FOUNDATION PHASE EDUCATORS' CONCEPTUALISATIONS OF EMOTIONAL

INTELLIGENCE AND ITS INFLUENCE ON TEACHING

BY

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# ABSTRACT

This study focused on foundation phase educators' understanding of emotional intelligence and how this understanding influenced their teaching.

The concept of emotional intelligence has emerged from the growing realisation that there are factors beyond cognitive performance which contribute to success in life. Emotional intelligence may be described as the recognition and management of emotions in oneself as well as in others.  It has been found to be beneficial in a wide variety of settings including that of education.

The study was qualitative in nature and was located within the interpretive paradigm. In order to investigate the understanding of the concept by the foundation phase educators and how this understanding impacted their teaching, the data production tools of semi structured interviews, questionnaires and observations were utilised.

The findings were analysed and discussed according to themes. The findings revealed that the foundation phase educators had an inadequate understanding of many aspects of emotional intelligence which consequently-impacted their teaching accordingly.

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# DEDICATION

To my shining beacons,

My mum, Dolly Pakkoo,

And my late dad, Ranjith Pakkoo

# PREFACE

The thesis was done through the School of Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, under the supervision of Dr. V. Jairam from the Department of Education.

This study represents original work by the author and has not been submitted in any form to another University.  Where appropriate the work of others has been duly acknowledged in the text.


Signed:


Ameetha Ranjith

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# CHAPTER 1

# ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

*"What's your EQ? It's not your IQ."* (Time Magazine, 1995, cover)

## 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence is a relatively new and growing field which refers to "the competence to identify and express emotions, understand emotions, assimilate emotions in thought, and regulate both positive and negative emotions in the self and in others" (Matthews et al, 2002, p. 3). According to Mayer and Salovey (1997, p. 10), emotional intelligence involves "the ability to perceive and express emotion, to access feelings when they facilitate thought, to understand emotions, and to regulate emotions." The purpose of the study was to explore what foundation phase educators understood about the concept of emotional intelligence and how this understanding influenced their teaching.

This chapter includes the rationale, purpose and significance of the study. It also presents the research questions and gives a brief introduction to the theoretical frameworks that were used in the study.

## 1.2. RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

My interest in doing the study stems from observations that I have made during my years in the teaching profession. I have observed educators who are very skilled and extremely competent as teachers, yet there still seems to be something lacking. I have witnessed educators becoming frustrated, despondent or completely lose their composure in situations that have not really warranted such behaviour. I began to question how it could be possible for one educator to remain relatively calm and composed with a group of learners whilst another would continually complain about the same group of learners and seem to experience many problems. Could the missing element have something to do with the educator's knowledge, understanding and use of emotional intelligence?

Possibly educators who are skilled in emotional intelligence would have a high degree of awareness and understanding of their own emotional intelligence as well

as those of the learners.  The emotionally intelligent educator would also be able to react more appropriately to the learners and help create a more positive learning environment where the learners are more willing to learn and to cooperate with their educator and their peers. This missing element seemed to be common to both new as well as seasoned educators.

A literature search indicated that no previous studies had been conducted in this particular area.  Therefore the second reason for studying the area stems from the fact that a gap exists with regard to studies focusing on foundation phase educators' emotional intelligence and the impact thereof on their teaching.

## 1.3.   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to find out what foundation phase educators understood about the concept of emotional intelligence and how their understanding of the concept influenced their teaching.  The study sought to explore and describe what understanding foundation phase educators in this particular context attached to the concept of emotional intelligence rather than to make generalisations about it.  I deliberately chose not to use direct questioning about emotional intelligence but instead focused on a variety  of instruments that I anticipated would elicit more useful data in an indirect manner as to whether the educators had any knowledge and understanding of emotional intelligence or not.  An integrated conceptual framework comprising the Mayer and Salovey ability model (1997) and Goleman's (1995) competency model was used.  The research was conducted in an urban primary school among the foundation phase staff.  Data was collected via a combination of techniques, namely, the semi-structured interview, questionnaires as well as observation.

## 1.4.   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Emotional intelligence has a vital role to play in teaching and learning and it is of cardinal importance that teachers recognise the role emotional intelligence plays in teaching and are able to use it. Many children are faced with dire problems today and are consequently coming to school more troubled than before and are experiencing far more challenges at school.  "Changes in family structures, such as divorce, separation, single parenthood, child headed homes, as well as other

adverse socio-economic conditions increasingly deprive learners of resources for socio-emotional support" (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p. 1). Changes in society are hurtling ahead at breakneck speed and children are increasingly being exposed to pressure not only to achieve academically but also to face the prevalence of AIDS, violence and premature sexual and drug related experimentation (Cohen, 1999, p. 6). These changing circumstances in the lives of learners mean that there is a greater and a growing need for educators to provide learners with emotional support and to develop their socio-emotional competencies. Educators need to create a space where learners feel psychologically safe, respected and understood (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p. 4). A fundamental goal of education is to foster children's ability to learn how to learn and that learning won't take place unless a child feels safe enough to listen to the self and others, to be curious, to ask questions, to express what he or she knows and does not know (Cohen, 1999, p. 19). Educators can attend to the emotional dimension of learning by using their own emotional intelligence to recognise and respond to the feelings of both themselves as well as the learners. If educators utilise their own emotional intelligence in this manner it can have the added advantage of making both the educator as well as the learner more effective in their respective roles.

A second way is to encourage an emotional state in the learners that is conducive to learning (Mortiboys, 2005, p. 8). According to Morris and Casey (2006), developing educators' knowledge, skills and understanding enables them to structure a facilitative environment. Educators thus need to understand the concept of emotional intelligence because it can have a profound impact upon the way they teach, the lessons they deliver, the relationships they develop with their learners and the results that learners ultimately achieve (Hamzah & Abdullah, 2009, p. 34).

Emotions are bound up with learning (Mortiboys, 2005, p. 1). In the words of Guy Claxton, "Learning itself is an intrinsically emotional business" (Claxton, 1999, p. 15). The process of learning, in whatever context, typically involves a variety of heightened feelings. If an educator's main function is to help learners to learn, it stands to reason that the educator be able to recognise the emotional dimension of learning and to work with it. Teachers need to use their emotional intelligence (Mortiboys, 2005, p. 1). Coetzee and Jansen (2007) contend that educators who demonstrate emotionally intelligent behaviour, model values and behaviour that

teach learners social and emotional management skills. According to Coetzee and Jansen (2007, p. 1), "educators who demonstrate emotionally intelligent behaviour in the classroom are not only more effective in achieving their academic goals but also convey a sense of caring towards their learners and create an emotional climate that enhances the learning environment, reduces peer conflict and facilitates a more desirable teaching context". Educators who are aware of and have an understanding of their own emotional intelligence are more likely to attend to the socio-emotional dimension of their learners thus boosting learners' relations, mutual respect and engagement in the classroom (Obiakor, 2001). According to Morris and Casey (2006), developing educators' knowledge, skills and understanding enables them to structure a facilitative environment.  If this is the case, then educators' understanding and use of emotional intelligence in their teaching should be a fundamental part of the teaching process.

Currently, however it is questionable just how many educators actually do recognise the fundamental role that emotional intelligence can play in their work. There are educators who are very competent in their teaching skills but this appears to be at the cost of the attention given to the emotional dimension of teaching and learning. Educators seem pressurised and compelled to prepare their learners for standardised tests and the completion of the syllabus. Thus educators themselves are emotionally overwhelmed by demands and expectations set by the education system, parents, colleagues as well as learners (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p. 3).

Conventionally, an educator brings into the classroom two things that are of value to the learner, subject expertise as well as knowledge of learning and teaching methods.  Mortiboys (2005) is of the view that emotional intelligence should make up the third component of what educators have to offer learners. As emphasised in the quote at the beginning of this chapter EI or EQ, as it is commonly referred to in the popular media is distinct from IQ.  However Mortiboys (2005) believes that educators should develop and employ emotional intelligence to complement the subject expertise and pedagogical skills, in other words the traditional intelligence that is already offered to learners. He further contends that "educators who do not use emotional intelligence in their teaching seriously diminish the value of their knowledge of their subject as well as their learning and teaching methods" (Mortiboys, 2005, p. 2). His views mirror those of Elias (1997, p. 81) who also

suggested that emotional intelligence is the element that is lacking and should be offered by educators to their learners. In other words, educators who do not make use of their emotional intelligence skills in the teaching-learning process do not share the value of their knowledge or subject matter or their teaching and learning methods properly.

Educators who use emotional intelligence have the potential to enhance a variety of aspects in their work as teachers. For example, discipline issues may be determined by how the educator handles the feelings of the learners concerned. Even more important, the use of emotional intelligence is more likely to develop a state in learners which is conducive to learning, with an increased likelihood of learners being engaged, motivated, ready to take risks in their learning, positive in their approach to learning, ready to collaborate, creative and resilient (Mortiboys, 2005, p. 4).

Cohen (1999) is in agreement that the capacity for educators to be effective is dependent upon knowing and understanding their learners from a developmental, academic, psychological, as well as a social perspective. Educators need to move away from the idea that teaching academic skills and content are separate from the growth of a learner's social and emotional well being (Cohen, 1999, p.72). Indeed Cohen (1999) contends that focusing on the whole child does not detract from teaching academic material. Instead, he argues that both domains are part of the same fabric that is inextricably woven and weakness in any part will cause the entire fabric to unravel. Educators need to have an understanding of what emotional intelligence is and use it in their classrooms to ensure that the fabric does not unravel.

## 1.5. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With a view to accomplishing the purposes of this study the following research questions were designed.

1. What do educators understand by the concept of emotional intelligence?

2. How does their conceptualisation of emotional intelligence influence their teaching?

## 1.6. THEORETICAL RATIONALE

The study focused on how foundation phase educators understood emotional intelligence and how the understanding of the concept influenced the way in which they taught.  For the purposes of this study an integrated conceptual framework comprising the Mayer and Salovey ability model and Goleman's competency model was used. An integrated conceptual framework was used as I felt that there were elements of the Goleman model which could complement the components of the Mayer/Salovey model.

The Mayer and Salovey ability model views emotional intelligence as a set of abilities that is distinct from the mixed models of Goleman and Bar-On, both of which view emotional intelligence as a set of personality traits. The ability model of Mayer and Salovey focuses on interactive cognitive-emotional processes and has already been applied to many educational settings.  The Mayer and Salovey model (1997) outlines four basic sets of abilities:

- **To perceive emotions in oneself and in others**
- **To use emotions to facilitate thinking**
- **To understand emotional knowledge**
- **To regulate emotions in oneself and others**

To accurately perceive emotion, one has to pay attention to non verbal cues such as facial expressions and tones of voice and also have the capacity to express emotions verbally. The second area includes the ability to accurately associate emotions to other sensations as well as using emotions to enhance thought for the purposes of problem solving and decision making. The third area, understanding emotions, refers to the meaning of particular emotions. It involves the analysis of emotions into different parts in trying to understand complex feelings in social situations. The final area, management of emotions, involves the ability to manage feelings in oneself and in others.

In his theoretical model, Goleman identifies the following five domains:

- **Knowing one's emotions.** Self-awareness, the keystone of emotional intelligence, involves an in-depth understanding of an individual's own emotions, strengths and weaknesses.

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- **Managing emotions**.  This has to do with controlling and regulation of one's emotions and the ability to remain calm in adverse conditions.
- **Motivating oneself**.  This refers to the ability to focus the power of one's emotions and to use them purposefully.
- **Recognising emotions in others**. This has to do with empathy.
- **Handling relationships**. This refers to the ability to communicate, influence, collaborate and work with others (Goleman, 1995, p. 43).

This study did not seek to measure the construct of emotional intelligence.  The models were used to determine what degree of understanding, if any, educators have of the different aspects of emotional intelligence.  A combination of both models was used to underpin the study because the researcher felt that components of both models could be invaluable in the field of education.

## 1.7.  STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

To orientate the reader, the thesis begins with an introductory chapter which gives a preview of the entire study. This is followed by chapter 2 which focuses on the theoretical rationale. Chapter 3 comprises the literature review while chapter 4 concentrates on the methodology of the study. Chapter 5 comprises the presentation of the results and the final chapter covers the discussion of the results and the recommendations for future research.

## 1.8.  SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to present the reader with an overview of the study. The rationale, purpose and significance of the study were outlined.  The research questions for the study were also highlighted.  A brief introduction of the construct emotional intelligence, which comprises a major part of this study, was given.  The following chapter will concentrate on the theoretical rationale for the study.

# CHAPTER 2

## THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

*Out of the marriage of reason with affect there issues clarity with passion.  Reason without affect would be impotent, affect without reason would be blind*

(Tomkins, 1962, p. 112)

### 2.1.   INTRODUCTION

The study focused on how foundation phase educators understood emotional intelligence and how the understanding of the concept influenced the way in which they taught.  For the purposes of this study an integrated conceptual framework comprising the Salovey/Mayer ability model and Goleman's competency model was used.  The models were used to determine what degree of understanding educators had of the different aspects of emotional intelligence.  A combination of both models was used to underpin the study as the researcher was of the view that both models comprised of components that could contribute positively to the field of education.

The models mentioned above form part of the trio of the most widely accepted in the field of emotional intelligence today.  In the following chapter, the intention is to describe all three models of emotional intelligence with the emphasis being on the Salovey/Mayer and the Goleman models.  The Bar-On model, although not used in this study will be discussed briefly because it is one of the models which make up the trio of the most influential models in the field of emotional intelligence and the researcher considered it important to orientate the reader towards this.   The reasons as to why the two models were selected for this study will also be outlined as will their importance with regard to teaching and learning.

### 2.2.   THE RESURRECTION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

The resurgence of interest in emotional intelligence can largely be attributed to Salovey and Mayer, who were the first to describe a framework for an emotional intelligence, formalise a definition of emotional intelligence and make suggestions about its measurement in two published articles in the 1990s (Salovey et al, 2002). Equally influential in the field are Daniel Goleman, who popularised the concept and

brought it to the masses with the publication of his book, *Emotional Intelligence: why it can matter more than IQ* (1995), and Reuven Bar-On who coined the term emotional quotient or EQ when he developed the EQ-i, an instrument for measuring emotional intelligence. For the purposes of this study, the construct of emotional intelligence shall be referred to as EI. The next section will concentrate on the models of emotional intelligence.

## 2.3.    MODELS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

There are currently three major conceptual models of emotional intelligence that compete for recognition and aim to define, describe and measure the construct of emotional intelligence. These models view emotional intelligence either from the specific ability perspective or that of the mixed ability perspective. Brackett and Katulak (2006) contend that the specific ability model of EI focuses on the individual's capacity to reason about emotions and to process emotional information to enhance cognitive processes and regulate behaviour. For instance, this model emphasises one's ability to manage one's own emotions (e.g., the ability to distract oneself temporarily from a difficult situation) as an element of EI.

Mixed models, on the other hand, define and measure EI as a set of perceived abilities, skills, and personality traits. Specific-Ability models focus on a set of particular skills that are considered fundamental to emotional intelligence while the Mixed Models do not focus primarily on emotional intelligence (Mayer et al, 2008). These models instead are combined with personality characteristics such as optimism and well-being (Mayer, 1999).  The two models will be discussed in greater detail so as to give the reader a more in-depth understanding of the concept of emotional intelligence and the core components.

## 2.4.    THE SALOVEY/MAYER MODEL

The ability model views emotional intelligence as a cognitive ability and therefore as a pure form of intelligence. This pure theory draws on and integrates key ideas from the fields of intelligence as well as that of emotion. The ability model defines emotional intelligence as a set of abilities that are separate and distinct from personality.  However, it does not suggest the existence of a completely new or previously undiscovered set of abilities.  Instead it recognises the relatedness of

several aspects of emotion processing that together contribute to social psychological functioning (Jordan et al, 2006). The term 'emotional intelligence' was originally coined by Peter Salovey and John D. Mayer, the leading researchers in the field and the first to formally define emotional intelligence and demonstrate that aspects of it could be measured (Mayer & Cobb, 2000). They initially defined emotional intelligence as:

*A form of intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' feelings and emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions* (Salovey & Mayer, 1990, p. 189).

This definition incorporated three core elements of emotional intelligence – appraisal and expression of emotions, regulation of emotions, and utilisation of emotions in thinking and acting (Salovey et al, 2002). At the time this definition was based on reading that the researchers had done rather than on empirical research. Consequently, this conceptualisation of emotional intelligence has since been refined to include four core elements. Salovey and Mayer currently define emotional intelligence as:

*The ability to perceive and express emotion, integrate emotion to facilitate thought, understand emotions, and to regulate emotions to promote personal growth* (Mayer & Salovey, 1997, p.10).

This definition allowed for the construct of EI to be divided into four distinct areas of abilities and skills which became known as the four-branch model. The order of the branches, from branch one through to the fourth branch, represents the degree to which the ability is integrated within the rest of an individual's major psychological subsystems, that is, within his or her overall personality (Mayer et al, 2004, p. 198 ). The four branches of the Salovey/Mayer model of emotional intelligence are as follows:

- Emotional perception and expression
- Emotional facilitation of thought
- Emotional understanding
- Emotional management  (Salovey et al, 2002)

### 2.4.1. Emotional Perception and Expression

The first branch refers to the capacity to perceive and express feelings. It is crucial for individuals to master the competencies involved in this branch without which emotional intelligence would be impossible. This branch is concerned with how accurately individuals can identify emotions and emotional content. To accurately perceive emotion, one has to register, pay attention to, and decipher emotional cues as they are expressed in the form of non verbal cues such as facial expressions, voice tones and cultural artefacts (Salovey et al, 2002). Included in this set of abilities is the capacity to verbally express emotions and their related needs (Pellitteri et al, 2006, p. 156).

Devoting adequate time and attention to the development of emotional perception can play a crucial role in optimising educator effectiveness in multiple domains (Brackett & Katulak, 2006). Educators can use their heightened self-awareness to accurately perceive the emotions of others and to guide the approach they adopt. For example, this branch would be extremely important for an educator who works with younger children who sometimes do not have the verbal capacity to vocalise their thoughts but can display them emotionally. As an example, an educator who witnesses even a fleeting expression of fear in the face of a learner can understand so much more about that learner's emotions as compared to an educator who misses such a signal and so too an opportunity. People need to acknowledge all feelings, including the negative ones and attend to them rather than ignore them in order to learn more about feelings.

