in observation and explanation.

3.6 Are Erikson's theories influenced by his class and culture?

Erikson accepted that his theory could be class and culture bound because his theories were based on his clinical work in Europe and America. He attempted to remedy this problem by means of anthropological studies and seminars to compare patterns of the life cycle in societies other than Western ones.

3.6.1 The importance of understanding identity within the cultural context

Erikson believed that psychoanalysis could not produce a thorough description or diagnosis of a person's state of ego identity without investigating the influences of culture and social organization throughout the stages of ego development. His emphasis of cultural significance in maintaining the capacity to unify conflicts adaptively is evident in his choice of terms in naming the ego identity, the psychosocial identity. Childhood can only be understood within its social context: 'the growing child must derive a vitalizing sense of reality from the awareness that his individual way of mastering experiences, his ego synthesis, in a successful variant of a group identity and is in accord with its space-time and life plan' (Roazen 1976:33).

Erikson differed from Freud in that he believed that the environment provided support and guidance for the individual making successful life choices. We need support from

significant social groups to form a positive identity, having a need to belong to and show faith in organizations that provide reassurance against our anxieties. Our inborn capacities can only develop and maintain an ego if interaction with cultural groups take place. He admits that while society can provide reassurance for infantile anxieties, exploitation of these emotions can lead to irrational behaviour.

3.6.2 Cultural influences on identity formation

Culture is an important influence on the ego identity. While Freud condemned society and religion as restraining burdens on the ego and remnants of a primitive past, Erikson embraces religion as an institution that creates a sense of trust and faith while providing a tangible form of evil. Erikson does admit that religion can be misused to promote irrational behaviour through the exploitation of fear.

Freud believed that culture did not interfere with the inner being of man. Erikson tried to prove a correlation between a loss of group identity and the apathy, passivity and depression of its individual members. He also noted that a victimized community tended to show identification with its aggressor. Child training techniques, as an element of culture, proved to influence identity development and instill values of the culture.

3.6.3 Cultural groups should encourage the development of a universally inclusive identity

When Erikson realized the effect that culture and society has on the development of the ego-identity, he attempted to find a means of expressing the responsibility of society to the individual. His solution to the problem of intolerance, prejudice and oppression was the formation of a universally inclusive identity that was more tolerant and more supportive of all ego-identities.

Erikson advocated that a universally inclusive identity, in conflict with negative identities is the main ambition of the world, in fact he went so far as to suggest that the psychosocial development of the human race is in fact aimed at reaching this level of identification. He uses America as an idealistic example of this. Erikson immigrated to America before the onset of the Second World War, and had an idealistic view of the freedom that America seemed to offer its citizens. Erikson had for a long time seen mankind working toward a

better future – more rational, more conscious and more universal. We live in a world of universally expanding identities, but one universal identity will need to be sought as a means of survival in which we all accept that we are humans and therefore alike.

Erikson believed that because psychoanalysis could be used to study the influence of social organization in individuals in a particular context, and vice versa, it would be suitable as a historical tool. Psychoanalysis would also prove suitable for making critiques of society and studying political sequences.

3.7 Does Erikson support and justify the status quo or is he undermining traditional culture and values?

3.7.1 Erikson is conformist and conservative

Erikson was criticized for being both conformist and conservative. This criticism has led analysts to accuse him of supporting the status quo. Ironically, Erikson has also been censured for undermining traditional culture and values through his work, though this has not occurred as frequently as his former charge of encouraging individuals to conform to the conservative values of society. He is considered conformist for theorizing that egos are in constant mutual affirmation with an outer world of ego-identities significant to it. Roazen (1976) felt that Erikson was at fault in making this claim, as Erikson did not foresee that to be caught up in pseudo-realities of ideal images and world views could be damaging if those image projections lack genuine meaning.

3.7.2 The dangers of conformism

Erikson's insistence that continuity and social sameness is necessary for a healthy society might lead people to accept or even promote the continuation of the myths of social formation. Despite his anger towards uniformity, conformity and standardization, he continues to state that adhering to the social identity's ideals is imperative to our psychosocial health. Erikson asserts that social institutions are able to make a positive contribution to identity formation by confirming identities and assigning roles, but some critics feel that he is ignoring the possibility that they may restrain and threaten anyone different. There seems a dependence of the ego on society at the expense of individuality. This places individuals in a position in which a divergence from the norm can be diagnosed

as a neurotic pattern. Erikson's ideal ego strength, keeping oneself together and functioning for others, may be had at too great a price – unthinking conformism - in which we are forced to uphold an established order. Roazen (1976) questioned whether achieving free choice could ever be the outcome of ritual regimentation.