### 2.4.2. Emotional Facilitation of Thought

The second branch concerns the use of emotions to facilitate thinking. This branch focuses on how emotion affects thinking and how it can be utilised to effectively solve problems, make decisions, improve reasoning and promote creativity (Mayer et al, 2008, Salovey et al, 2002). Emotions can prioritise thinking so that attention can be redirected to important events. The process of emotional facilitation of thinking consists of the ability to consider the emotional valence of ideas and events in making judgement (Pellitteri et al, 2006, p.156). For example, when feelings such as anxiety or fear arise, the emotions can take over and attend to what is important instead. This means that the emotions can prioritise the cognitive system so that the

important issues are given attention rather than allowing cognition to be disrupted by negative emotions such as fear, anxiety or frustration (Salovey et al, 2002). Someone who responds emotionally to the important issues will attend to the more crucial aspects of his or her life (Mayer et al, 2008) rather than be sidetracked by issues that are not really important. In contrast, if for example an educator is constantly frustrated by a learner's minor mistakes, then other more important issues regarding the learning process of the learner might not be addressed. Brackett and Katulak (2006) contend that educator effectiveness is dependent upon the abilities to recognise which emotions are suited for different situations, to harness that emotional energy to facilitate thinking and behaviour, and to generate optimal emotional states for different contexts.

### 2.4.3. Emotional Understanding

The third branch involves the understanding of emotion. This involves the ability to understand the relationships among different emotions and to perceive the causes and consequences of emotions (Salovey et al, 2002). This branch is concerned with the ability to accurately label and categorise feelings. It is a particularly important branch for educators as they are in constant interaction with learners and are therefore continuously engaged in the interplay of emotions. A person who is low on emotional understanding may misunderstand a situation or the consequences thereof and react inappropriately. An educator who is not strong in this particular domain of EI, may not understand a learner's angry outburst and may mistake this for disrespect and hence deal with the situation inappropriately, possibly by reacting in anger him/herself.  For example, if a learner behaves in an unbecoming manner towards an educator and refuses to do any work, the educator may react by losing his/her temper perceiving this as unacceptable and demeaning behaviour on the part of the learner. Another educator might attribute the same learner's behaviour as a response to some sort of negative home situation and may experience feelings of sadness toward the learner.

### 2.4.4. Emotional Management

The final branch refers to the ability to manage one's own emotions and those of others.  Management of feelings forms a crucial aspect of emotional intelligence.  It focuses on the ability to be open to feelings, both positive and negative, monitoring

and reflection of feelings as well as the ability to engage, prolong or detach from an emotional state (Salovey et al, 2002). The implementation of emotion-management strategies is a priceless approach for educators as it not only leads to more effective classroom management but also helps to create a more open and effective classroom environment with fewer distractions (Brackett & Katulak, 2006). For example, an educator with good emotional management skills will be able to regulate his/her feelings to the extent such that he/she can withdraw from a situation without becoming aggressive towards learners.

Each of the branches includes levels of abilities which an individual has to complete in sequence before progressing to the next stage. Those who have higher levels of EI are believed to progress through these abilities quicker than those with lower levels of EI (Mayer & Salovey, 1997).

The Salovey/Mayer model of emotional intelligence progresses in hierarchy from the basic to the higher more psychologically integrated skills. For instance, the lowest level branch comprises the perception and expression of emotion which is a fairly simple ability in comparison to the highest level branch which involves the conscious, reflective regulation of emotion (Mayer & Salovey, 1997). It is necessary for one to master the first three branches in order to progress to the next level. The four EI skills included in the Mayer and Salovey (1997) model are interrelated, as proficiency in one skill influences mastery in other areas, and cumulative, as mastery on the first three skills culminates in proficiency in the fourth area, management of emotion(Brackett & Katulak, 2006). Research has shown that EI can be taught and enhanced.

## 2.5. GOLEMAN'S MODEL OF MIXED ABILITY

Goleman was inspired by the work of Salovey and Mayer in the area of EI and as a result began his own research in the area. Consequently, the core components of the Goleman model are common to that of the Salovey and Mayer model. The difference is, that the Goleman model was designed specifically for increasing competencies in the workplace, whereas the Salovey/Mayer model was designed for a variety of different settings, including, education, the health field, as well as the corporate world. I am, however, of the view that the Goleman model can also be

used very effectively in the field of education as. Goleman defines emotional intelligence as "the ability to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations, to control impulse and delay gratification, to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think, to empathise and hope" (Goleman, 1995, p. 34).

In his theoretical model, Goleman identifies the following five domains of emotional intelligence:

- Knowing one's emotions (Self-awareness)
- Managing emotions.
- Motivating oneself.
- Recognising emotions in others (Empathy)
- Handling relationships (Goleman, 1995, p. 43).

### 2.5.1. Knowing One's Emotions (Self-Awareness)

Self-awareness, which is the ability to recognise a feeling as it occurs, is the keystone of emotional intelligence. It involves an in-depth understanding of an individual's own emotions, strengths and weaknesses. The ability to monitor feelings from one moment to the next is paramount to psychological insight and self-understanding. According to him people who have a greater self-awareness of their feelings have better control over their lives and have a better sense of how they really feel about personal decisions. An educator's enhanced self-awareness can play a crucial role in the educator's ability to recognise the feelings of his or her learners. Self-awareness of one's own feelings enables one to recognise feelings in others more easily. Self-awareness of one's emotions is a stepping stone to the next domain.

### 2.5.2. Managing Emotions

This has to do with the controlling and regulation of one's emotions and the ability to remain calm in adverse conditions. This basic but essential emotional skill has to do with soothing oneself, shaking off anxiety and improving one's mood. One has to be skilled in the area of self-awareness in order to handle feelings appropriately. The goal of this component is not to suppress emotions but to control them to a point that emotions do not become too extreme causing depression, anxiety, anger, rage or frustration (Goleman 1995). According to Goleman (1995) those who are competent

in this skill are able to deal more effectively with life's setbacks as compared to those who aren't. An educator who is able to recognise personal feelings in any given moment will also be able to manage emotions effectively. So for example, an educator might recognise that his anger might lead him to striking a learner. The recognition of the feeling can be utilised to calm one down and react in a more positive manner.

### 2.5.3. Motivating Oneself

This refers to the ability to focus the power of one's emotions and to use them purposefully.  Goleman (1995) contends that motivation refers to the extent to which an individual acts upon a given idea, thought, or goal. Motivating oneself involves channelling emotions to achieve a goal, emotional self-control, and delaying indulgent and overpowering impulses (Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005).  In an age where many educators feel very unmotivated and demoralised, this component can be a very useful tool.

### 2.5.4. Recognising Emotion in Others (Empathy)

Empathy, another ability which builds on self-awareness, is regarded as the fundamental people skill by Goleman (1995). One has to be very aware of their own feelings in order to recognise the feelings of another. Empathy involves being sensitive to the feelings of others and having the ability to view a situation from their perspective. It also involves appreciating peoples' uniqueness. According to Goleman (1995, p. 43) people who are empathic are more attuned to the subtle social signals that indicate what others need or want. Richburg and Fletcher (2002) contend that  it is important to take into account the emotions and needs of others as this sensitivity moulds one's social skills, enhances one's emphatic  perspective and increases one's social competence. This element of EI should form a crucial part of all educators' development, more especially those educators who deal with younger learners. Only by putting oneself in the shoes of another can one really understand what the other party is experiencing.

### 2.5.5. Handling Relationships

This refers to the ability to communicate, influence, collaborate and work with others. In order for feelings to be managed they have to be identified first. Managing of

emotions involves entering an emotional state associated with achievement and success. Applying these three abilities to other people allows one to read and influence positively other people's emotions. Once this can be done one has increased one's ability to enter and sustain good relationships. The degree to which one forms and maintains relationships reflects the strength of one's ability on the domain of self-awareness and social competence (Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005).

As with the Salovey/Mayer model the Goleman model also progresses in hierarchy, meaning that one necessarily has to move from the first domain to the last. The different components can be seen as building blocks with the upper blocks building on the strength of the previous ones.

## 2.6.    REUVEN BAR-ON'S MIXED ABILITY MODEL

Another equally important model of EI, is the Bar-On model. This model describes emotional intelligence as an array of emotional and social competences and abilities that impact intelligent behaviour. These include the ability to be aware of, understand, and express oneself, the ability to be aware of, understand, and to relate to others, the ability to deal with strong emotions, and the ability to adapt to change and solve problems of a social or personal nature (Bar-On, 1997). This model focuses on the following components:

- intrapersonal
- interpersonal
- adaptability
- stress management
- general mood (Bar-On, 1997)

Bar-On's model of emotional intelligence relates to the potential for performance and success, rather than performance or success itself, and is considered process-oriented rather than outcome-oriented (Bar-On, 2002). The Bar-On model bears some similarity to that of the Goleman model but it was not included as part of the theoretical framework for this study as it focuses more on personality traits rather than on EI itself. It will therefore not be discussed any further as it does not have any merit for this study. The Bar-On model was briefly mentioned here only because it is one of the models which make up the trio of the most influential models in the field of

emotional intelligence and the researcher considered it important to orientate the reader towards this.

Many of the elements of the Goleman model are very similar to that of the Salovey /Mayer model with the distinguishing feature being that Goleman designed his model specifically for the workplace while the Salovey and Mayer model was designed for use in settings other than just the corporate setting. Despite their distinctions, all of the above approaches share one common factor; they all aim to understand how an individual perceives and regulates his or her own emotions and those of others.

## 2.7. MEASUREMENT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Each of the three models is associated with their own distinctive measurement instrument. These are the Mayer-Salovey-Caruso Emotional Intelligence Test (MSCEIT), the Bar-On Emotion Quotient Inventory (EQ-i) and Goleman's ECI 360 test. It is only the MSCEIT that tests the actual ability of an individual while the other two tests are self-report tests. These tests shall not be discussed any further as they were not utilised during the study. They were mentioned with the intention of alerting the reader to the fact that these measuring tools do exist and they can be utilised in other studies that warrant their use. They were also mentioned here because much of the debate concerning the field of EI centres on the instruments of EI and this aspect will be discussed in more detail at a later stage.

## 2.8. RATIONALE FOR THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The way in which emotional intelligence is used by both educators as well as their learners can have a powerful effect with wide ranging benefits in the lives of both. Educators can be crucial models in the domain of emotional intelligence and their learners can expand their own repertoire of emotional and social competences simply by observing how their teachers manage their own and the feelings of others, how they react to certain situations, what is really important etc. Since school is a natural setting in which to help learners deal with a wide range of confounding issues, educators whose jobs are to prepare their learners for life, should have more than just a cognitive understanding of what emotional intelligence is. They should have a scientific and practical understanding and knowledge of emotional intelligence, not only for their own wellness and teaching-learning relationships but

also to provide a safe and positive climate that is more conducive to learning. An educator with a good understanding of the core elements of emotional intelligence and how they work is in the ideal position to equip his/her learners with tools other than those required by the explicit school curriculum. Those educators who have an understanding and knowledge of emotional intelligence are well equipped to achieve a balance in the classroom that encourages children to learn and to achieve their full potential. Educators who have a scientific understanding of the core elements of emotional intelligence as defined and described by both Salovey and Mayer as well as Goleman can put to good use their knowledge as part of best practice. Exploring, understanding and employing emotional intelligence skills can be most beneficial in terms of enhancing the learning climate.

## 2.9. EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE AND TEACHING

The Salovey and Mayer Ability model views EI as a pure intelligence and as a skill that can be taught as well as enhanced. This is in direct contrast to the traditional type of intelligence. Research has shown, however, that EI can have a very positive influence on the standard type of intelligence. According to the ability model, the construct of EI can be divided into four branches, all of which can either be taught or improved upon.

The first branch which refers to the perception and expression of emotions correlates with Goleman's first component of self-awareness as they are both concerned with identification of emotions in oneself and in others. The domain of self-awareness is the keystone of emotional intelligence. As Socrates contended, '*know thyself'*, the ability to identify and monitor one's true feelings increases an individual's level of self-awareness and the ability to monitor and control our lives. It also allows one to make conscious choices regarding major and minor life decisions (Richburg & Fletcher, 2002, p. 32).

Learning to identify and convey emotions is crucial for effective communication and for gaining emotional control. Why are these two components important in the field of teaching and learning? An educator who is perceptive to learners' emotions through non-verbal cues such as body language and facial expressions or gestures can gain a wealth of information about his/her charges. However, an educator can only make these types of observations about others if he/she is able to identify his/her own

feelings as they arise and deal with them in an effective manner. The concept of self-awareness involves an awakening of the self. This means that the individual has to examine his/her own thoughts, feelings and actions introspectively. This self reflective action leads to a better understanding of the self and thus an enhanced emotional competence of the self (Richburg & Fletcher, 2002, p. 32).

Only when one has reached the level where one is attuned to one's own feelings and how one is affected by them can one then perceive and understand the feelings of others. One of the fundamental assumptions of Self-Science, a curriculum which teaches emotional intelligence skills is that the more self-knowledge one gains, the more likely it is that one can respond to one's self and others. A well developed sense of self-awareness is therefore vital for educators to develop fulfilling and nurturing relationships not only with their learners but with all people in their lives.

The second branch of the Salovey/Mayer model which concerns emotional facilitation of cognitive activities focuses on how emotion affects the cognitive system.  This means that educators who practise emotional intelligence can harness their emotions for more effective problem solving, reasoning, decision making and creative endeavours in the teaching-learning environment (Salovey et al, 2002). Strength in this domain would definitely improve educator-learner relationships and influence teaching positively. An individual who is highly skilled in this branch will be able to think about a problem more deeply and creatively and arrive at a solution that is beneficial.

The third branch of the Salovey/Mayer model involves the understanding of emotion. At this level one must have the ability to label emotions with words and also be able to realise that certain feelings can lead to undesirable states if the provocative stimulus is not removed.  For example, annoyance towards a learner who has not completed a homework task can easily turn into rage and cause aggressive behaviour.  However, an educator who is able to label and categorise feelings will be able to react proactively.

The fourth branch of the Salovey/Mayer model corresponds to Golelman's second domain as both focus on the management of emotions. According to Goleman (1995) the goal of emotional management is not to suppress emotions but rather to control the emotions to a point that they do not become so extreme as to cause

pathological states such as depression, anxiety, anger, rage or frustration to develop. Salovey and Mayer also emphasise the importance of being able to deal with both positive and negative emotions in an effective manner. Educators are presented with frustrating situations in the teaching-learning environment on a daily basis. The educator who is highly skilled in emotional intelligence could manage these situations in a manner that best warrants it and move on while another educator could react by using aggression or even corporal punishment. The emotionally intelligent educator will firstly be able to identify the feelings of the learner and then acknowledge his/her own emotional state before deciding how to react in terms of emotional expression.

Empathy, a domain of Goleman's model is considered to be the building block for all social competences (Weare, 2004, p. 45). It is about viewing the world from another's point of view. In more colloquial terms it is about putting oneself in the shoes of another person in order to really feel the emotions they are feeling. It involves recognition of emotion in others, having compassion for others, refraining from harming others, sensitivity to their feelings, respect and acceptance of differences in others (Weare, 2004, p.45). This domain, in particular should be very strong in educators. Learners arrive at schools everyday with a multitude of varying and often baffling behaviour. It must also be considered that younger children very often do not have the verbal repertoire to express their emotions fully and appropriately. It is particularly important for foundation phase educators to be very strong in the domain of empathy so that they are able to recognise the emotions of their young learners who may not want to, or may not be able to, express their emotions appropriately.

Motivating oneself makes up the third component of Goleman's EI model and refers to the ability to focus the power of emotions and use them purposefully. A self-motivated educator should be able to keep him or herself from being swamped by negative emotions and be able to motivate their learners as well.

It stands to reason that educators who are skilled in all of the above EI components would have the ability to manage their relationships with their learners more creatively and consequently maintain better relationships with them.

The two models while distinct from each with regard to certain domains share a few commonalities as discussed above. These are the core elements of emotional intelligence which should be essential to every educator's gamut of skills. The two EI models complement each other very well and can be used very effectively in the field of education. As Tomkins's (1962) points out at the beginning of the chapter, rational thought and emotion should be seen as complementary aspects rather than two distinct areas. Educators need to embrace emotional intelligence as part of their everyday teaching in order to help their learners reach their optimum.

The reason for using Goleman's theory as well as Salovey's and Mayer's theory is that there are certain elements which the researcher considers very important that are missing from the Salovey/Mayer model. These include the domains of empathy, motivation as well as handling of relationships which are considered by the researcher to be of paramount importance in the field of EI. These domains can also play a pivotal role in the teaching-learning experience.

## 2.10. SUMMARY

This chapter covered the theoretical framework of the study. The aim was to provide the theoretical foundation for the construct of EI. The different definitions and models of EI were discussed. The measurement instruments of EI were also introduced. This chapter also aimed to elucidate why the frameworks were chosen and how they are important to the study. The following chapter will focus on the review of literature pertaining to EI and its importance in the field of education. The historical background, as well as some of the controversies surrounding EI, will also be discussed.

# CHAPTER 3

# REVIEW OF LITERATURE

*"All learning has an emotional base."*
*-- Plato*

## 3.1.    INTRODUCTION

Emotional intelligence (EI) is a relatively new field when compared to the standard type of intelligence which has been researched for over a hundred years. Although still in its infancy stage, the field of emotional intelligence has grown dramatically since it was first scientifically conceptualised in academic literature in the 1990s. Yet it still remains a somewhat elusive concept and a field that has been fraught with criticism and debate.

The concept of emotional intelligence first began to make waves when it was popularised in the media with the publication of Daniel Goleman's book, *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ* (1995). This fuelled both public and professional interest in the arena of emotional intelligence.  Consequently, numerous programmes and courses on teaching, developing and enhancing emotional intelligence have since been implemented in a variety of settings, including the corporate world, the health field, as well as the field of education.

This chapter focuses on the review of literature, more specifically, the history, background and importance of EI for education. It also discusses some of the controversies around the construct of EI.