3.7.3 Erikson's conservative approach

Erikson was viewed as conservative because he did not advocate a violent revolt among the oppressed but rather promoted the teachings of Gandhi. According to Welchman (2000:109), Erikson was 'disturbed by the militancy which sees the way forward only through violence and the dependence of new black identity on reverse projections and pseudo-speciation...' Erikson has used psychoanalysis more explicitly than Freud to uncover unintentional bias. He has explained prejudice as prime dangers to man's freedom and insisted that psychoanalysis can function as a criticism of wasteful social change. He believed that 'the bondage of man to such fear of radical otherness that he must annihilate or suppress others, and the corresponding bondage of feeling so endangered by his own nature that he would attempt to unduly repress it' (Roazen 1976: 151).

3.7.4 Kovel's criticism of Erikson's view of society and politics

Kovel (1988) disagrees with Erikson's view of the individual's relationship to society and politics. He writes that he was 'suffocated when reading Erikson' (Kovel 1988:28) and reduces Erikson's psychosocial development theory to a 'cheap perfume of identity' (Kovel 1988:73). Kovel's opinion is that Erikson's identity concept shows moral confusion and political backwardness, rendered by his avoidance of the exploration of sex and power structures. He believes that Erikson's theory lacks a political explanation of human suffering, as well as a lack of commitment to political change. He continues to accuse Erikson of ignoring the negative aspects of life and even the possibility of evil. Erikson is also said to have hidden psychological vulnerabilities in addition to being a weak thinker.

3.7.5 Welchman's defense of Erikson

Welchman (2000:121) agrees that Erikson is 'never comfortable with activism or politically committed to radicalism' but he does not oppose change, he 'clearly advocated change and growth through conflict both in the individual and society.' There is a conservative element

in Erikson's emphasis on continuity between the individual identity and society that seems to encourage a dependence on society, but Erikson was not afraid of speaking against established ideas: 'Erikson condemned and cogently exposed the delusions and manipulations of power, not just in academic writings but to gatherings of senators and church leaders' (Welchman 2000:122).

Welchman (2000) believes that Erikson is a more realistic basis for change than Kovel because Erikson recognized the creative and limiting potentials of society. He urges Erikson's readers to understand him as 'a pioneer who values tradition and an original thinker who prefers convergence and continuity over controversy and confrontation' (Welchman 2000:122).

3.7.6 Erikson's view of American Society

While some critics assert that Erikson had no political involvement, others accused Erikson of being duped by American propaganda. Erikson seems to remain influenced by post war ideologies and continued to mention the Russians as adversaries of America in his writing until 1963. Roazen (1976) believed that Erikson had allowed himself to be led by propaganda in his idealistic view of America, as he ignores political errors and racial conflict. Erikson admired America's variety of roles and stances, freedom of choice as well as the 'myth of respect for human freedom' (Roazen 1976:49). The researcher disagrees with Roazen, as Erikson was not completely blinded by the "American Dream," he does show interest in the minorities and the oppressed of American society. He had analyzed the American black population since 1946. He believed that the dominant identity imposed negative identities and racial caricatures on the African Americans. 'In Erikson's writing on race there is a mingling of hope and uneasiness. His outrage at the dominant exploiter's resistance to change is mixed with disappointment at the response of the exploited and those who try to "help" them' (Welchman 2000:109).

The researcher shares Welchman's (2000:6) opinion that Erikson's work has revealed that psychoanalysis can and should be applied to social and political issues, which makes Erikson's work of 'continuing relevance.' If we are able to understand the behaviour of humans, and their infantile fears, we will be better equipped to solve a variety of social problems without violence or acts of intolerance.

3.8 Does Erikson's optimism jeopardize the value of his theories?

Erikson is considered to be a highly optimistic psychoanalyst, a trait that has distinguished him from his contemporary psychologists. He is renowned as one of Freud's more "humane" and empathetic followers, with the ability to recognize potential in some of the most severe cases of neurosis. He tends to overlook the negative, as he was acutely sensitive to the negativity of his fellow clinicians. This optimism has been interpreted as naïve idealism by some of his critics.

3.8.1 Are universal values innate in the life cycle?

Erikson thought that society was continually striving to make amends for the horrors of the last world war. He insisted that humans need to achieve certain values in order to progress through the cycle of life with a sense of accomplishment, but critics question whether humanity is really striving towards universal values and whether these values are innate. Erikson had proposed that values were learnt at every stage in the life cycle. The addition of values to the positive polarity of each stage conflict has caused critics to doubt his intentions. Was Erikson trying to indoctrinate future generations with suggestions that Christian values are a biological achievement in development? It has been said that Erikson has confused values with objective reality, and not just any values, but his own that he assumes are universal. The critics argue that there is no natural harmony of human needs, and societies will always have to deal with the confrontation of divergent goals that may not always be compatible. They question whether he is concerned with reality or the creation of his own personal idea of Utopia.

3.8.2 The assumption that crisis will always have a positive resolution

Furthermore, individual conflicts within the development scheme are assumed to always have a positive resolution. There appears to be a presumption that the human potentials and capabilities will always overcome the negative aspects of each stage's turning point of crisis. Erikson had faith in the "wisdom of the ground plan" believing that the human identity would rise above crises. This concept has value if it prevents people from labeling unsocial behaviour as being beyond help, but struggles to achieve a healthy ego-identity do sometimes end in despair without providing any noticeable benefit. Roazen (1976: 118) asks: '...are there not emotional conflicts in life, which lead in no "healthy" direction at all?

The very essence of some crises in so-called normal people, is that they constitute a thorough going waste of human feelings and impulses.’ He continues to accuse Erikson of searching in ‘even the worst human losses for some remnant of a saving grace.’

3.8.3 Infantile fear and the non-existence of evil

Erikson’s life cycle suggests that young children first experience fears of the unknown in the second stage of development. He explains that if the individual is unable to achieve an adequate sense of autonomy they will be inflicted with emotions of doubt. Doubt is the origin of all paranoia, the irrational anxieties that people experience as a fear of the unknown. Social institutions and power structures exploit such infantile fears. Erikson maintained that if humanity were able to provide adequate child training systems that removed all sense of doubt from childhood, the level of irrational behaviour and violence present in contemporary society would be reduced. Critics thought that such ideas were highly optimistic, as it implied that apart from rational fear, nothing else existed and society would have no means of controlling its members.

Erikson’s optimism even challenged the concept of the existence of a tangible force of evil. He claimed that there is no such thing as an evil entity, but a “sense of evil” that can be minimized by more appropriate child rearing methods. Evil is merely *what* we are afraid of, and in most cases this is an irrational anxiety rather than a rational fear. Irrational anxieties stem from infantile fear. Infantile fear can be controlled or exploited, depending on whether it is revealed to us in its harmless simplicity or manipulated by power structures as a vague and ominous force. In other words, the question is not whether conflict exists but how the human acts in the face of it. He promoted the teaching of ethical values to prevent primitive violence but he did not assume that conflict could be avoided entirely. In fact, Erikson implied that conflict could motivate growth and learning.

3.9 Does Erikson confuse ethics and values with facts?

Erikson’s ethical view grew from his respect for religion. His ethical concern led to the creation of concepts such as mutuality and generativity; influenced his theory of the life cycle and his commitment to promoting Gandhi’s technique of non-violence.

Erikson put forward the notion that certain virtues were inherent in the development cycle of humans. He therefore implied that ethical principles are both innate to human development and universal. The virtues individuals are said to develop in each stage are shown in relation to the psychosocial development scheme in table 4. The culmination of all the virtues is the ability to uphold the Golden Rule, which Erikson believed all humans would wish to adhere to because their inner ego-identity would require it of them. Critics argued that Erikson had no proof that the development of ethical virtues coincides with physical and psychological progression as an essential element of human growth. The allocation of virtues to each stage was also questioned.