## 3.2.    EMOTIONS AND INTELLIGENCE

The debate as to whether emotions or cognition is more important has been going on for centuries.   Many philosophical and religious texts have emphasised the importance of developing awareness as well as behaviour monitoring of humankind and have reflected on both interpersonal and intrapersonal skills such as compassion, empathy, trust, self-knowledge and contemplation (Freshman & Rubino, 2002).  As an example, *The Bhagavad Gita*, a Hindu text, argues  in favour

of the awareness and management of emotions by maintaining, "That man is disciplined and happy who can prevail over the turmoil that springs from desire and anger, here on earth …" (Freshman & Rubino, 2002).

Elements of intrapersonal and interpersonal intelligence, which are core components of EI can be detected in the works of the great Eastern philosopher Confucius who in 500 BC taught concepts in terms of vertical and horizontal relationships.  The vertical relationships emphasised the development of a better human being through self improvement based on meditation and education with regard to ethics and morals, patience and benevolence. Horizontal relationships focused on social awareness and the impact one has on other people (Berthrong & Berthrong, 2000).

The debate between whether intelligence or the emotions are more important can also be traced back to Ancient Greece when the Stoics provided a context for thinking about the relationship between emotion and cognition by declaring that reason was superior to emotion. The Stoic philosophers viewed emotion as too individualistic and self-absorbed and therefore an unreliable guide for insight and wisdom (Salovey et al, 2002). This view was rejected by the Sentimentalists of eighteenth-century Europe who argued that feelings were truer than reason (Mayer et al, 2008) and that intuition and empathy that were rooted in emotion could provide insights that were unattainable through logic alone (Salovey et al, 2002).

Aristotle, the Greek philosopher also touched on the importance of managing the emotions, a core component of emotional intelligence, when he said, "*Anyone can become angry—that is easy. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way—this is not easy.*"

## 3.3.    EARLY BEGINNINGS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Hints of the emotional component of intelligence can be traced back to theorists such as Thorndike (1920) who described "social intelligence" as the ability to get along with people. Thorndike (1920, p. 228) wrote that social intelligence was "the ability to understand and manage men and women, boys and girls – to act wisely in human relations."  There was also a call by several other theorists to attend to multiple specific intelligences. These included Weschsler (1952), who suggested that emotional components of intelligence may be essential to success in life and stressed the importance of the emotional capacities as part of the human repertoire

of capabilities. In the 1950s, humanistic psychologists such as Abraham Maslow described how people can build emotional strength.

The work of these early pioneers was largely overlooked until Gardner (1983) introduced the concept of multiple intelligences. According to his theory of multiple intelligences all humans possess a number of intelligences, each of which resides in a different part of the brain. The theory of Multiple Intelligences placed key emphasis on interpersonal as well as intrapersonal intelligences both of which are key components of emotional intelligence. Gardner (1983) put forth that both interpersonal as well as intrapersonal intelligence are just as important as the cognitive elements of intelligence. He argued in favour of the use of multiple intelligences to recognise the strengths that learners bring into the classroom. Interpersonal intelligence or "people smart" refers to how well an individual can understand and get along with others while intrapersonal intelligence refers to one's ability to understand and know oneself. Payne was one of the early contributors who came close to a first definition of emotional intelligence when he described emotional intelligence as a basic intelligence and he spoke of felt meanings, emotional truths, interpersonal relationships and emotional problems in an unpublished dissertation (Mayer & Cobb, 2000).

## 3.4. THE RESURRECTION OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

It has already been established that the idea of EI has been in existence for some time. However, the resurrection of EI, in the more modern era can be attributed largely to Salovey and Mayer, Goleman and Bar-On. These theorists are most often associated with the field of EI due to the strides they have made in the field. Salovey and Mayer defined EI as an ability that included awareness of feelings, integration of feelings into thought and the understanding and management of feelings (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Goleman's definition made the construct of EI more accessible to the general public when he defined it in terms that people could relate to their own lives (Matthews, et al, 2002). His definition, which included some of the core concepts of EI as defined by Salovey and Mayer, included a series of competencies which could be developed and enhanced specifically in the workplace and with regard to leadership (Goleman, 1995). These competencies included self-awareness, recognition and management of emotions, motivation, and handling of relationships.

Bar-On expanded on Goleman's definition of EI by including the five areas of intrapersonal intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, stress management, adaptability, and general mood. Their contributions to the field have already been covered in the previous chapter and shall therefore not be discussed in detail here.

## 3.5.  THE CONSTRUCT OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

What exactly is the construct of emotional intelligence and what makes it so appealing? Simply put, emotional intelligence refers to the ability to process emotion-laden information competently and to use it to guide cognitive activities like problem solving and to focus energy on required behaviours (Salovey et al, 2002, p. 159). According to Walton (2012) emotional intelligence is the ability to manage the impact that our emotions have on our relationships with others. It includes accurate recognition of feelings as well as having sufficient control over feelings so as to act effectively. The term led to some questioning the IQ score which is obtained on standardised intelligence tests, as being the only predictor of success in an individual's life (Bar-On, 2003, Wagner, 1997).

Researchers began to theorise that there may be other ways of being intelligent as opposed to the standard type of intelligence which traditionally placed emphasis on increasing the cognitive capacities, skills and competencies of individuals and applying the information to reasoning, understanding and solving problems (Bar-On, 2003). The term also suggested that, not only could these abilities be developed, but also that an emotional intelligence could be an important predictor of success in personal relationships, family functioning and the workplace (Salovey et al, 2002, p. 159). It offered hope and promise in comparison to the traditional, standard intelligence.

Consequently, the concept of emotional intelligence has emerged from the growing realisation that there are factors beyond cognitive performance which play a role in life's success. Maree and Fernandes (2003) contend that the concept of EI represents a move away from an exclusive focus on cognitive processes and abilities based on the fact that even intellectually 'weak' persons often progress through life successfully and purposefully.

The definition of EI is largely influenced by the approach; each different definition making use of differing measurement tools and varying claims for EI's importance. The three most popular definitions are those as put forward by the theorists mentioned above. Despite the variances in the definitions all share and emphasise certain core elements very strongly. Drawing from the above definitions, emotional intelligence can be described as the recognition and management of emotions in oneself and in others. The definition offered by Salovey and Mayer, and which is the most widely accepted today, combines the ideas of interrelatedness between intelligence and emotion. According to their definition, the two constructs complement one another. It puts forth quite clearly that the use of emotion can make thinking more intelligent and that one can think intelligently about emotions.

## 3.6. EMOTIONS AND TEACHING

Emotions are an integral part of education (Sutton & Wheatley, 2003, Hargreaves, 2000). Plato himself stated that "*All learning has an emotional base*". Nias (1996) also noted that teaching involves human interaction and therefore has an emotional dimension. Moreover, it involves ''intensive personal interactions, often in crowded conditions, with large numbers of pupils who are frequently energetic, spontaneous, immature and preoccupied with their own interests'' (Nias, 1996, p. 296). Educators and learners all experience an array of sometimes contrasting emotions in the classroom (Day, 2004). Both educators as well as learners display feelings of boredom, frustration, anger, enthusiasm, pride etc at different times within the teaching and learning context (Hargreaves, 2000). Each educator and learner experiences and expresses emotions in a unique way. Put differently, this means that each and every educator and learner differs in their ways of thinking, expression of feelings and choices of behaviours or actions.

Emotions and rational thought should be seen as interrelated rather than discrete entities. According to Hargreaves (2000), emotions are not peripheral to people's lives nor can they be compartmentalised away from rational reflection and action. He contends that emotions, cognition and action are integrally connected. Frijda (2000) and Nias (1996) also see emotion and cognition as being inextricably interconnected and are thus difficult to separate. Damasio (1996), one of the world's leading neurologists also emphasises that emotions have a crucial role to play in learning

and asserts that there are aspects of emotions and feelings that are indispensable to rationality. He also contends that the use of emotional intelligence should be a part of every teacher's development. Furthermore, if teaching and learning have an emotional dimension, then to more completely understand processes of teaching and learning it necessitates exploring the emotional and cognitive aspects of both (Mortiboys, 2005).

Currently, however the emotional dimension of teaching largely continues to remain an area of neglect (Hargreaves, 2000). A possible explanation for the continued neglect of this vital component of teaching could be attributed to the influential writings of Rene Descartes who, in the seventeenth century wrote, "*I think therefore I am*" (Mortiboys, 2005). He saw the body and the mind as two separate entities with the mind being viewed as a higher faculty than the body. Traditionally emotions and intelligence have been seen as adversaries and this view continues to impact on much of education today with the intellect being viewed as the seat of rational thought and therefore superior and more trustworthy than the emotions. According to Hargreaves (2000, p.811), emotions are just as important for "deepening our understanding of the nature, conditions and consequences of teaching, learning and leading in our schools today". The construct of emotional intelligence offers a new approach that can be utilised to address the importance of emotions in intelligence.

Ergur (2009) emphasises the importance of educators learning to relate their emotional intelligence skills to the context in which they work. Ergur (2009) contends "schools are social places and learning is an intrinsically social process, therefore the social and emotional competencies of educators have great impact on the teaching-learning process." Educators who are socially and emotionally competent can use their skills with their learners by encouraging learners to learn, work and contribute to their full potential. Emotionally intelligent educators are able to relate more effectively to their charges, manage their classrooms better and teach more effectively. The emotionally intelligent educator is also more able to manage their own stress and respond to change (Weare, 2004, p. 14).

Similarly Morris and Casey (2006) also contend that educators have a much more crucial role to play and are responsible for more than just imparting knowledge.

Rather educators are attempting to develop compassionate, responsible, creative and cooperative citizens for the future. What better tool to utilise than that of their own emotional intelligence. Educators who are skilled in the area of emotional intelligence are able to structure a facilitative environment that facilitates development of their learners' emotional intelligence.

It is particularly important for foundation phase educators to be skilled in the area of emotional intelligence. The foundation phase typically consists of learners who range from the reception grade to grade three learners. This group of learners usually require more care and nurturing as compared to their older counterparts. Their first encounters at school are with foundation phase educators. Since most foundation phase educators are involved in class based teaching it means that many of them spend a considerable amount of time with their learners. Thus foundation phase educators are in the prime position not only to nurture the emotional intelligence skills of their charges but also that of their own. Palaiologou (2013) contends that foundation phase educators need to develop a range of skills in order to promote learning. Emotional intelligence should be one of the crucial skills that foundation phase educators in particular need to develop.

## 3.7. IMPORTANCE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE FOR EDUCATION

Traditionally, intelligence has been defined from the perspective of academic performance as reflected by test scores to the detriment of the emotional intelligence and resilience that are needed to survive in today's increasingly complex and competitive world (Obiakor, 2001). Some researchers (Goleman, 1995, Obiakor, 2001) contend that traditional intelligence does not offer adequate preparation for life's turmoil or opportunities and that a high IQ is no guarantee of prosperity, prestige or happiness, yet schools and our culture continue to fixate on academic abilities. Indeed, today's youth are part of a society that is plagued with overwhelming challenges of violence, poverty, racism and despair.

The children of today need to be equipped with strategies and tools which will enable them to manage themselves better and so make positive contributions and changes to society in spite of negative circumstances that surround them. Educators themselves need to be effectively equipped to empower their learners in terms of the academic and socio-emotional challenges they face almost on a daily basis. Many

educators struggle to manage the diversity of today's classrooms while simultaneously trying to assist their learners to reach their full potential in the wake of the daily trauma and mayhem.

Kaufhold and Johnson (2005) contend that an educator's best practice involves dedication to lifelong learning and a commitment to personal and professional growth. Their argument is that a critical aspect of a healthy, personally accountable and successful person is that of emotional intelligence. They hold the view that educators who understand and improve their own emotional intelligence skills have the added advantage of being able to not only develop their own professional and personal strengths and improve areas of weakness, but also lessen the risk of psychological burnout.

Studies show that educators who have difficulty regulating their emotions and consequently their classrooms tend to have students who experience more negative emotions such as sadness, shame and guilt in class (Sutton & Wheately, 2003). Another study conducted by Stuhlman and Pianta (2002) also found that the educators' emotional responses to their learners were most closely related to classroom behaviour, that is when educators experienced negative emotions with regard to certain learners, those learners displayed greater behaviour problems. Many researchers believe emotional skills training for teachers can create a more stable, supportive, and productive learning environment that encourages positive social interaction, active engagement, and academic achievement among students (Brackett & Katulak, 2006).

Day (2004) and Goleman (1995) argue that in order for educators to facilitate their learners' emotional literacy, i.e. the understanding and application of emotional intelligence, educators themselves need to have a sense of it. In the *Passion Frame*, one of their leadership frames that identify the importance of attending to feeling, Hargreaves et al (1997) emphasise the need for educators to cultivate their own as well as their learners' emotional intelligence. Indeed educators who understand and improve their own emotional intelligence skills have at hand an instrument that can be used to simultaneously develop professional strengths as well as improve areas of weakness (Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005).

Educators who are skilled in emotional intelligence could then also potentially utilise their own emotional intelligence as a means of gaining a more complete picture of individual learners and can apply it to classroom instruction and use it to build learners' social skills (Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005). They could also serve as role models for their learners. Educators who model emotional intelligence are characterised by: intentional reflective (not reactive) behaviour; greater flexibility (not resistant to change); assertiveness (not aggressive or passive); greater optimism and hope (not pessimistic and negative), and a reliance on skills and positive habits (not reactive habits) (Nelson et al, 2005). Weare (2004, p.127) contends that the behaviour and attitudes of the adults with whom children come into contact is highly significant in determining how effectively they learn emotional and social competences and experience emotional and social well being in school.

Pellitteri et al (2006), agree that the EI of educators is a necessary factor in developing EI in learners. They believe that educators can structure learner interactions in the environment by placing value on emotional sensitivity and self-awareness. Educators themselves must have a significant level of self-awareness in order to communicate in a genuine manner and connect with the learners on an emotional level. Educators who utilise an EI approach can also regulate the behavioural dynamics of the classroom by the manner in which they respond to instances of learners' negative emotional interactions.

For learners to develop their emotional intelligence skills, they require safe learning environments that are emotionally healthy and academically challenging (Nelson et al, 2005). Researchers contend that educators and schools should be responsible for providing and maintaining these healthy learning environments which play a crucial role in minimising negativity and also contribute to more effective learning for the learners. According to Colverd and Hodgkin (2011) the school should represent a safe, caring environment in which the child can access academic as well as social and emotional life enhancing experiences. Nelson et al (2005) maintain that safe learning environments which are characterised by trust, respect and engaging dialogue in the classroom are critical to the development of constructive thinking as well as problem solving, goal setting, achievement, and leadership behaviours. They are of the opinion that healthy learning environments should focus on cognitive as well as affective skills. They believe that the emotional intelligence skills of assertion,

time management, goal achievement, commitment ethic, stress management and positive change are all crucial to academic achievement and success. Accordingly, educators should then become more accountable towards helping learners develop their emotional intelligence skills by learning and applying new skills themselves. As educators develop emotional awareness in themselves, they can begin to create more emotionally intelligent classroom environments (Pelliteri et al, 2006).

Many studies have focused on the emotional intelligence of learners and the role it plays in education. Such research indicates that children, who learn to manage time, stress and emotions will be more successful in the classroom (Kaufhold and Johnson (2005). Educators who promote emotional intelligence skills emphasise the value of positive individual differences, promote the learning of teamwork and problem solving skills and empower children to gain positive social skills. According to Obiakor (2001) such social skills boost learners' relations, mutual respect and engagement in classroom learning. Therefore it is important and essential for educators to learn about their own, as well as their learners' emotional intelligence.

Goleman (1995) has also argued for the importance of developing the emotional intelligence of children and adults. He contends that being able to put aside one's self-centred focus and impulses has social benefits in that it opens the way to empathy, to real listening and to taking another person's perspective. Goleman (1995) states that empathy, the cornerstone of emotional intelligence, leads to caring, altruism, and compassion all of which should form an essential part of an educator's repertoire of skills. Empathy enables one to break down biased stereotypes and breeds tolerance and acceptance of others. Learning is almost always influenced by social and emotional factors (Wang et al, 1997). Therefore, children need to develop reflective skills that enable them to recognise, acknowledge, understand and manage their emotions, which, according to Day (2004) is the responsibility not only of parents but also of educators. The implications for educators are that they need to have the confidence and skills to intervene and facilitate learners' emotional literacy from a position of having their own (Day. 2004, p. 98).

According to Coetzee and Jansen (2007), teaching is a work of heart. They contend that educators who display emotionally intelligent behaviour towards their learners

"activate and nourish the hearts of their learners" (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p.3). They further state that emotionally intelligent educators have the ability to ignite a passionate heart and a questing mind within themselves which makes a critical difference to the emotional environment. According to Coetzee et al (2007), emotionally intelligent educators are able to use their skills to create conditions that help learners feel cared for by someone who accepts them unconditionally and respects their uniqueness.

Emotionally intelligent educators are able to set clearly defined boundaries which are consistently upheld, involve learners in classroom activities and make them feel they belong, and encourage them to take an active part in classroom decision-making (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p.3). The emotionally intelligent educator is able to develop the skills and knowledge needed to create a safe classroom climate where learners can calm down and be motivated to learn. When children feel content and safe in the classroom, they are more motivated to learn and perform. Learners become motivated when they feel that they are being treated with respect, genuineness and empathy (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007; Ergur 2009). As Carl Rogers stated, an educator who showed genuineness, empathy and acceptance with learners would be able to bring about a positive change in their learners (Ergur, 2009). According to Mortiboys (2005, p.80), to teach with emotional intelligence, which includes being able to deal with the learners' feelings, is important in that:

- It makes the learners feel valued

- It helps to develop a fuller relationship with them

- It aids their learning

- It helps to shape a positive environment

Several studies indicate that social and emotional skills are associated with success in many areas of life, including effective teaching, student learning, quality relationships, and academic performance (Brackett & Katulak, 2006; Mayer et al, 2004; Sutton & Wheately, 2003).

Studies have shown EI to be very important and beneficial in a variety of settings including education. For example, a study conducted by James Parker (Bar-On,

2003) indicated a significant connection between EI and scholastic performance. The test was conducted among 667 male and female high school learners using the EQ-i:YV, a Bar-On measure of EI. A comparison of their EI scores and their grade point average scores revealed a correlation of 0.41 suggesting a significant relationship between the two. Based on the sample studied, the results mean that at least 17% of scholastic performance is a function of emotional and social intelligence in addition to inter alia cognitive intelligence.