The researcher thinks that Erikson's readers may become uneasy if they do not agree with his set of ethics. Although his major intention is to promote the Golden Rule, other elements of Christian principles pervade throughout his theory. Erikson's "preachiest features" are evident in his support of preexisting social institutions, namely marriage, heterosexuality and the child bearing. Roazen (1976:171) questions this view, as no one should be allowed to dictate which norms are universally valid and fears that 'by promoting the middle class ideal of a nuclear family, Erikson may have unwittingly lent support to a new form of ego restriction.' There are various incidents in which Erikson describes homosexuality as a form of unhealthy identity, which shows a very conservative mindset. Roazen continues to state that Erikson had ventured into areas of philosophy that Freud had refused to enter into. He exceeded the boundaries of psychoanalysis to incorporate psychological and social issues. In other words, Erikson included social themes such as sexuality and ethics in his development cycle as potentials that either needed to be achieved or in the case of homosexuality, needed to be avoided.

While ethics are important, one must be reminded not to confuse values with facts. Erikson was accused of suffering from Utopianism and conservatism. Although he supports the teaching of values, he does nothing more than proposes that a source of new morality, based on the mutuality of function, can challenge the social status quo.

In his defense, Roazen (1976) suggests that perhaps Erikson did not encourage radical change as his patients and those he intended to help, would be better off striving for stability rather than challenge the social power structures in their weakened state.

Erikson's recognition and exploration of the involvement, and indeed the indispensability of values in therapy in individual development and in social structure is one of his major contributions, in spite of the problems it leaves unresolved (Welchman 2000:120).

As with any theory, critical evaluation is necessary when determining its worth. The researcher thinks that people should choose the values that they will live and behave according to. The only criteria that should govern such decisions are whether the value has personal meaning and that it will not infringe on the rights of others. Erikson promotes the Golden Rule; that we should do unto others, as we would want others to treat us. Considering the fact that most religions agree with this teaching, it seems that this is a positive form of guidance to live by.

4 Is the study of psychosocial identity necessary in contemporary society?

Roazen (1976), Stevens (1983) and Welchman (2000) agree that Erikson's work in psychosocial analysis and identity development has relevance in our modern society. Understanding psychosocial identity has significance as the nature of society is reflected in psychosocial problems characteristically experienced by members of the society.

4.1 Contemporary issues in society

Welchman (2000:3) presents three contemporary issues that need attention, namely the constant threat of war, the disintegration of identity due to technology and the problems of viable identity transmission across generations.

4.1.1 War

Roazen (1976:150) states that Erikson has contemporary significance because he is willing to entertain broader, more difficult questions that earlier analysts had hoped to avoid. He was able to make his readers aware of their potential if they were willing to overcome their infantile fear. He explains that intractable inter-group aggression and exclusiveness results from the dependence of group identities on hostility to and the exclusion of others. Erikson

titled this pseudo-speciation. Pseudo-speciation occurs when the group identity provides its members with a sense that the group ‘represents the sole fulfillment of human possibilities’ causing its members to act ‘as if they were separate species created at the beginning of time by supernatural intent’ (Roazen 1976:160). It appears that humans need to be part of a social group in order to be whole, and so partake in the oppression of others as a moralistic treatment of those who have been allocated the negative identity of the group. Welchman (2000:4) states that ‘we urgently need to understand better and to find ways of transcending and transforming the destructive tendencies of these basic national and social identities.’ Erikson believed that a more universal and incorporative identity could be achieved if people were made conscious of their infantile fears and avoid projecting this fear on other people, groups or nations.

4.1.2 Mechanization and the loss of identity

Technology has caused an increasing pace of change in society. Although this does have its benefits, it has caused individuals to be cut off from their ancestral or cultural roots thus causing a loss of a sense of continuity and belonging with themselves and with their community. Society must therefore recognize the need for developing communal identity that can support its members as ‘the problems of how to create and enable such new forms of mature identity are urgent and challenging’ (Welchman 2000:5). Technology can therefore cause a disintegration of identity in much the same ways as other disastrous events throughout world history, without humans being conscious of it.

4.1.3 Transmission of identity

The third issue, namely the transmission of identity from one generation to the next is equally important. A changing society must find appropriate ways to nurture their infants, promote the education and skills of young children and provide an adequate period of moratorium for identity formation in adolescence. If these three areas of guidance are not adapted to suit contemporary society, then the next generation will not be able to function in their society. People who do not have the necessary skills or values may resort to violence.

5 Conclusion

The researcher believes that Erikson's theory has value in contemporary society as it provides an understanding of human behaviour through an explanation of psychosocial and ego-identity development. It also raises important questions regarding the methods by which we raise and educate our children, and forces us to consider the influences that society and culture have on developing identities.