The different versions of EI may all differ in some ways but they are all in agreement that EI broadens what it means to be smart. Emotional intelligence may help educators to have a better grasp of the whole learner, and to realise that the information educators convey is both cognitive and emotional (Mayer & Cobb, 2000, p. 178).

## 3.8.  CAN EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE BE TAUGHT?

Findings indicate that emotional intelligence can be enhanced as well as learned (Salovey et al, 2002). The literature points to various programmes that have been implemented in schools to teach or enhance emotional intelligence skills of both learners and educators alike. A well-known emotional intelligence curriculum that has been implemented in some schools in the USA is the Self-Science curriculum. This approach which was developed by Karen Stone-McCown and her colleagues focuses on emotions in half of the lessons and includes talking about feelings, listening, sharing and comforting others, learning to grow from conflict and adversity, prioritising and setting goals, including others, making conscious decisions, and giving time and resources to the larger community.

Other emotional intelligence interventions for learners take place within other more specific prevention programmes like the Resolving Conflict Creatively Programme (RCCP). An evaluation, in which 5000 learners participated, found the RCCP programme to be successful in terms of the following: There was a drop in aggressive behaviour of learners and the highest academic achievement improvement was detected amongst those who had received the most lessons. Programmes such as The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) have also been implemented in some schools. CASEL aims to advance the science and practice of school-based social and emotional learning

programmes by providing leadership to researchers, policy makers and educators (Brackett & Katulak, 2006, p. 2). However, some argue that there is no empirical proof that shows how effective these programmes have been.

## 3.9. CONTROVERSIES REGARDING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Although there has been a rapid growth of interest in EI, the field is still in its infancy. As an emerging science the field has been besieged with controversy and debate, much of which centre around the definitions and the models of emotional intelligence (Mayer & Cobb, 2000, Murphy, 2006). The claim that such intelligence might exist at all was in itself a controversial one and that claim is still somewhat disputed, despite a wave of support for the idea (Mayer, 2001). Much of the criticism has been aimed at the naive popularisations of emotional intelligence and more especially at the irresponsible claims made in the popular press (Mayer, Salovey & Caruso, 2004; Matthews, Zeidner & Richards, 2002; Jordan et al (2006). The diversity of definitions and consequently the different measures involved and the claims for its significance are other areas that have been criticised (Mayer, 2001). The diversity of definitions makes the question, 'Which EI are we talking about?' all the more critical. This is because the different definitions will impact on the type of measure used which will in turn impact on the results. With regard to the traditional type of intelligence, different intelligence scales will yield more or less the same results on the same person. However, in the case of EI, due to the varying definitions, different scales will encompass varying measures and so yield different results. For example, the self-report measures might measure more of the character traits while the ability scales will focus on various abilities. There has been much debate about the use of self-report measures which are based on self – judgement rather than being measurements by an expert.

There is also a divide in the field concerning the role of the concept of EI in predicting success in life where some researchers claim it to be twice as important as IQ (Goleman, 1995) and other researchers disagree (Mayer, 2001).

There also appears to be much diversity of opinion with regard to the measuring instruments and their validity. Some have argued that the measuring instruments are not scientific and have questioned whether they actually do measure EI. The field has been criticised for the use of an array of poorly validated measurement

instruments for the analysis of EI (Davies et al, 1998, Salovey et al, 2002). Although Salovey et al (2002) concur that as a new field there is still much to be done in terms of refining instruments that will accurately and validly measure EI, they argue that this criticism should be directed at those instruments, such as self-report measures which do not rely on experts to measure the construct, rather than on ability based measures.

Mayer (2001) argues that self-report measures only measure a person's self-perceived well-being. He also postulates that if EI was said to equal persistence, zeal, optimism, empathy and character, then any of the multitudes of personality scales could be used to measure EI. Although they agree that the use of ability-based measures is still in its early stages, they nevertheless contend that ability-based measures are the only measures that can validly and accurately measure the construct and that the researchers should focus their energies on improving ability-based instruments rather than any of the self-report measures. Popular claims, together with the opportunistic re-labelling of self-report measures as measures of EI seemed to have led some psychologists to dismiss the area entirely (Mayer, 2001, p. 22). Davies et al (1998, p. 1013) wrote "as presently postulated, little remains of emotional intelligence that is rather unique and psychometrically sound."

Mayer et al (2004, p. 200) have argued that EI meets the standards for a traditional intelligence by meeting three broad criteria. Firstly, EI test items can be operationalised in such a manner that the answers are more or less correct. Secondly, EI shows specific patterns of correlations to those of known intelligences and, finally, EI should develop with age.

Nonetheless, despite this and the positive contributions it has made in various fields, as an emerging science much criticism and debate have been levelled against it. Many have raised questions concerning not only the theory and measurement but also its adequacy (Mayer et al, 2004). Many have focused on what EI actually predicts and what the high EI individual is like. Despite the criticism and controversy, there is one area where the scientific, popular and policy versions of EI are all in agreement: that emotional intelligence broadens what it means to be smart (Mayer & Cobb, 2000).

## 3.10. SUMMARY

This chapter orientated the reader towards a study of the literature pertaining to the field of emotional intelligence and its relevance to education in particular. It also covered the early beginnings of the construct and looked at its growth through to current developments. As an emerging field there are many new and exciting developments taking place but simultaneously there is much criticism levelled against it and this has been discussed in this chapter as well. The following chapter will concentrate on the methodology that was utilised in this study.

# CHAPTER 4

# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 4.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter gave an intensive review of the construct of emotional intelligence. The focus of this chapter will be on the methodology, more specifically, on the research questions, the research design, the research sample, the instruments, procedures for data collection, trustworthiness and ethical issues.

## 4.2. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In attempting to find out how each participant understood emotional intelligence, the study focused on the following key research questions:

- What do educators understand by the concept of emotional intelligence?

- How does their conceptualisation of emotional intelligence influence their teaching?

## 4.3. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design has been described by Mouton (2001, p. 55) as a plan of how one intends to conduct a study. Yin (1994) explains a research design as the logic that links the data to be collected (and the conclusions to be drawn) to the initial questions of the study. A basic qualitative study located in the interpretive tradition was conducted. According to Ary et al (2009) basic qualitative studies involve data collection via a variety of methods and provide descriptive accounts with the purpose of understanding a phenomenon from the viewpoint of others. The Interpretive paradigm endeavours to understand the subjective world of human experience, and concern for the individual is key (Cohen et al, 2007). Interpretive research, which is where qualitative research is most often located, assumes that reality is socially constructed and that there is no single, observable reality, but instead there are multiple realities or interpretations of a single event (Merriam, 2009, p. 9).

Denzin and Lincoln (2005, p. 3,) state that "qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings attempting to make sense of , or interpret, phenomena in terms

of the meanings people bring to them". Van Maanen (1979, p. 520) offers a more concise view of qualitative research by describing it as "an umbrella term covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world".

According to Lichtman (2010, p.15), qualitative research involves the study of something in its entirety. Here researchers want to study how something is and understand it, rather than breaking down components into separate variables. Lichtman further contends that most qualitative research focuses on description, understanding and interpretation. Put simply, qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences (Merriam, 2009, p 13). The key concern is the understanding of the phenomenon under study from the viewpoint of the participants, not that of the researcher.

In keeping with the qualitative nature of this study, I was interested in understanding the meanings created by each participant, with regard to the construct of emotional intelligence. I was interested in how each participant made sense of their world and their experiences therein. As such I was not concerned with the outcome. Rather the focus was on the process, understanding and meaning. By focusing on discovery, insight and understanding from the perspective of the participants, a qualitative research design afforded me the most apt way in which to answer the research questions. This study did not seek to make generalisations, but rather sought to describe what understanding and meaning foundation phase educators, in this particular context, attached to the concept of emotional intelligence.

## 4.4. RESEARCH POPULATION

The research population consisted of foundation phase educators within primary schools in South Africa. A sample of 5 foundation phase educators was selected from this population.

## 4.5. RESEARCH SAMPLE

The research sample for this study comprised 5 foundation phase educators, ranging from grade R through to Grade 3. These educators formed part of the staff at a

primary school located in a suburb in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. They ranged in age from their twenties through to their fifties. The participants also varied in terms of their years of teaching experience. The school was selected partly for the sake of convenience as it is also the school where I currently teach.

Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where subjects are selected because of their convenient accessibility and proximity to the researcher. In this study, I selected the sample from those with whom I had easy access, the foundation phase educators of the school where I am a member of staff. One might argue that the sample is not representative of a larger population. However, the aim of this study was not to make generalisations about a wider population. I selected the sample fully aware that it did not represent a wider population but rather that it represented itself. As I did not intend to generalise the findings further than the sample selected, a convenience sampling technique proved adequate (Cohen et al, 2007).

Being an educator at the school where the research was conducted, I had the advantage of easy access to the research site as well as the participants.

## 4.6. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

I was the primary instrument for the collection and analysis of data. As Lichtman (2010, p.15) states, "the researcher plays a pivotal role in the qualitative research process in that, data are collected, information is gathered, settings are viewed, and realities are constructed through the eyes and ears of the researcher." Merriam (2009, p. 15) contends that since understanding is the goal of this type of research, the human instrument is the ideal means of collecting and analysing data because of the ability to be immediately responsive and adaptive. It also affords the researcher the opportunity to expand his or her understanding through verbal and non verbal communication. The other advantage is that the researcher is able to process data immediately, clarify and summarise material, check with participants for accuracy, and explore responses that might warrant it (Merriam, 2009). In this study the participants used me as the tool through which to tell their stories.

## 4.7. CODE OF ETHICS

The code of ethics was abided by throughout the study. Written permission was sought and received from the Department of Education prior to any research being undertaken. Permission was also sought from the principal as well as the participants. All participants gave their written consent to participating in the research process.

Participants were informed of the aims of the study. It was also communicated to them that their participation was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to do so without having to face any consequences. Participants were also assured of confidentiality and anonymity with regard to the data collected from them. They were informed by me that all data collected from them would remain in a secure location. To protect the identity of the participants, I referred to them as participants A, B, C, D, and E. The name of the school was also not mentioned. Other aspects of research ethics, such as participants' right to privacy, harm avoidance to participants as well as objectivity and honesty in reporting, were strictly adhered to.

## 4.8. DATA PRODUCTION METHODS

It is common for qualitative researchers to use multiple forms of data in a single study (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). According to Vithal and Jansen (1997), data from a variety of sources assist in providing the necessary checks and balances in the research. For the purposes of this study, I utilised interviews, observation, as well as questionnaires in that order as methods of data production.

### a. Interviews

Interviewing is the most common form of data collection in qualitative research. According to Merriam (2009) the success of an interview depends on the nature of the interaction between the interviewer and the respondent and on the interviewer's skill in asking good questions. Patton contends that the purpose of interviewing is to allow one to enter into the other person's perspective. Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable and able to be made explicit (Patton, 2002, p 341).

Interviews allow us to learn what is going on in another person's mind and allows us to gather their stories. In this study I made use of the semi-structured interview. This type of interview allows the researcher to develop a general set of questions and format that is used with all participants. The researcher may deviate from the set format if a situation requires it. For example, the researcher might want to probe further into a particular participant's response as this may provide further insight into the participant's perspective.

The interviews were held at the school as this proved to be the most convenient for all of the participants. To accommodate the wishes of the participants, the interviews were conducted during school hours during their free periods. The location was not the most ideal but precautions were taken to ensure that the participants were comfortable and that the interviews could be conducted with as little interruption by outside sources as possible. The door to the room where the interviews were conducted was closed with a 'do not disturb' sign attached to it. Prior to the interview sessions, the staff, including the cleaning staff, were apprised of the impending interviews and were also requested to not disturb the sessions.

Prior to the interviews commencing, I chatted informally with the participants to make them feel more at ease. I also explained once again how the interview session would proceed and informed them that the interview sessions would be recorded with their permission.  I explained the objectives of the research and informed them that the interview would not take up too much of their time. It was explained to each participant that all information shared would be treated as confidential. They were also informed that pseudonyms (A, B, C, D and E) would be used in order to ensure anonymity. Participants were eager to assist with the research but did initially display signs of nervousness. Their nervousness was mostly due to their not knowing what to expect and also being unsure as to whether they would be able to answer the questions well enough.

I made use of a created scenario on which the interview questions were based. The excerpt that the participants were presented with appears below.

> ***John is a learner in Mrs Ngokha's class.  He finds it difficult to concentrate on his schoolwork and tends to isolate himself in class.  Mrs Ngokha is an excellent teacher.  She feels frustrated and tense because, once again,***

*John is not concentrating. When she asks him a question, he merely stares back in blank surprise. This makes her lose her temper. She shouts at him: "John, you idiot! I hate learners like you! What are you doing in my classroom anyway?* (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p. 43).

The created scenario involved an educator reacting to a learner's attitude during her lesson. The aim of the interview was to establish what understanding and knowledge the participants had of emotional intelligence and how their understanding impacted their teaching. It was envisaged that the participants' responses would give insight into this and if, and to what degree, it was consequently being practised in their own classrooms. Therefore I posed questions to each of the participants based on the created scenario rather than using direct questioning with regard to emotional intelligence. It was not my intention to present the participants with the term emotional intelligence itself. Rather the researcher wanted to observe, via the participants' actions and verbal responses, whether they were aware that there were alternatives to the traditional type of intelligence. It was anticipated that their verbal and physical responses would give me clues as to their levels of awareness and understanding of emotional intelligence. The researcher worked with a schedule of pre formulated questions and probed further where it was required. Probing afforded me the opportunity to get clarity on answers. The technique of probing also led to further questions and more data generation in some cases.

All of the interviews were audio recorded. This was only done after making explicit to all participants that the interview sessions would only be recorded with their permission. Prior to this it was explained to all participants again, that the recordings would be kept confidential and would only be utilised for the purposes of the study. It was also explained to the participants that the audio recordings would be transcribed and interpreted by the researcher at a later stage. They were assured of confidentiality and anonymity with regard to the audio recordings as well as the transcribed material. They were also assured that all recordings and transcripts would be stored in a safe location. The interview schedule was piloted with another staff member before being administered to the research participants.

## b. Observations

Observations allow the researcher to gain first-hand accounts of the phenomenon of interest rather than relying on someone else's interpretations (Merriam, 2009). The unique strength of observation as a data collection method, lies in the fact that it affords researchers the opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations and thus has the potential to yield more valid or authentic data (Cohen et al, 2007, p.396). According to Hatch (2002) the goal of observation is to understand the culture, setting, or social phenomenon being studied from the perspectives of the participants. He contends that direct observation of social phenomena permits better understanding of the contexts in which the phenomena occur and also allows the researcher to be open to discovering inductively how the participants understand the setting.

For this study I used an observation schedule together with additional notes that were taken during the observation periods. Each educator was observed in the classroom for the duration of one thirty minute lesson. Ideally, I would have preferred a longer observation period, however, practicality did not allow for it. One of the reasons for using shorter observation periods was because I did not want to cause any undue disruptions to the normal schooling day. Using longer observation periods would have meant that I would have had to leave my own class for longer periods of time in order to conduct the research. This also meant that a substitute educator had to be found to replace me when I was busy with the observations. During the course of the study I tried as far as possible, not to disrupt the school day in any way.

The aim was to observe whether educators used elements of emotional intelligence in their teaching, or not, as this would also reflect on whether they had any understanding of what emotional intelligence was. Educators who understood the concept of emotional intelligence would be more likely to use the language and elements of emotional intelligence in their teaching as opposed to those who had no understanding of the concept. The observation therefore focused on the behaviour and the qualities of the educators. It also served to provide as a check as to whether there were differences in how the educators understood emotional intelligence and what they actually did in the classroom. All participants were informed beforehand of the observation. Educators were at first apprehensive as they felt they were being

put under the spotlight. This is a natural reaction for anyone who is aware that he or she is being observed. Consequently, participants initially appeared unnatural and stilted in their mannerisms. In an attempt to make the participants feel more comfortable and less pressurised I used my own body language and facial expressions to convey to them that I was not there to criticise but just to observe.

Despite their initial apprehension the participants were all very accommodating in allowing me to conduct observations in their classrooms. One of the reasons was because they all felt that the research could be beneficial to education, but they were also willing to participate because I was a colleague. I made use of an observation schedule to record observations. Additional notes were also recorded. I could have video recorded the sessions but declined from doing so as I did not want to place the participants under undue pressure or make them feel uncomfortable.

## c. Questionnaires

A questionnaire is a self-report data production instrument that is used by researchers to gather information from research participants about the study being conducted (Johnson & Christensen, 2010). Questionnaires are used to measure characteristics such as thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values, perceptions, personality and behavioural intentions of research participants (Johnson & Christensen, 2010). They are one of the instruments that are used most often in the data collection process.

The aim of the questionnaire was to find out whether educators had any understanding of emotional intelligence. I deliberately chose to use a structured questionnaire comprising closed questions. The questionnaire consisted of a section A and a section B. Section A contained multiple choice questions requiring personal information. Section B was made up of closed questions. Closed questions prescribe the range of responses from which the respondent may choose. They have the advantage of being directly to the point and more focused which is why the researcher chose this type of question (Cohen et al, 2007). De Vos et al (2005) contend that closed questions lend themselves quite meaningfully to ascertaining the degree, frequency and comprehensiveness of a phenomenon. The questionnaire contained 11 closed questions made up of the elements of emotional intelligence.

Each question consisted of 5 alternatives and was rated from 1 to 5. The rating scales were as follows: 1 – always, 2 – usually, 3 – sometimes, 4 – rarely, 5 – never. The participants were thus obligated to choose from a given range of responses rather than providing their own responses. Although rating scales are powerful and useful in research there are certain factors that the researcher needs to be cautious about when using them. One of these is that there is a tendency for participants to opt for the middle response in a 5 - point scale such as the one utilised in this study. The researcher did initially consider using an even number scaling system that has no mid-point.  However, she finally settled on using the Likert 5 – point rating scale as she felt that since the participants were volunteering their time and efforts willingly, they should be given the option of choosing to sit on the fence if they wanted to.

Another limitation of using rating scales is that they do not allow the participants to make any additional remarks. Some participants might have wanted to qualify their responses but were limited to the pre-set responses. Again, however, it depends on what the researcher's intentions are. In this instance, the researcher wanted participant feedback on specific areas with regard to emotional intelligence and so providing the pre set responses suited her purposes.

The questionnaires were handed out to the participants to be completed in their own time and without the presence of the researcher. The questionnaire was deliberately kept short, consisting of only 11 succinct questions that were formulated in a manner that was easy for all participants to understand. The fact that the questions were closed also meant that the participants were not required to spend too much of time filling out the questionnaires. It was an advantage being an educator at the same school as the participants, as I was able to gather all the questionnaires in a relatively short space of time. My presence at the research site was also advantageous in that I was available to all the participants to provide clarification of questions if required. In addition none of the participants opted to not complete any sections of the questionnaire. This was possibly due to the questionnaire being short and relatively simple and quick to answer because of the way in which it was constructed. Prior to being given the questionnaires the participants gave their informed consent in writing.

They were also informed of their rights to withdraw at any stage or to not complete certain questions in the questionnaire should they not want to. The questionnaire was piloted on another member of staff prior to being given to the participants. This was to ascertain that there were no ambiguities and misunderstandings with regard to the questions.

## 4.9. RESEARCHER BIAS

Researchers cannot be separated from the research process and they must be able to understand the different perspectives of all participants (Yeh et al, 2008). Mathie and Camozzi (2005) maintain that in order to maintain rigour in qualitative research therefore, qualitative researchers are obliged to be conscious of the biases they bring to the research, and to try and offset such biases by externally and internally validating their work  Lichtman (2010), however is of the opinion that bias cannot be eliminated or controlled. Her belief is that striving for objectivity by reducing bias is not important for much of qualitative research. The perspective or world view of the researcher can itself bias the researcher. A world view is the general interpretation of life and its events by a particular group of people (Mathie & Camazzi, 2005, p. 92). A good researcher should have the ability to understand the world view of a particular social group, in the case of this study, a group of foundation phase educators. In this instance I tried to limit researcher bias by being aware at all times that my own world view could influence my observations, questioning, interviews as well as the reporting of the study. I tried to be as honest and factual as possible and tried not to let my attitudes, beliefs and ideas taint the data.

## 4.10. REFLEXIVITY

In the course of the study, I found myself questioning my own understanding of emotional intelligence. I was always of the view that I was an individual with a high level of emotional intelligence skills. However, the study widened my vision with regard to the management of my own emotions.

## 4.11. TRUSTWORTHINESS

Qualitative researchers apply the principle of triangulation to cross check the accuracy of data collected or the interpretation of interviews and observations (Mathie & Camozzi, 2005). Methodological triangulation contributed to establishing

trustworthiness of the data in this study. According to Cohen, methodological triangulation refers to "the use of the same method on different occasions, or different methods on the same object of study" (Cohen et al, 2007, p.142).

Mathie and Camozzi (2005) posit that methodological triangulation is the use of different research methods to study a single research problem. These triangular techniques help bring out the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one standpoint (Cohen et al, 2007, p. 141). Exclusive reliance by a researcher on just one method poses the threat of bias or distortion of the researcher's picture of reality of what is being researched (Cohen et al, 2007, p 141).

In this study, to be confident of the accuracy of interpretation, questionnaires, interviews and observations were utilised to answer the same research question. This also helped to correct bias interpretation. According to Mathie and Camozzi (2005, p. 69), triangulation is based on the idea that no single approach ever really solves, delineates, or validates a particular problem. Instead different methodologies, investigative approaches, and other types of triangulation yield more complete data and result in more credible findings. The use of multiple methods of data collection in this study served to increase the researcher's confidence in that the data that were generated were not as the result of just one specific method of collection. Rather the different data collection methods yielded the same results. Mathie and Camozzi (2005) contend that many researchers use triangulation, not so much to verify findings, but to find agreement between different perspectives.

## 4.12.  SUMMARY

This chapter sought to inform the reader about the research methodology of this study. It focused on aspects such as the research questions, research design, data collection procedures, researcher bias as well as triangulation.  The following chapter will present the results of the research.

# CHAPTER 5

## PRESENTATION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

*"No single truth is ever sufficient, because the world is complex, any truth, separated from its complementary truth, is a half truth" (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003, p. 61).*

### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on the methodological orientation of this study, namely on the research design, the research questions, the research population, the sample as well as the data production techniques utilised. This chapter will present the specific findings of this research and a discussion of the findings.

The study focused on what understanding Foundation Phase educators have of emotional intelligence (EI).

A qualitative study located in the interpretive paradigm was undertaken. The research instruments that were utilised were semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, as well as observations. The interview transcripts were the main source of data but information gathered via the questionnaires as well as observations was also used. To ensure accuracy of the transcripts, the researcher read them word for word while listening to the audio recordings. The data were coded into themes with a view to providing some insight into how Foundation Phase educators conceptualised emotional intelligence, and how it influenced their teaching. For the purposes of anonymity and confidentiality, the names of the participants were omitted. The participants were instead referred to as Educator/Participant A, B, C, D and E.

### 5.2. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

This chapter focuses on the presentation of findings that were gleaned from the responses that were elicited during data production. The data were analysed and categorised according to different themes. The results are presented in relation to the theoretical framework utilised in this study and relevant literature on emotional intelligence as discussed in the previous chapters. Although this study was not

designed to generate conclusive findings, certain themes emerged from the responses which directly answered the key research questions. There were other themes which emerged as well and these will also be discussed as part of the findings. Direct quotations were deemed as very important to the study as they emphasise each participant's perspective or truth. As alluded to in the quotation at the beginning of this chapter, there is more than one truth or understanding of a phenomenon and the verbal quotes or truths of each participant add richness to their experiences and to the study. They also add authenticity and accuracy to the results. Some themes were common to all the data production techniques. There was also much overlapping within themes as can be seen by the repetition of quotes in some instances.

## 5.3.  FRAMEWORK OF THEMES FOUND

The framework below provides a summary of themes that developed out of the data that was obtained in this study. Some of the themes that were generated are specific emotional intelligence elements while other new themes that were also deemed important to this study were included. In a previous chapter the components of emotional intelligence were discussed in detail. These components were discussed in terms of the Mayer/Salovey (2002) model as well as the Goleman (1995) model. These themes have been included in the framework of themes but in some instances certain components of both models have been grouped together due to their similarities and to avoid repetition of similar themes.

The findings of the study will be presented in terms of the different data production techniques that were used, that is, the semi structured interview, the questionnaires as well as the observations.

| Components of Emotional Intelligence | Other themes that are important to Emotional Intelligence |
|---|---|
| Emotional Perception and Expression | Communication and Interaction |
| Emotional Facilitation of Thought | Improvement of Skills |
| Emotional Understanding | Conceptualisation<br><br>*Good Educator*<br><br>*Intelligence*<br><br>*Good/Weak Learners* |
| Managing of Emotions<br><br>*Reasons for Educators behaviour* | |
| Motivating Oneself | Classroom Climate |
| Empathy | Learning |
| Handling Relationships<br><br>*Challenging Learners* | |

Mayer & Salovey — Goleman

**TABLE 5.1: FRAMEWORK OF THEMES**

## 5.4. INTERVIEW FINDINGS

The semi structured interview was based on a created scenario and was utilised to elicit responses from the participants in terms of the following research questions:

1. What do educators understand by the concept of emotional intelligence?

2. How does their conceptualisation of emotional intelligence influence their teaching?

Below is the excerpt on which the interview questions were based.

> *John is a learner in Mrs Ngokha's class. He finds it difficult to concentrate on his schoolwork and tends to isolate himself in class. Mrs Ngokha is an excellent teacher. She feels frustrated and tense because, once again, John is not concentrating. When she asks him a question, he merely stares back in blank surprise. This makes her lose her temper. She shouts at him: "John, you idiot! I hate learners like you! What are you doing in my classroom anyway? I don't need failures like you."* (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p. 43)

The excerpt served as a starting point for the interview. The researcher followed the interview schedule and only deviated from the schedule in instances that required further probing. The core components of EI which include emotional perception and expression, emotional understanding, managing of emotions, empathy as well as handling relationships all surfaced as themes during the interviews. Other themes which surfaced and were considered as important to this study were those of communication and interaction, improvement of skills, conceptualisation and classroom climate.

## a. Emotional Perception and Expression

The first component of EI according to the Mayer/Salovey model concerns how one perceives and expresses emotions. This component is very closely linked to Goleman's component of self-awareness. To accurately perceive emotions one has to be able to register and identify non verbal emotional cues such as tone of voice, body language and facial expressions (Salovey et al, 2002). This in turn impacts on the verbal expression of emotions, that is, the way you perceive an emotion will impact on the manner in which you act upon it. In order to be able to accurately perceive emotion in others, one has to first be very aware of one's own emotions. It is only when one is able to realise one's own emotions that one can then recognise emotion in others. This is where the component of Salovey and Mayer's emotional perception and expression overlaps with that of Goleman's component of self-awareness.

We all need to be able to express our emotions clearly, appropriately and authentically, because expressing an emotion is an integral part of experiencing it (Weare, 2004). Brackett and Katulak (2006) contend that devoting adequate time and attention to fostering such emotional awareness is extremely important in optimising teacher effectiveness in multiple domains. They also maintain that educators who are able to recognise how they are feeling throughout the day in different situations, may be able to better express themselves in and out of the classroom. Emotional self-awareness may also help to predict emotions in various circumstances and to guide one's behaviour. Likewise, the ability to accurately assess the emotions of others can be used to guide the approach a teacher may take. According to Weare (2004, p. 34), expressing emotions include the following:

- Expressing emotion to ourselves, that is, feeling the anger or the sadness, crying, letting off steam in a safe way, and realising that we are not necessarily going to be completely overwhelmed by an emotion;
- Expressing our emotions clearly to others, through facial expression, gesture, body language, verbal language and tone;
- Developing a complex language of the emotions, with a wide and precise vocabulary and range of expression;
- Expressing our emotions clearly through writing, and other forms such as drama, dance, art and physical action.

Taken to extremes, emotional expression can lead to: over impulsivity (acting too quickly and thoughtlessly on the basis of an emotion); acting inappropriately; and ignoring feelings of others in favour of our own (for example, venting anger without thought for the other person) (Weare, 2004, p. 35).

The participants' views with regard to the manner in which Mrs Ngokha expressed her emotions are revealed in their verbal quotes below.

**PARTICIPANT A:**

Extract 1: *"She just cannot lose her temper... and shout at the child"* **(**Participant A, p. 1).

Extract 2**:** *"...I shout at the child but I don't like really say terrible things... I try to settle the child and get on with your work"* **(**Participant A, p. 2).

The words of this participant indicate that she felt that Mrs Ngokha acted impulsively and without thought for the emotions that John might have been feeling at the time.

Her words further demonstrate awareness that how one expresses emotion is of importance. She makes reference to Mrs Ngokha's impulsive reaction as well as the tone in which Mrs Ngokha spoke to the learner when she remarks that **"She just cannot lose her temper... and shout at the child."** Her remark also implies her feeling that Mrs Ngokha was not aware of her own feelings at the time of her outburst and that she responded in an inappropriate manner to John. However, contrastingly, she also remarks "**I shout at the child but I don't like really say terrible things."** This comment almost opposes her previous remark for she makes it seem justifiable to shout at the child, in other words use an unsuitable tone of voice as long as she didn't say "**terrible things."** It seems as if this educator, even though she has a certain degree of awareness with regard to this component, does not practise it in class as is evidenced by her follow up remark.

## PARTICIPANT B:

Extract 3: *"I think her...words. She's too harsh in the manner she speaks to ...John er she could have said it in a different way I hate learners like you shows a lot of er emotion..."* (Participant B, p. 1).

This participant vocalised quite strongly that Mrs Ngokha was **"too harsh"** in the manner in which she spoke to the learner. This indicates that she is aware that the tone of Mrs Ngokha's voice and choice of words were equally inappropriate. Her comment suggests that she is very aware of how important it is for an educator to be able to perceive and express emotion appropriately. It also evidences that this participant is careful to choose more appropriate emotional responses herself towards her learners. This is indicated by her comment **"she could have said it in a different way,"** suggesting that she would have chosen a less harsh reaction to the learner. In comparison to participant A, this participant seems to attach greater importance to this component and also seems to have a higher degree of awareness of the importance of educators perceiving and expressing emotions.

## PARTICIPANT C:

Extract 4: *"...she just attack him"* (Participant C, p. 1).

Extract 5: *"It wasn't the right way"* (Participant C, p.1).

This participant's words, **"She just attack him,'** and **"it wasn't the right way,"** clearly indicate her view that Mrs Ngokha did not express her emotions appropriately. Weare (2004) contends that an educator who does not give adequate attention to the perception and expression of emotion can act impulsively. That is, inadequate attention to this component can lead to educators ignoring the feelings of their learners and venting their anger towards their learners without considering their emotions. Participant C's remarks seem to suggest that Mrs Ngokha reacted too quickly without thought for John's emotions. This participant seems to have a relatively high degree of awareness of this component of EI but possibly not an in-depth understanding of what it entails in totality.

**PARTICIPANT D:**

Extract 6: *"I think she shouldn't react in that way..."* (Participant D , p. 1).

This participant commented that Mrs Ngokha **"shouldn't react in that way."** Her remark evidences that she has some degree of awareness that an educator's perception and expression of emotion are important. However she does not seem to attach as much importance to it as did educator B.

**PARTICIPANT E:**

Extract 7: *She shouldn't react in that manner first of all..."* (Participant E, p.1).

While this participant commented that Mrs Ngokha **"shouldn't react in that manner first of all,'** she did not elaborate in any way to indicate that she has an in-depth understanding of this component of EI. She did, however, acknowledge that it was an inappropriate response on the educator's part.

Cohen (1999, p. 65) contends that learners "will learn most effectively in an atmosphere in which they feel safe and do not fear being ridiculed or humiliated, in which they are challenged and assisted to meet realistic goals, in which they feel educators genuinely care about them and respect their individuality." The verbal quotes of the participants give an indication of the participants' views that Mrs Ngokha expressed her feelings inappropriately and that she did not make allowances for the learner's expression of emotions. While none of the participants

spoke specifically about perceiving emotion, they all commented on the manner in which Mrs Ngokha expressed her emotions. As already discussed, the way in which one acts is determined by the way one perceives an emotion.  All the participants alluded to the fact that Mrs Ngokha reacted thoughtlessly and inappropriately to John.  While the remarks made by the participants show that they are aware of the importance of emotions when dealing with situations in the classroom, they also show that the participants do not have an in-depth knowledge or understanding of this component of emotional intelligence.   Only participant B seemed to show a relatively higher level of understanding of this component.

### b.  Emotional Facilitation of Thought

This component of EI refers to how one can utilise one's emotions to facilitate thoughts to effectively solve problems, make decisions, improve reasoning and promote creativity (Mayer et al, 2008, Salovey et al, 2002). None of the participants made any reference to this component of EI during the interviews. However this theme did occur at the questionnaire level and is discussed later in the chapter.

### c.  Emotional Understanding

Emotional understanding is another of the branches of the Mayer/Salovey EI model. It refers to the labelling and categorising of emotions as well as the perception of the causes and consequences of these emotions. This component includes not only the understanding of the emotions of others but also those of ourselves. Understanding the causes of our emotions includes:

- Being aware of previous events, circumstances, thoughts and past experiences that may have triggered an emotion;
- Being aware of the current context that may have triggered an emotion;
- Being aware of the extent to which our emotions are triggered by factors "out there" or "in here" (Weare, 2004, p. 32).

Without using the actual terms, all participants made reference to the understanding of emotion aspect, as the quotations below show:

**PARTICIPANT A:**

Extract 8: *"Find out what's the problem...because some children do have problems"* (Participant A, p 1).

Extract 9: *"maybe there's other things at home that worry him..."* (Participant A, p. 1).

This participant's words: **"Find out what's the problem,"** and **"maybe there's other things at home that worry him...,"** show that she is aware that there could be a variety of factors responsible for the learner's behaviour as suggested by Weare (2004). Her remarks are also suggestive that Mrs Ngokha should have given extra attention to understanding the reasons behind John's behaviour. She does not make any reference to Mrs Ngokha attempting to understand what may have triggered her own response. This participant does not seem to have a full understanding of this component.

**PARTICIPANT B:**

Extract 10: *"The child obviously has a problem"* (Participant B, p 1).

This participant also speaks about the child having a problem, but she does not make any mention that Mrs Ngokha should take any specific action to uncover the reasons behind why the learner or she, Mrs Ngokha, are acting in the way that they do. Participant B does not show much understanding of this component of EI.

**PARTICIPANT C:**

Extract 11: *"She should er understand the reason why he is not doing his homework. Maybe it's a ho er home situation, probably there's no lights or something"* (Participant C, p. 1).

Participant C makes reference to the fact that Mrs Ngokha should try to understand the reason behind John's behaviour but she does not make any reference to Mrs Ngokha herself trying to understand what it is about the current occurrence that might have triggered her emotions. This participant's remarks show that she does not really have an awareness or understanding of this component of EI.

**PARTICIPANT D:**

Extract 12: *"In the morning there could have been some problems at home so er he could have had lack of sleep. She could have found out, what was wrong er you know first, what the problem was"* (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 13: *"He could be emotionally upset. So she should consider all these factors first before shouting or becoming frustrated with him"* (Participant D, p. 1)

Extract 14: *"I think if the teacher can find out what the problems are and then react"* (Participant D, p. 2).

Participant D mentions that Mrs Ngokha should have considered a variety of factors before reacting in the manner that she did. She does not make any reference to the fact that Mrs Ngokha should have examined her own understanding of her emotional reaction to the situation. This shows that this participant has a limited understanding of this component of EI.

**PARTICIPANT E:**

Extract 15: *"John has, maybe a problem. That is why he is reacting like that"* (Participant E, p. 1).

This participant merely mentions that **"John, has maybe a problem."** She does not make further comments, demonstrating that she has a good understanding of this component of EI.

The remarks made by the participants highlight each individual's own opinion that Mrs Ngokha should be more understanding of the emotions that John might be experiencing. The comments made by the participants indicate that, whilst they all display a certain degree of awareness of this component of EI, none of them have an in-depth understanding of what this component entails. This is seen in the participants' comments that although Mrs Ngokha tried to understand the reasons for John's behaviour, there were no comments made on whether Mrs Ngokha tried to understand what exactly it was about the situation that influenced her own response.