There are many issues that have been raised by critics over the past thirty years since the introduction of Erikson's theory of psychosocial development. These issues need consideration when applying Erikson's theory in the field of education. Although the theory has provided educators with valuable insights to the development of the child, their behaviour and needs, it must still be applied through use of critical interpretation.

Roazen (1976:120) reminds us that Erikson has presented 'a set of theories, not facts... And it is partly because of his own acknowledged lack of theoretical-mindedness that many of his readers come away with the belief, despite his declared intention, that he has uncovered an ineluctable piece of science rather than constructed a valuable point of view.'

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A4 LETTER TO THE HEADMASTER

School of Music
University of KwaZulu-Natal
Durban
4041
25 May 2006

The Headmaster
[The address of the school has been omitted]

Dear Mr [name omitted]

RESEARCH IN THE MUSIC EDUCATION OF MALE ADOLESCENTS

I am currently undertaking an MMus research project that aims to provide recommendations for the improvement of Music Education in South Africa. International studies have shown that male adolescents who take part in Music are often discriminated against by external influences in their environment and are therefore disadvantaged in their education or involvement in Music.

Learners who have been selected to take part in this study have been provided with an informed consent form that requires either a parent or guardian's signature of permission. Selection was based on their involvement in Music, both at school and recreational. Should the learners agree to participate in the study, they will be expected to undergo an interview. The interviews will be an hour in duration and be recorded using audio equipment. All information collected will be treated confidentially and the learners' names will not be divulged in the final report, in order to remain anonymous. All material will be disposed of three years after completion of the study.

Participation in the research project is voluntary and learners are free to withdraw from the study at any stage. Those who take part will unfortunately not be paid, but we hope that the research will benefit other learners in future.

Please feel free to contact either my supervisor or myself should you need any more information.

Yours Sincerely

Miss CC Smythe
Researcher
Tel: 082 501 0353

Mr J Robinson
Supervisor
Tel: (031) 2601042

I.....(full name) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to learners participating in the research project.

SIGNATURE

DATE

.....

A5 LETTER OF INFORMED CONSENT

School of Music
University of KwaZulu Natal
Durban
4041
Date

Address of parents

Dear Mr and Mrs (or as appropriate)

Your son _____ has been selected to participate in a research project due to his involvement in music, either as a subject, extracurricular activity, or both. It will greatly benefit the study if he is willing to share his personal experiences, and factors that influence his involvement in music.

The research is aimed at improving music education for male learners in South Africa as international studies have shown that male adolescents who take part in music are often discriminated against by external influences in their environment.

Should your son agree to participate in the study, he will be expected to undergo an interview. The interviews will be an hour in duration and be recorded using audio equipment.

All information collected will be treated confidentially and your son's name need not be used in the study should he choose to remain anonymous. All material will be disposed of three years after completion of the study.

Participation in the research project is voluntary and your son is free to withdraw from the study at any stage. Those who take part will unfortunately not be paid, but we hope that the research will benefit other learners in future.

In addition to the information provided by your son, I would like to ask if you would be so kind as to complete the attached questionnaire. Your answers will be used in the study to show the parent's perspective. Please return the completed questionnaire with this form. You are, however, not obliged to complete the questionnaire, and you may remain anonymous.

Please feel free to contact either my supervisor or myself should you need any more information.

Yours Sincerely

Miss CC Smythe
Researcher
Tel: 082 501 0353

Mr J Robinson
Supervisor
Tel: (031) 260 1042

I.....(full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....
SIGNATURE OF PARENT/GUARDIAN

DATE

.....

A6 INFORMAL INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

The following topics will be discussed:

1. Participation in music: activities and reasons for participation.
2. Participation in sport or other activities: pressure, stereotyping, acceptance, etc.
3. The reaction of peers, teachers, parents, family and community members to the learners' participation in music.
4. Positive and negative experiences: stereotyping and bullying, or recognition and success?
5. Does culture and background play a role in choices made?
6. Role models and preferred social groups.
7. Career and subject choices: influences and aspirations.
8. A discussion of coping mechanisms.
9. Suggestions for improvement made by the learners themselves.