### d. Managing of Emotions

This component, which refers to the ability of individuals to manage their own feelings and those of others, forms one of the most crucial components of emotional intelligence. It is common to both the Salovey/Mayer (2002) model as well as the Goleman (1995) model. Individuals should be able to gain mastery over the management of emotions and not necessarily respond immediately or directly to them but instead take charge of how they express or even decide not to express them (Weare, 2004). Brackett and Katulak (2006, p. 8 ) assert that the ability to manage emotions in oneself and others is a valuable skill for educators and that the frequent implementation of emotion-management strategies is a priceless approach to effective classroom management, stress reduction, functional professional and personal relationships, and overall quality of life. Educators who are able to manage their own emotions and those of their learners are also able to create a more open and effective teaching and learning space with fewer distractions. Managing one's responses to emotions includes being able to:

- Observe one's own emotions;
- Resist acting on impulse;
- Express difficult emotions appropriately, particularly dangerous ones such as anger;
- Manage one's own body states, for example, calming ourselves when angry, or withdrawing when frustrated (Weare, 2004, p. 36).

All the participants recognised the management of emotions as being an important element of an educator's repertoire of skills. While the actual term was not utilised, many references were made pointing to the management of emotions, as can be seen from the following comments:

**PARTICIPANT A:**

Extract 1: ***"She just cannot lose her temper... and shout at the child"*** (Participant A, p.1).

Extract 2: ***"I shout at the child but I don't like really say terrible things...I try to settle the child and get on with your work"*** (Participant A, p. 2). This comment is

a reflection of this participant's attempt to exercise some control over her own feelings.

Extract 55: *"There was no time to even sit with John and really work out his problem because she has so many children to see to"* (Participant A, pp 1-2).

Extract 62: *"That also frustrates me... so I do know how she feels..."* (Participant A, p. 2).

This participant commented that Mrs Ngokha **"just cannot lose her temper ... and shout at the child."** Her comment seems to indicate her view that an educator should be able to exercise some restraint with regard to managing her emotions. However her later remark seems to imply that she herself does have trouble managing her own emotions in the classroom, for she remarked **"I shout at the child but I don't like really say terrible things."** This seems like a double bind remark, for on one hand it implies that while this participant is aware that she does have a struggle managing her feelings, she also tries to manage her emotions. However, on the other hand, it seems as if the participant is saying that it is fine to shout at the child, as long as the educator does not say "**terrible things."**

This participant's words mirror her own feelings of being overwhelmed when she says that Mrs Ngokha **"has so many children to see to."** Her feelings of being overwhelmed can probably be attributed to her having a large class herself which she finds overwhelming. If this educator had knowledge and awareness of how to manage her emotions better, she would have been able to harness this information to help her manage her emotions in a healthy manner rather than being overwhelmed by them. Participant A empathises with Mrs Ngokha when she remarks, "**...so I do know how she feels...**This indicates an awareness of her own feeling but does not indicate that she has an adequate understanding of how to manage those feelings in a better way.

**PARTICIPANT B:**

Extract 16: *"Er not being able to er... deal with the situation"* (Participant B, p. 1). This remark seems to echo this educator's own feelings of not being able to manage her emotions as she was moved from the senior primary phase into the foundation phase and found it quite challenging to adapt.

Extract 17: *"It is very frustrating. It is. Er it's it's it's er frustrating."* (Participant B, p.3). This remark is suggestive that this particular participant does have a struggle managing her own emotions. She used the word "frustrating," which points to her own feelings of being overwhelmed. The repetition of the words "It is" cements her feelings of frustration.

Extract 18: *"...but even that is not helping"* (Participant B, p.3). The emphasis on "even" is also indicative of her frustrations.

Extract 53: *"I feel like I'm not doing enough (laughs) but I'm trying"* (Participant B, p.3).

Extract 54: *"And er it's also a bit disheartening because er I feel like I'm not doing enough to help this child"* (Participant B, p. 3).

Extract 56: *"Could be classroom numbers er you know this the number of learners in the classroom er because you have to give your attention to so many learners and then er it's difficult to give that individual attention to a child that has a learning problem"* (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 57: *"You give him a simple task like er ...transcribing from the board. He's unable to even do this"* (Participant B, p. 3).

Extract 58: *"Anything that you give him he just stares at you blankly. He doesn't make an attempt"* (Participant B, p. 3).

Extract 59: *"But this learner in particular just, he just closes up, shuts down. Er doesn't want to work in any way. He just sits there. Stares at you blankly"* (Participant B, p. 3).

Extract 60: *"I have referred him to PGSES (Psychological services) but er nothing has been done about him"* (Participant B, p. 3).

This participant's remarks are very suggestive of the fact that she does have a struggle managing her own emotions. She made a comment relating to her own feelings of frustration in the classroom. Her repetition of the words **"It is,"** cements her own experiences of her frustration levels. Her words **"not being able to er ... deal with the situation,"** seem to mirror her belief that she herself was not dealing

with or managing the classroom situation in the most appropriate manner. This participant was moved out of the senior primary phase into the foundation phase and she did have a struggle adapting to her different role. Her comments indicate that she does find it challenging to manage her own emotions in class. Had she had knowledge and understanding of this component, she would have utilised it to assist her to manage her feelings. She admits to feeling inadequate and disheartened so she is aware of her own feelings but does not have adequate knowledge or understanding of the concept of EI. If she had a better understanding of EI she could have utilised her emotions to facilitate her thinking and use them to make better decisions regarding her learners. In extracts 56 to 60, participant B's feelings of despair, hopelessness and being overwhelmed come through, evidencing her lack of understanding of how to manage her feelings more effectively. An understanding of this component of EI would have afforded her a tool with which to address her feelings so she could manage them more creatively.

**PARTICIPANT C:**

Extract 19: *"She's taken her anger out on him"* (Participant C, p. 1).

Extract 20: *"...she din know how to control it"* (Participant C, p. 2).

Extract 21: **"...*she's lashing out because that's not the way she wants it to be done"* (Participant C, p. 2).

Extract 63*: "She just got tired eventually"* (Participant C, p.1).

This participant makes a direct reference to the fact that she thought that Mrs Ngokha had trouble managing her emotions when she remarks: **"...she din know how to control it."** Her comment indicates that she felt that Mrs Ngokha reacted impulsively in that she did not give adequate attention to managing her emotions and thus expressed her emotions in an inappropriate manner. As Weare (2004) stated, dangerous emotions such as anger should be expressed appropriately. The remark *"She's taken her anger out on him,"* evidences that this participant felt that Mrs Ngokha did not withdraw herself from the situation as she should have when she felt that she was losing her composure. This participant's comment in extract 63 indicates her view that Mrs Ngokha eventually gave in to her feelings of frustration. This is probably an emotion that she herself identifies with. Participant C seems to

be aware of how important it is for educators to manage their own feelings as well as those of their learners. She seems to have a relatively better understanding of this component as compared to the previous three participants.

**PARTICIPANT D:**

Extract 13: **"*She should consider all these factors first before shouting or becoming frustrated with him"*** (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 22*: "I think maybe she is frustrated because she probably is trying to get through to him and she can't get through to him and I think it must be difficult for her too"* (Participant D, p. 1).

 Extract 23*: "You know you cannot shout at him"* (Participant D, p. 1).

Participant D's comments, evidences her belief that managing emotions is an important quality for educators to have.  She seems to have a considerably higher level of understanding of this component of EI as is revealed by her remarks.  Her comment **"You know you cannot shout at him,"** suggests that Mrs Ngokha should have had more control over her emotions rather than just losing her temper with John.

**PARTICIPANT E**

Extract 24*: "...maybe she's frustrated.  She must have been teaching for many years and didn't get a promotion or she's frustrated with with the ... with her teaching er with the work that she's doing in the class.  And er maybe the situation in school, she's not happy"* (Participant E. p. 2).

Extract 25: *"If you being a teacher reacts in that way the child knows that there is something wrong so he reacts in that manner that he's reacting at the moment"* (Participant E. p. 2).

Participant E seems to be saying that Mrs Ngokha did not manage her feelings appropriately due to her own feelings of frustration.  Her remarks suggest that Mrs Ngokha allowed her feelings to get the better of her.

The quotes above point out that participants, not only felt that Mrs Ngokha was not managing her emotions correctly but some of their remarks also point to their own

inadequacies with regard to their own emotional management. For example, participant A commented **"So I do I do know how she feels..."**

Educator C remarked that Mrs Ngokha **"just got tired eventually,"** implying that she eventually just gave vent to her feelings of frustration because of an inability to manage her emotions." Educator E captured the importance of emotional management in a different way by remarking that **"If you being a teacher reacts in that way the child knows that there there's something (sneezes) excuse me wrong with er there's something wrong so he reacts in that manner that he's reacting at the moment."** Her remark suggested that the educator's inability to manage her emotions filters through to her learners and affects their behaviour accordingly. All the participants recognised the importance of managing emotions, but displayed varying degrees of understanding of this component. Participants seem to have a considerable level of awareness with regard to their own feelings but inadequate understanding of how to effectively manage or utilise their emotions.

Reasons for Educator's Behaviour

This theme will be discussed here as a sub theme of managing emotions. The participants' views regarding the reasons for Mrs Ngokha's reaction are expressed in the quotes below.

**PARTICIPANT A:**

Extract 82: *"Ok maybe she er has a large cl... er has lots of pupils in her class and er that is why she behaves in this manner or maybe because John does this everyday and she has she is becoming frustrated with him er way the way he carries on in class as well"* (Participant A, p. 1).

This participant mentioned large classes but also frustration as the reason for Mrs Ngokha's reaction to John.

**PARTICIPANT B:**

Extract 83: *"Size of the classroom. Number of learners in the classroom. Er frustration"* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 84: *"Could have been an off day"* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 16: *"Er... not being able to er deal with the situation"* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 50: *"It could be classroom numbers er you know this the number of learners in the classroom er because you have to give your attention to so many learners and then er it's difficult to give that individual attention to a child that has a learning problem"* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 67: **"You have to be equipped in order to er deal with a learner like this"** (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 68: *"Er you need to have the skills..."* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 85: *"Maybe there could be a language barrier... where the teacher doesn't understand the child"* (Participant B, p. 2).

Participant B also mentioned class size and frustration among the reasons for Mrs Ngokha's response to John. She also mentioned not having the skills and training to deal with certain situations in class.

**PARTICIPANT C:**

Extract 63: *"Maybe because he continued to do not the homework. Er... and she felt that he wasn't doing his part. She was doing his part er her part but he wasn't doing his part like doing the homework and er ...she just got tired eventually"* (Participant C, p.1).

This participant also commented on Mrs Ngokha's reaction by saying "**she just got tired eventually.**" In other words Mrs Ngokha eventually gave in to her feelings of frustration.

**PARTICIPANT D:**

Extract 22: *"I think maybe she is frustrated because she is probably trying to get through to him and she can't get through to him and er I think er it must be difficult for her too because maybe she has a large number of learners in her class and she cannot like concentrate on one learner."* (Participant D, p. 1)

Extract 64: ***"Most schools don't have a remedial class so we forced to deal with er diverse type of learners and er...that is why she she she could be frust er you know she could, it felt right for her to react in that way..."*** (Participant D, p. 1).

Participant D also focused on frustration as the main reason for Mrs Ngokha's reaction to her learner.

**PARTICIPANT E:**

Extract 86: ***"Maybe she has a class of high flyers and John is the only one that is reacting like that to her"*** (Participant E, p. 1).

Extract 24*: **"...maybe she's frustrated. She must have been teaching for many years and didn't get a promotion or she's frustrated with with the with her teaching er with the work that she's doing in the class. And er maybe the situation in school, she's not happy"** (Participant E. p. 2).

This participant also focused on Mrs Ngokha's feelings and more specifically on her management of her feelings. She emphasised frustration as the reason that caused Mrs Ngokha to behave in the way that she did.

In summary, it is evident that participants felt that management of emotions played a major role in the way Mrs Ngokha handled the situation. Participants mainly focused on emotions such as frustration, feelings of being overwhelmed, as well as feeling inadequate because of not having the proper training and skills in the classroom. Participants placed much focus on the management of emotions, and more especially on frustration, thus reflecting their own inadequacies when it came to dealing with their own feelings of frustration in the classroom.

**e. Motivating Oneself**

This refers to the ability to focus the power of one's emotions and to use them purposefully. Goleman (1995) contends that motivation refers to the extent to which an individual acts upon a given idea, thought, or goal. Motivating oneself involves channelling emotions to achieve a goal, emotional self-control, and delaying indulgent and overpowering impulses (Kaufhold & Johnson, 2005). No data for this theme emerged from the responses of the participants. The fact that the participants

did not comment on issues of motivation evidences that they do not have knowledge or understanding of this component as an important aspect of EI.

### f. Empathy

Empathy which is a basic skill in any relationship concerns the ability to be empathic, to truly see the world through the eyes of the other person (Cohen, 1999, p. 62). According to Goleman (1995), this ability to recognise emotions in others, is one of the key elements of emotional intelligence. Empathy, the building block for all social competences, is about being able to see the world from the point of view of another person and give them the same regard as we (ideally) give ourselves ( Weare, 2004, p. 44). Coetzee and Jansen (2007, p. 26) contend that "empathy is our capacity to understand and share other people's emotions without losing the awareness of our own." Empathising with learners allows educators to be sensitive towards their emotional needs and to temporarily identify with their lives and share their ideas and emotions by being open to their points of view. Empathy helps educators to relate in an emotionally healthy manner to the needs of their learners. It requires patience, sensitivity, openness and a ready willingness to truly understand. It is an especially important quality for educators to have, considering the often baffling behaviour that their learners present within the classroom. Empathy includes the following:

- Recognising emotion in others;
- Seeing the world from another's point of view, putting yourself in their shoes;
- Having compassion for others;
- Refraining from harming others;
- Sensitivity – being able to intuit how people are feeling from their tone and body language;
- Giving people the same concern as we give ourselves;
- Accepting others and tolerating difference (Weare, 2004, p. 45).

The following verbal quotes reflect the participants' thoughts and views on the theme of empathy.

**PARTICIPANT A:**

Extract 8: ***"She needs to work with the child and find out what's the problem ...because some children do have problems"*** (Participant A, p.1).

As discussed earlier, an empathetic educator is one who shows sensitivity towards the emotional needs of her learners. The remark made by this participant shows that she is sensitive to the fact that learners do face challenges and "**problems**." Her comment also indicates that Mrs Ngokha should have shown more sensitivity to John's emotional needs. Her comments show that she has a fairly good understanding of empathy and its importance for educators.

**PARTICIPANT B:**

Extract 26: *"She's also got to be er compassionate"* (Participant B, p. 2). This participant mentioned compassion which forms a major component of empathy. In voicing her opinion that Mrs Ngokha should be more compassionate, participant B is showing that she is aware of how important it is for an educator to possess this quality. The fact that participant B honed in on this core component of empathy suggests that she has a relatively good understanding of it. From her comment, it can also be assumed that she does practise empathy with her learners.

**PARTICIPANT C:**

Extract 11: *"She should er understand the reason why he is not doing his homework. Maybe it's a ho er a home situation maybe, probably there's no lights or something"* (Participant C, p. 1).

Participant C's remarks show that she has an understanding of empathy and what this component encompasses. She speaks about Mrs Ngokha making an attempt to understand the reasons behind John's behaviour. Weare (2004) contends that an educator who is empathetic should give others the same concern that they would give themselves. It is clear from her remark that this participant feels that Mrs Ngokha should have empathised with her learner. This in turn indicates that this educator has a considerably good understanding of this component and that she probably practises empathy in her classroom.

**PARTICIPANT D:**

Extract 27: *"She should know that er considering the background John is coming from"* (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 12: *Er in the morning there could have been problems at home so er he could have had lack of sleep. She could have found out, what was wrong er you know first, what the problem was instead of just shouting at him"* (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 28: *"He could have poor concentration due to lack of sleep"* (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 13: *"He could be emotionally upset. So she should consider all these factors first"* (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 29: *"She could have er called him, you know er called him and spoke to him and find out what the problem is...."* (Participant D, p. 1,2).

Extract 30: *"Er if she was an excellent teacher, I would say she would find out what the problem with John is first before reacting in that way"* (Participant D, p. 2).

Extract 31: *"We have er children I know in other classes as well that come from these boarding houses and due to them getting up er early to go to the bathroom, er some of them are getting up at 3 o' clock in the morning. So they could be feeling sleepy in the class and you have to understand that. If you can give them that that little time even if they have a short nap like i'm sure like recharge the batteries as we say the brain, the brain needed that time to rest and then they could react in a in a you know, when you are teaching they they can you know they will be concentrating"* (Participant D, p. 2).

Extract 32: *"try to help the learner because of their situation, because of the economic background that they are coming from"* (Participant D, p.2).

Extract 33: *"A good teacher would establish where all these learners are coming from first and then help the learner"* (Participant D, p.3).

Extract: 34 *"I would have found out what John's problem was. I would look at his situation"* (Participant D, p. 3).

Empathy, as discussed above, requires patience, sensitivity, openness and a ready willingness to truly understand. The verbal quotes of this participant reveal that she

is sensitive to the needs of her learners. Her remarks also display a willingness to truly understand the plight of her learners. She comments on the fact that John could have been **"emotionally upset."** This shows an attempt at understanding the emotional reasons behind the learner's behaviour. Her comments in extract 31 evidence that she is quite empathetic towards the challenges learners face. She comments more than once about the **"problems"** learners face.

**PARTICIPANT E:**

It is interesting to note that this participant made no remarks or comments which pointed directly to the theme of empathy although she did speak of being patient with learners and encouraging them.

As Goleman (1995) concedes, empathy is a key component of emotional intelligence. It is also an important quality for foundation phase educators to have. The participants' comments indicate quite clearly that the majority of them do have a good understanding of just how important it is for an educator to be empathic towards her learners. Participants A and D and C all mentioned that educators need to show greater sensitivity towards problems learners might be experiencing while Participant B emphasised that educators have **"got to be er compassionate"** It was only participant E who did not make any direct references to this theme.

**g. Handling Relationships**

This component which forms the last rung on Goleman's EI model makes up a very important part of emotional intelligence for it refers to the ability to communicate, influence, collaborate and work with others. Handling relationships appropriately is dependent upon firstly, accurately perceiving and expressing emotion, emotional facilitation of thought, emotional understanding, managing of emotions as well as empathy. Competence in all of these components will directly impact the kinds and quality of relationships one has with others. A sub theme which developed out of this theme is how educators handle challenging learners and this is discussed below.

Challenging Learners

Participants' views on this theme are reflected in their quotes below.

Extract 87: *"I would call the child to my table..and speak to the child during the break or after school and find out what's the problem, why is why are you not concentrating in class and maybe we can work from there if there is a problem"* (Participant A, p.2).

This participant spoke about talking to the child on a one to one basis to try and find out what the problem could be.

Extract 60: *"I have referred him to PGSES (Psychological Services) but er nothing has been done about him"* (Participant B, p. 3).

Extract 88: *"Well with the situation in my class I use a lot of peer learning. I ask the child another child to explain to the child. Another problem that I also have is that I don't understand Zulu so er I cannot talk to the child. So ja I use peer teaching"* (Participant B, p. 3).

Extract 89: *"Er explain. Maybe he didn't understand the first time when you were explaining to them so er re explain whatever work was given to them"* (Participant B, p. 3).

Participant B looked at different strategies that she could utilise to help her learners in the classroom. It is quite interesting to note that while this participant looked at how other sources, like psychological services and other learners could be used to assist her challenging learners she did not look at how changes in herself could help her manage similar situations more creatively.

**PARTICIPANT C:**

Extract 45: *"I would have firstly spoken to the child, asked the child the reason why the homework was not done."* (Participant C, p. 2)

Extract 39: *"I would call the parents and speak to the parents"* (Participant C, p. 2).

Extract 90: *"Call the parents in, speak to them and see if there's any problem at home but if there's not I will if I can keep the child in after school and let the child do the work ... after school"* (Participant C, p. 2).

This participant also offered several solutions such as speaking to the child as well as the parents to ascertain if there were any problems. However, this participant also did not make any mention of how she as an educator could manage the situation in a better way.

**PARTICIPANT D:**

Extract 34: *"I would have found out what John's problem was. I would look at his situation"* (Participant D, p. 3).

Extract 91: *"You could go to their peers. You could also ask whether he has a bigger brother or sister and you could go and call them in and talk to them. Er I would call his parents in and talk to his parents and then I'd find out why John is er reacting in this way, with his poor concentration, find out what the problems are, perhaps get help for him, get er you know I could help him in my spare time on er calling him and working on a one to one basis with him. Then I could get the other learners in class, peers to help him...Er maybe er with that child it could be er poor nutrition as well, poor nutrition would lead to lack of concentration and our school we have a feeding scheme. So if that is the problem I could make sure that you know he gets er lunch everyday...and er if there's time after school I could keep John in after school and help him er complete his work"* (Participant D, p. 3).

Participant D mentioned a variety of ways in which she could help the learner. However, this participant as well did not mention anything about how a change in her own behaviour could have brought about a change in how the situation was viewed or managed.

**PARTICIPANT E:**

Extract 78: *"But then I have to be patient with him and encourage him to do his work"* (Participant E, p. 1).

Extract 92: *"I would have called his parents in and spoken to them and asked if they having a problem or is he having a problem at home and maybe see a psychiatrist or you know need get extra help for him and in school be patient with him and encourage him to work"* (Participant E, p. 2).

Although this participant also offered other strategies that could be used to assist the learner, she is the only one who directly included herself as a role-player in strategically helping the learner.

The common threads in this theme were one on one interaction with the learner, peer teaching and learning, extra lessons, referrals to psychological services as well as talking to the learners, their siblings and the parents regarding a way forward. Other reasons included ensuring that the child was not hungry. One participant commented that the learner required patience and encouragement from her. All these strategies mentioned indicate attempts by the participants to improve relationships with their learners. However, it was interesting to note that, apart from participant E, no other participant focused on themselves as the catalyst that could bring about change in learners or in the classroom. That is, none of the participants seemed to be aware that an awareness of their own feelings and those of their learners, together with better management of the feelings, could result in positive repercussions in the classroom. None of the participants mentioned, for instance, using their emotions to problem solve or make decisions regarding how they handled challenging learners in the classroom.

## h. Communication and Interaction

Communication is not a conventional component of emotional intelligence as espoused by Salovey and Goleman. However it is considered important to emotional intelligence and was therefore included as a theme. Coetzee and Jansen (2007) contend that emotionally intelligent educators preserve their composure by being assertive rather than aggressive and abusive towards their learners. They argue that educators who are not able to display emotionally intelligent behaviour towards their learners come across as being harsh and authoritarian. For example, such educators might shout at learners or ridicule them in class. According to Coetzee and Jansen (2007), poor communicators are not sufficiently aware of their learners' emotional needs and communicate in inappropriate ways. They also miss important verbal and non-verbal cues which inform them how the interaction is going. Learning to identify and convey emotions is an important part of communication (Richburg & Fletcher, 2002). Weare (2004) contends that empathy and positive self-regard, the twin cornerstones of emotional intelligence, can only be demonstrated practically

through effective communication with others. According to Weare (2004, p. 46), key communicative competences include the following:

- Choosing our own response, rather than acting on impulse, so that it is one that we and others find helpful
- Listening effectively to others in ways that encourage them to talk and to feel understood
- Responding effectively in ways that help the other person feel good about themselves while retaining our own authenticity and self-respect
- Being aware of our own non-verbal communication: getting control of it and using it effectively.

According to Mortiboys (2005), on every occasion that a learner makes a comment an opportunity exists for educators to use emotional intelligence in the way that they respond to that comment. The educator has the chance to:

- affect how the learners feel about being in the session;

- determine if and how they will ever speak again in the session;

- influence how they feel about themselves as learners;

- influence how they view the educator;

- influence how the rest of the learners view the educator and the session;

- confirm the kind of relationship that the educator has with the learners (Mortiboys. 2005, p. 87).

If handled in the correct manner, the educator's response can not only improve the motivation of all learners, but it can also have a positive effect on the emotional environment itself. Appropriate responses from educators also show the learners that their responses are valued and that they are being listened to. Mortiboys (2005) contend that educators have a choice of responding either cognitively or affectively. While the cognitive responses concentrate on aspects such as informing, clarifying and expanding, the affective responses involve the educator thinking about the effect his/her responses would have on the learner. These include either making the

learner feel respected, valued, enthused, belittled, dismissed or humiliated. In other words, it's not just what you say, but how you say it that's crucial.

Most participants expressed similar views in terms of how an educator should address a learner. They were quite vocal in their views that educators should speak to learners in a befitting manner. Their quotes below add credibility to their views.

**PARTICIPANT A:**

Extract 1*: "She just cannot lose her temper...and shout at the child"* (Participant A, p. 1).

Extract 2: *"I shout at the child but I don't like really say terrible things"* (Participant A, p. 2).

As Weare (2004) contends, responding effectively in ways that help the other person feel good about themselves while retaining our own authenticity and self-respect makes up an important part of good communication which is key to emotional intelligence. Participant A's comment (extract 1) indicates that she thought that Mrs Ngokha's response was not effective or appropriate. Her remarks in extract 2 further indicate that she herself chooses her responses deliberately when interacting with her learners. This in itself is an indication that she is quite aware of the impact communication can have when interacting with her learners and that she tries to ensure that she communicates effectively with them. Nevertheless one can question what level of understanding this participant has of EI and if she does actually use it with her learners

**PARTICIPANT B:**

Extract 3: *"I think her...words.  She's too harsh in the manner she speaks to ...John er she could have said it in a different way I hate learners like you shows a lot of er emotion..."* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 36:  *"The manner in which she imparts her knowledge er she's got to be trained and skilled er it's senseless just being er having the knowledge, you've also got to know how, how to deliver the content in class"* (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 37 *"...not too harsh with the children"* (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 38: *"The manner in which she spoke to the child? I think its frustration. (laughs). It must be frustration"* (Participant B, p. 3).

Extract 39: *"Er, firstly, she spoke very badly. I don't take lightly to that. I wouldn't have spoken to the child in I hate learners like you, what are you doing in my class anyway?"* (Participant B, p. 3).

Extract 40: *"It is frustrating I would get cross (laughs) or angry but er not in those words"* (Participant B, p. 4).

This participant showed a greater degree of understanding with regard to the importance of good communication skills as can be evidenced by her comments. She was quite forthright and vociferous in her views that Mrs Ngokha spoke in a very unbefitting manner to John. The participant's body language mirrored her indignation at Mrs Ngokha's words as she bristled in anger when she commented that Mrs Ngokha **"spoke very badly."** She remarked that she would not have spoken to the child in the manner that Mrs Ngokha addressed him. Although this participant admitted that she would also have become cross, she nevertheless still reiterated **"not in those words."**

**PARTICIPANT C:**

Extract 41: *"She should have called him aside and asked him the reason, not in front of the whole class"* (Participant C, p. 1).

Extract 42: *"She should ask him nicely. If you shout at the child they automatically gonna er gonna put a barrier up. If you ask in a nice way they'll probably explain to you the reason why the homework wasn't done"* (Participant C, p. 1).

Extract 43: *"The children must be able to talk and come to you as a teacher and not be frightened"* (Participant C, p. 1).

Extract 44: *"So I pulled the child aside and asked them why they didn't do the homework"* (Participant C, p. 2).

Extract 45: *"I would have...firstly spoken to the child, asked the child if the reason why the homework wasn't done"* (Participant C, p. 3).

Extract 46: *"She's not giving him space to explore er explain..." (*Participant C, p. 1).

Participant C has a high degree of awareness and understanding of the importance of effective communication skills in the classroom as is evidenced by her remarks above. Her comment in extract 41 shows not only her understanding of the importance of good communication skills but also that of empathy for she remarked that Mrs Ngokha should have called the child aside and spoken to him privately. This is showing sensitivity to the child's situation. Participant C also comments on Mrs Ngokha's tone when she says, **"She should ask him nicely."** As already discussed, the tone that one uses when communicating with others, is of utmost importance. This participant touches on the importance of open communication when she mentions that the learners must be able to talk to the educator without being afraid.

**PARTICIPANT D:**

Extract 47: **"***He could not be understanding her, the language she's speaking in. Ermmmm her questions could have been like er on a higher level. She should, She can come down to his level and make him understand"** (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 13: *"So she should consider all these factors first before shouting or becoming frustrated with him"* (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 48 *"All educators are taught to cater for a diversity of learners and to speak to learners in a proper and becoming way, you know er not in this way."* (Participant D, p. 1)

Extract 49: *"You cannot belittle a learner"* (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 23: *"You know You cannot shout at him, you cannot call him an idiot you know"* (Participant D, p. 1).

Extract 29: *"She could have er called him, you know er called him and spoke to him and find found out what the problem is but any educator cannot be speaking to a child in that manner"* (Participant D, p.2).

Extract 50: *"...but don't er react in that way by shouting and screaming at the learner"* (Participant D, p. 3).

Extract 51: *"I think er her approach is more like er stand and deliver. You know it's chalk and talk it's not er engaging the learner er in her teaching. Er the lack John's lack of concentration as I said is due to her just standing there and er and teaching and not engaging the learners in a two way process"* (Participant D, p. 3).

Extract 52: *"And probably by er by the two process er he he could probably partake in the discussion"* (Participant D, p. 3).

Participant D is cognisant of the fact that effective communication skills are of prime importance in a classroom situation. She makes several references to the fact that educators need to address their charges in an appropriate manner. Her comments evidence a high degree of awareness of and understanding of the importance of effective communication skills.

**PARTICIPANT E:**

This participant did not make any direct references with regard to this theme.

Three educators held the views that an educator shouting at a learner was an unacceptable form of communication However, it was interesting to note the contradiction in Educator A's views on this theme. Whilst this educator expressed her view on the manner in which an educator should address a learner by saying "She cannot just lose her temper...and shout at the child" this educator went on, later, to say "I shout at the child but I don't like really say terrible things." This seems to suggest that as long as the educator did not say "terrible" things it was okay to shout at the child. Educator B held a particularly strong view on the manner in which an educator should address a learner as is revealed in the particular quote "She spoke very badly. I don't take lightly to that." This educator's body language and the manner in which she laughed cemented her strong emotions in this regard. Educator E did not make any direct references to this idea but she did comment that "Mrs Ngokha shouldn't react like that." This shows that she did think that Mrs Ngokha's interaction with John was not appropriate although she did not go into further detail about this.

### i. Improvement of Skills

Training and improvement of educators' skills emerged as one of the themes. It was included as it was considered important to the study. Some researchers are of the opinion that emotional intelligence should form part of training and development of educators. Kaufhold and Johnson (2005) contend that an educator's best practice involves dedication to lifelong learning and a commitment to personal and professional growth and that a critical aspect of a healthy, personally accountable and successful person is that of emotional intelligence.

Day (2004, p. 8) contends that it is the kind and quality of the education, training and development opportunities throughout educators' careers and the cultures in which they work that will influence their ability to help learners to learn how to succeed. Participant B, in particular made many references which pointed to the importance of educators being properly trained and skilled. This participant was moved out of the senior phase and into the foundation phase and she found the change quite challenging.  This could be one of the reasons why she was so vocal on this issue.

**PARTICIPANT B:**

Extract 65:   *"Maybe she's not equipped or she's not er trained to handle...a situation like this.  Maybe she needs more training"* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 66: *"Er how to deal with er children that have learning problems and er ja maybe a workshop on how to handle these learners"* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 16: *"Er ... not being able to er ...deal with the situation"* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 67: *"You have to be equipped in order to er deal with a learner like this"* (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 68: *"Er you need to have the skills"* (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 69: *"She's got to be trained and skilled"* (Participant B, p. 1).

Extract 70: *"Maybe if I was er trained to er assist him..."* (Participant B, p. 3).

It can be deduced from this participant's words that she feels the need for extra training in order to deal with certain classroom situations. She was also quite vocal that training could have helped Mrs Ngokha to handle the situation in a more positive manner. Participant B did not make specific mention of what type of training and skill was necessary. However, the fact that she admits to feeling frustrated indicates that she thinks that she requires training in other areas. Her words indicate her view that training in other areas could be beneficial to educators in terms of dealing with learners in more appropriate ways.

It was evident that Participant B felt very strongly on the issue of educators being properly trained and skilled. She was very vocal on the aspect concerning the training and skill of educators. This seemed to stem from her own inadequacies regarding her role in the foundation phase where she seemed to be completely out of her depth.

**j.  Conceptualisation**

This theme has been divided into three sub themes namely the conceptualisation of (i) a good educator, (ii) Intelligence, and (iii) Good/Weak Learners.  A discussion of each theme follows below.

<u>Good Educator</u>

There are varying views on what qualities contribute to being a good educator. Justice and Espinosa (2007) suggested that these include enthusiasm, love of children, knowledge of subject matter, verbal skills, intelligence, experience, and a strong work ethic. According to Day (2004, p. 15), the primary factors in good teaching are the inner qualities of the teacher, a continuing striving for excellence (in herself and others), a caring for and fascination with growth, and a deep commitment to providing the best possible opportunities for each child. He adds that other essential components of effective educators include emotional engagement, love of children/young people, as well as being caring and critical thinkers. He also contends that all effective educators have a passion for their subject and for their learners, as well as a passionate belief that who they are and how they teach can have a difference in their learners' lives. Below are each participant's views on how they conceptualise good educators.

**PARTICIPANT A:**

Extract 71: ***"The teacher needs to have patience... and be able to work with...any child be it a good child or...weak child..."*** (Participant A, p. 1).

Extract 72: ***"Maybe Mrs Ngokha has er many years of experience as well which makes her a better teacher"*** (Participant A, p. 2).

Extract 73: ***"Maybe she she networks with other teachers.  She does research on her own or maybe she she's carrying on with her studies as well so she's learning new ideas and...new concepts..."*** (Participant A, p.2).

Participant A mentions networking, research and continuing studies as areas that good educators should develop. "**Patience**" is another quality that participant A maintains a good educator should possess. From her quotes it can be seen that this participant tends to attach more importance to experience and expertise as essential qualities for good educators to have. Apart from the quality of patience, she makes no mention of any qualities that point to an educator's emotional intelligence.

**PARTICIPANT B:**

Extract 74: ***"She must be knowledgeable firstly. She must be able to impart that knowledge to her learners"*** (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 36: ***"The manner in which, she imparts her knowledge er she's got to be skilled and trained er it's senseless just being er having the knowledge you've also got to know how, how to deliver the content in class"*** (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 26:  ***"She's also got to be er compassionate"*** (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 37: ***"Not too harsh with the children"*** (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 75: ***"She's got to be a disciplinarian at the same time"*** (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 69: ***"Er she's got to be trained and skilled"*** (Participant B, p. 2).

Participant B emphasised qualities such as being knowledgeable, being able to deliver the content, being skilled and trained, and being a disciplinarian as being important qualities for educators to have. However, she balanced this by also

mentioning that good educators are **"compassionate"** and "**not too harsh with the children."** This indicates that she thinks that good educators need to encompass not only cognitive qualities but also some of the softer skills.

**PARTICIPANT C:**

Extract 76: *"Understanding. Giving the chil children space to explore themselves. Try to get their full potential in different areas, in different ways"* (Participant C, p. 1).

This participant commented on allowing the learners **"space to explore themselves,"** and trying **"to get their full potential."** This seems to indicate that she is aware that there is more to being a good educator than just imparting academic knowledge.

**PARTICIPANT E:**

Extract 77*: "Er understanding. You have to understand your children. Er be passionate towards your children. Er have patience..."* (Participant E, p. 1).

Extract 78*: "But then I have to be patient with him and encourage him to do his work"* (Participant E, p. 2).

Participant E emphasised **"understanding, patience** and being **passionate"** as qualities that a good educator needs to possess. This shows that she acknowledges that there are other skills that educators need rather than just expertise with regard to knowledge and delivery of that knowledge.

Participants' conceptualisations of good educators comprised a mixture where some viewed experience and expertise as important while others stressed compassion, patience and understanding as valuable. Their comments indicated that being skilled and properly trained in different areas was viewed as being of primary importance.

Intelligence

According to Obiakor (2001, p. 9), one of our greatest errors is that intelligent learners are those who excel on standardised tests or those that come from good neighbourhoods and good schools. Participants seemed to have the same stereotypical view as they conceptualised intelligence in terms of academic

knowledge and presentation of work. No allowance was made for differing learning styles or other types of intelligences.

**PARTICIPANT A:**

Extract 79: "*She's an excellent worker when it comes to her...her knowledge of the work*" (Participant A, p. 2).