A7 PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

Please be so kind as to complete the following questionnaire with regards to your son's involvement in music. Simply answer the questions by ticking the appropriate box. Question 10 requires a written answer.

| | | Definitely Yes | Yes | Perhaps | No | Definitely No |
|----|---|--------------------|-----|---------|----|---------------|
| 1 | Do you think your son's participation in music has helped him to form friendships and socialize with others? | | | | | |
| 2 | Do you think your son's music involvement has helped his extramural development? | | | | | |
| 3 | Do you encourage his involvement and participation in music? | | | | | |
| 4 | Does your son feel that his involvement with music is supported and encouraged by his school in general? | | | | | |
| 5 | Has your son had any negative comments from, or experiences with, any of the following people, because he takes part in music activities? Please answer 5.1,5.2, 5.3 and 5.4 separately. | 5.1 teachers | | | | |
| | | 5.2 friends | | | | |
| | | 5.3 other learners | | | | |
| | | 5.4 family members | | | | |
| 6 | Do you think that if a young man is to take part in a cultural activity, he should make an effort to take part in sport as well? | | | | | |
| 7 | Would you feel disappointed if your son were unable to participate in sport because he chose to take part in music instead? | | | | | |
| 8 | Would you suggest a career in music to your son? | | | | | |
| 9 | Would you be willing to support your son's choice if he made a decision to pursue a career in music? | | | | | |
| 10 | In consideration of questions 8 and 9, what reasons would motivate you to encourage or discourage your son from following a career in music? | | | | | |

Thank you for your time and your willingness to assist in this research project. Please return this questionnaire with the informed consent form.

A8 RESULTS OF THE PARENTS' QUESTIONNAIRE

| Question | Subject 1 | Subject 2 | Subject 3 | Subject 5 | Subject 8 | Subject 9 |
|----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| 1 | DY | Y | DY | Y | Y | Y |
| 2 | DY | P | DY | Y | P | P |
| 3 | DY | DY | DY | DY | DY | Y |
| 4 | Y | DY | DN | N | P | - |
| 5.1 | N | DN | DN | N | N | Y |
| 5.2 | Y | DN | Y | P | N | P |
| 5.3 | P | DN | DY | Y | P | P |
| 5.4 | DN | DN | DN | N | DN | P |
| 6 | Y | DY | N | Y | P | P |
| 7 | DN | P | N | DN | N | P |
| 8 | DY | P | P | Y | P | Y |
| 9 | DY | DY | Y | DY | Y | Y |

Key:

DY: Definitely Yes

Y : Yes

P : Perhaps

N : No

DN : Definitely No

The parents' response to question ten, the proposition that their child might wish to pursue music as a career, was as follows:

Subject One's mother:

'I will encourage him to pursue music as his career because he has a talent in music and he enjoys it very much.'

Subject Two's mother:

'None whatsoever – I would not discourage him. He is passionate about it.'

Subject Three's parent:

'The reasons would depend on the interest he shows in music. The motivation would also be the realism of being able to afford a reasonable standard of living.'

Subject Five's father:

'I wanted a career in music and would love my son to do so.'

Subject Eight's mother:

'Financial security.'

Subject Nine's mother:

'No comment.'

A9 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR THE LEARNERS

Please complete the following questionnaire by ticking the appropriate box after each question or by writing an answer in the empty space as provided.
Answer the questions as truthfully as possible.

You may remain anonymous.

Age : _____

Grade : _____

1. Do you take part in a cultural activity at school?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|
2. Why or why not? Give reasons for your answer:

3. What suggestions, if any, would you make to improve cultural activities at the school? _____

4. Who is the biggest influence your choice of extramural activities?

| | | | |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Friends | Teachers | Parents | Yourself |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|

5. What makes an extramural activity popular?

6. Who was the greatest influence in your choice of subjects:

| | | | |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|
| Friends | Teachers | Parents | Yourself |
|---------|----------|---------|----------|

7. Have you ever played a music instrument or been involved in music?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

8. Do you still play a music instrument or make music?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|

9. If you have stopped participating in music or playing an instrument, what are your reasons for doing so?

10. Would you ever consider becoming a professional musician, why or why not?

11. How do you think your parents, friends or teachers would react if you decided to become a professional musician?

Parents: _____

Teachers: _____

Friends: _____

12. Do you think that they would react differently had you decided to become a professional sportsman?

| | |
|-----|----|
| Yes | No |
|-----|----|