Extract 62:*"But when it comes to putting it down she tends to talk and does her work anyhow so that also frustrates me because you know that child can work but the child is just playing the fool"* (Participant A, p. 2).

Extract 80: *"They can be intelligent in class but there are certain areas they lack in"* (Participant A, p. 1).

This comment (extract 80) seems to hint that there could be an element missing with regard to the conceptualisation of intelligence. However, the participant gives no indication of what this might be. Intelligent learners seem to be viewed as those who complete all written tasks in a manner that is acceptable by the educator. Their performance also seems to be measured only in relation to their academic achievement and "knowledge of work." Conceptualisations of intelligence seemed to be linked to conceptualisation of good educators. Many of the participants viewed the good educator as being an expert, experienced, knowledgeable, authoritative, and someone who keeps abreast by furthering studies. Although participants also mentioned qualities such as 'patience', 'understanding' and being 'compassionate' these were not emphasised as much.

Good/weak Learners

In the traditional sense a good learner is identified in terms of good academic achievement while learners who are not intelligent in the traditional sense seem to be classified as weak learners. In this study as well good learners seemed to be conceptualised only in terms of academic knowledge as is revealed in the following statements.

**PARTICIPANT A:**

Extract 79: *"She's an excellent worker when it comes to her...her knowledge of the work"* (Participant A, p. 2).

The implication is that learners are only viewed as intelligent or smart if they are able to excel academically. There seems to be no room for learners who excel in areas other than the academic arena.

Extract 71: *The teacher needs to have patience ... and be able to work with ... any child be it a good child or ...weak child"* (Participant A, p. 1).

Extract 62: *"But when it comes to putting it down she tends to talk and does her work anyhow so that also frustrates me because I know that child can work but the child is just playing the fool"* (Participant A, p. 2).

"**Good**" seems to be equated with a child who is a top achiever academically while "**weak**" seems to be equated with a child who does not excel academically or a child who experiences learning difficulties in class. Taken in context, this participant conveys her view that learners who have difficulty with concentration or coping academically are "weak" learners.  Participant A's remarks convey her view that the child who cannot do written tasks and in the way that conforms to her beliefs, is a weak child.  These remarks show that this participant focuses more on the traditional view of intelligence and has a very limited understanding that there are other types of intelligences to be considered as well.

**PARTICIPANT B:**

Extract 66: *"Er how to deal with children that have learning problems..."* (Participant B, p 2).

Extract 93: *"Er maybe the child just has learning problems where he's unable to...er concen...well they say he is unable to concentrate so he  has er a problem maybe he needs medication maybe he's a hype hyperactive child"* (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 94: *'Er he has a learning problem.  He ... is not able to concentrate on anything"* (Participant B, p. 2).

Extract 59: *"But this learner in particular just, he just closes up, shuts down. Er doesn't want to work in any way. He just sits there. Stares at you blankly"* (Participant B, p. 2).

Participant B equates learners who experience concentration difficulties as those who have learning problems. She attributes the concentration challenges that the learner in her class experiences to the fact that he has a learning problem. She does not make any comments that indicate that the child could be experiencing challenges due to emotional difficulties. Nor does she make comments regarding how she as an educator could approach the situation from the emotional side.

**PARTICIPANT E:**

**Extract 95:** *"On a certain day he'll do his work properly but after break he he like lapses into this time that he just doesn't want to do anything"* (Participant E, p. 1).

This participant comments "**He'll do his work properly,**" and then in stark opposition comments "**he just doesn't want to do anything.**" This gives the indication that this participant also equates intelligence and the 'good' learner with the traditional sense of academic achievement. The learner who does "his work properly," is viewed as a 'good' learner. When this participant says "**he just doesn't want to do anything,**" she is referring to him not wanting to do any of the tasks associated with the traditional view of what a good learner is.

Participants A and B felt that children who experienced concentration problems were "weak" learners. Participant E felt that a learner who did not complete his written tasks was not a 'good' learner. Participant B also implied that a child experiencing learning problems was not "a good child' but a "weak child." Participant B suggested that hyperactivity could be a contributing factor towards a child's performance in class when she commented that "maybe he needs medication, maybe he's a hyperactive child." "Talking all the time" and "playing the fool" were also seen as qualities that "problem" learners display. Participants conceptualised "good" and "weak" learners in the traditional sense where learners who excelled academically were viewed as being the 'good' learners with the opposite being true for those who were viewed as "weak" learners.

### k. Classroom Climate

The importance of the classroom being a psychologically safe and non-threatening space emerged as a theme. According to Nelson et al (2005), a safe environment is one that is emotionally and academically challenging and is characterised by trust, respect, and engaging dialogue in the classroom. He contends that a healthy learning environment requires emphasis on both the cognitive as well as the affective aspects, as emotional intelligence skills are particularly important to academic success. Classroom climate refers to the conditions, circumstances and influences that surround and affect the development and performance of learners (Coetzee & Jansen, p. 2007). The manner in which educators communicate with their learners in the classroom greatly influences their sense of psychological safety, their self-image, their feeling of belonging and their sense of competence. Communication in the classroom not only involves the imparting of knowledge but also sends messages to learners about their abilities and innate capacities regarding how they handle tasks. Negative messages by educators can demean learners and make lasting impressions on them. Educators who are not sensitive to the unconscious messages that learners send through their behaviour, unintentionally worsen the learners' negative emotional state by their choice of words and their body language (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p.43).

**PARTICIPANT C:**

Extract 43: *"Children must be able to talk to and come to you as a teacher and not be frightened"* (Participant C, p. 1).

Extract 81: *"If they don't understand, they will say 'mam I do not understand,' and not be frightened and look blank. If they blank you must know they frightened of you cos a child that's frightened of you can't learn. If they relaxed they will be able to learn"* (Participant C, p. 1).

Extract 42: *"If you shout at the child they automatically gonna er gonna put a barrier up. If you ask in a nice way they"ll probably explain to the reason to you why the homework wasn't done"* (Participant C, p. 1).

A positive classroom climate increases a learner's sense of psychological safety and their willingness to participate in class activities. Participant C conveys her

understanding of how important a positive classroom environment is to learning through her remarks. This participant displayed a high degree of awareness as to how important a positive and safe classroom climate is as can be evidenced by her comments. Her remarks show that she recognises that a safe environment is one that is characterised not only by academic and emotional stimulation but also trust, respect and engaging dialogue. The fact that no other participant commented on classroom climate is an indicator that they are unaware of the importance of a positive and safe classroom environment in terms of EI.

## I.  Learning

No evidence of this theme surfaced during the interviews and hence could not be discussed any further.

## 5.5.  QUESTIONNAIRE FINDINGS

Participants were presented with structured questionnaires that comprised of eleven closed questions from which they had to choose their responses. The structure of the questionnaire was deliberate as I wanted to establish the participants' responses on set components of emotional intelligence. Some themes were common to both the interviews as well as the questionnaires so there is some overlap of themes here.

| THEMES | QUESTION | RESPONSES OF PARTICIPANTS | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | ALWAYS | USUALLY | SOMETIMES | RARELY | NEVER |
| EMOTIONAL PERCEPTION AND EXPRESSION | 1 | B D E | C | A | | |
| | | | | | | |
| EMOTIONAL FACILITATION OF THOUGHT | | | | | | |
| Decision Making | 2 | | | B D E | C | A |
| Problem Solving | 10 | A D E | | B C | | |
| Problem Solving | 11 | | | C | B | A D E |
| | | | | | | |
| MANAGING OF EMOTIONS | 3 | D | E | B C | | A |
| | 4 | B | | A C D E | | |
| | | | | | | |
| EMPATHY | 5 | A D | B C | E | | |
| | | | | | | |
| LEARNING | 6 | A B D E | C | | | |
| | 7 | B C D E | | A | | |
| | 8 | C E | B D | A | | |
| | 9 | D | B E | C | | A |

**TABLE 5.2: THEMES FROM QUESTIONNAIRES**

The themes that emerged from the questionnaires are indicated in the table above together with the responses of the participants.

## a. Emotional Perception and Expression

As previously discussed Salovey's and Mayer's first component, emotional perception and expression corresponds with that of Goleman's (1995) component of self-awareness. This component has already been discussed in much detail in a prior section and will just be touched upon here. Self-awareness is one of the key components of Goleman's (1995) model of emotional intelligence. It is the ability to recognise and label an increasingly complex range of feelings, and to link these to possible causes (Morris & Casey, 2006, p. 60). It enables us to have a better self understanding and makes us aware of our own strengths and limitations.

Our self-awareness helps us anticipate how to respond and feel in different situations and so enables us to modify our behaviour as well. This is important because in order to recognise emotions in others one has to first be able to recognise and acknowledge one's own emotions. Of Goleman's five domains of emotional intelligence, self-awareness is considered crucial as it is the domain that the other four build on (Morris & Casey, 2006). Self-awareness is at the heart of being emotionally intelligent (Mortiboys, 2005). To be able to express emotions appropriately one has to be able to accurately perceive one's own emotions as well as those of others.

Educators B, D and E all indicated that it was always very important for educators to be aware of their own feelings as they experienced them, while educator A thought it was only important sometimes. Educator C thought that it was usually important to be aware of emotions as they occurred.

## b. Emotional Facilitation of Thought

This is a component of emotional intelligence that focuses on how emotions can be used to effectively solve problems and make decisions. Questions 10 and 11 concerned the use of feelings with regard problem solving while question 2 related to decision making. Three of the participants (A, D, E) indicated on question 11 that educators should never allow emotions to guide them when problem solving. Educator B felt that emotional guidance during problem solving should be a rare

occurrence while educator C felt that emotions should only be used sometimes when problem solving. Participants A, D and E also indicated that problem solving at school should always be based on sound reasoning rather than feelings. Participants B and C indicated that problem solving at school should only sometimes be based on sound reasoning instead of feelings. With regard to utilising emotions to make decisions educators B, D and E indicated that educators should only occasionally use emotions to make major decisions in their lives. Educator A indicated that emotions should never be used in decision making while educator C felt that emotions in decision making should be used very rarely.

### c. Emotional Understanding

No evidence of this theme surfaced during the questionnaire stage and hence could not be discussed any further.

### d. Managing of Emotions

Questions 3 and 4 refer to how educators manage their emotions. This theme was also common to the interviews. Participant D felt that an educator who experienced feelings of being overwhelmed could still be effective in the classroom, while participant E felt that that an overwhelmed educator could never be effective. Participant E felt that such an educator could usually still be effective in the classroom while Participants B and C thought that this was only possible sometimes. In response to the statement that it was natural for an educator who is angry to blow his/her top or fume in silence, Participants A, C, D and E revealed this was only sometimes acceptable while Participant B felt that this was always acceptable.

### e. Motivating Oneself

No evidence of this theme surfaced during the questionnaire level and hence could not be discussed any further.

### f. Empathy

The responses of participants A and D revealed that they thought that only empathic educators could be truly effective educators while the responses of participants B and C revealed their thoughts that this was usually the case. Participant E felt that this was only sometimes true.

### g. Motivating Oneself

No evidence of this theme surfaced during the questionnaire stage and hence could not be discussed here.

### h. Communication and Interaction

This theme did not surface at this level and hence was not discussed here.

### i. Improvement of Skills

No evidence of this theme surfaced at the questionnaire level and hence could not be discussed any further.

### j. Conceptualisation

No evidence of this theme surfaced during the questionnaires and hence could not be discussed any further.

### k. Classroom Climate

No evidence of this theme surfaced during the questionnaires and hence could not be discussed any further.

### l. Learning

Participants A, B, D and E all felt that learning about the world (question 6) should always constitute a very important part of the school curriculum while participant C felt that this was usually important. Participants B, C, D and E all felt that learning about one's self (question 7) should be an important constituent of the learning process while participant A felt that this was only sometimes important. With regard to question 8, participants C and E indicated that talking, thinking and reading about experiences and ideas should always be central to the learning process.

On the other hand, participants B and D indicated that this was usually important while participant A felt that this was only sometimes important. With regard to question 9, participant D thought that experiencing one's self and surroundings should be a central part of the learning process while participant A felt that this should never be the case. Participants B and E felt that it was usually important to

experience one's self and surroundings while participant C indicated that it was only sometimes so.

The findings of the questionnaires indicate that participants have varying levels of awareness and understanding of the various components of EI.

## 5.6.  OBSERVATION FINDINGS

The table below indicates the educators' responses and reactions according to the different areas of observation.

| Theme | Observed Educator Activity | Observed | Not Observed | Not Enough Time |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Emotional Perception and Expression | Makes eye contact with learners | A B C D E | | |
| Emotional Perception and Expression | Addresses learners by name | A B C D E | | |
| Managing of Emotions | Displays effective control of emotions | | A B C D E | |
| Managing of Emotions | Addresses issues calmly | B C | A D E | |
| Managing of Emotions | Appears composed when handling discipline issues | A C | B D E | |
| Managing of Emotions | Displays irritability | A B C D E | | |
| Managing of Emotions | Displays  a positive demeanour | C | A B D E | |
| Managing of Emotions | Appears composed for most of the day | B C | A D E | |
| Managing of Emotions | Management of conflict resolution | A | | B C D E |
| Managing of Emotions / Communication | Has suitable tone of voice | A B C D E | | |
| Empathy | Displays empathy | A C D | B E | |
| Empathy/Communication | Is open | A C | B D E | |
| Handling Relationships | Is respectful towards learners | A B C | D E | |
| Handling Relationships | Is approachable | A C D | B E | |
| Handling Relationships | Is acceptant | C | A B D E | |
| Handling Relationships | Does not make assumptions | | | A B C D E |
| Communication | Has a good rapport with learners | A B C | D E | |
| Communication | Displays effective listening skills | | A B C D E | |
| Communication | Body language matches verbal response | A B C D E | | |
| Communication /Emotional Perception | Able to identify learners' non-verbal cues appropriately | C | A B D E | |

**TABLE 5.3: THEMES FROM OBSERVATION**

During the observation phase of the research, four themes were evident and these are illustrated in the table above. These themes were categorised in terms of the educator's observed activity. It was observed that all participants made eye contact with every learner and also addressed each child by name. According to Mortiboys (2005) this acknowledgement of individual learners is a simple but effective way in which educators can affect the learner's feelings for the better.

All participants displayed a fair amount of irritability with learners who were not behaving or working accordingly. Their tone of voice matched the emotions of irritability that were displayed. None of the participants displayed effective control of their emotions, further evidencing the difficulty they experienced with managing their emotions in certain situations. However, the observation period was not long enough to ascertain exactly how participants dealt with learners who they found challenging

in the classroom. One very important observation made was that participants' listening skills were not effective enough. Mortiboys (2005) assert that the ability to listen, to attend to others, is an integral part of emotional intelligence. Effective listening requires that one be fully attentive to the speaker and not be distracted by one's own concerns. That is, one needs to hear what is being said and what is being communicated but not necessarily articulated (Mortiboys, 2005).

Being a good listener is a prerequisite to showing that you are responding to people's feelings. The observations showed that educators were only listening on a superficial level to what their learners were saying. The observation period was not long enough to gauge exactly which EI skills were utilised in the teaching/learning process. However, what did emerge from this period of observation was that educators are very aware of their own emotions, but do not have the necessary skills to adequately manage their own emotions.

## 5.7. SUMMARY

The purpose of this chapter was to present the research results of the study. The data was analysed and discussed in terms of the specific research objectives and with reference to the theoretical framework and relevant literature. In the following chapter the findings will be discussed, conclusions drawn, limitations of this study will be noted, and recommendations for future research will be proposed.

# CHAPTER 6

# RESEARCH FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## 6.1. INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter dealt with the presentation and discussion of the results. This chapter will present an overview of the entire research as well as a summary of the findings of the study.

In the initial part of the chapter an analysis of participants' level of understanding and awareness of EI is provided. The findings have been analysed against the conventional EI criteria as well as other new themes that the researcher found to be important to the area of EI. The second part of the chapter reviews possible limitations of the study and how these could have affected the results. The final part of the chapter presents a conclusion of the overall findings of the study. The chapter concludes with possible recommendations that may be implemented in future studies of this nature. These recommendations have come about as a result of the findings of this study.

## 6.2. SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether foundation phase educators understood anything about the concept of emotional intelligence and how this understanding influenced their classroom practice. The study was qualitative in nature and was located within the interpretive paradigm. The sample was drawn from the foundation phase department of an urban primary school in Pietermaritzburg, South Africa. Data was gathered via semi-structured interviews, questionnaires as well as observation of the participants.

The two theories that were used to underpin this study were Salovey and Mayer's (2002) specific ability theory and Goleman's (1995) theory of mixed ability. The Salovey/Mayer theory holds that emotional intelligence comprises a set of specific skills that can be taught and improved upon.

Goleman's mixed ability theory holds that emotional intelligence is "the ability to motivate oneself and persist in the face of frustrations, to control impulse and delay

gratification, to regulate one's moods and keep distress from swamping the ability to think, to empathise and hope" (Goleman, 1995, p. 34).

The aim of the study was twofold. Firstly, it aimed to find out what understanding educators had of the concept of emotional intelligence. The second aim was to establish how their conceptualisation of emotional intelligence influenced their teaching. Five participants were selected for the study. They were subjected to three different data production techniques. The first part of the study consisted of a created scenario which was presented to the participants and on which the interview questions were based. The created scenario was chosen deliberately because the researcher wanted to see what the participants' answers revealed about their understanding of emotional intelligence. The researcher was of the opinion that this would reveal more useful data than direct questioning. The second data production technique comprised a structured questionnaire that consisted of 11 questions that related to emotional intelligence. The final technique entailed observing each participant during a lesson and noting whether any components of emotional intelligence were utilised.

## 6.3. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The findings have been discussed according to the themes that were uncovered during the course of this study.

### a. Emotional Perception and Expression

The appropriate verbal expression of emotions depends wholly on the accurate perception of emotions through the identification of non-verbal clues such as body language, tone of voice, facial expressions and gestures. Accurate perception of emotions of others is dependent on self-awareness of emotions for it is only if one is aware of one's own emotions can one detect the emotions of others. In the course of this study it was found that the different participants showed varying levels of awareness and understanding of this component. While all participants acknowledged in some way that the manner in which educators responded to their learners was important, none showed that they had a full understanding of what the component entailed. The participants focused only on the inappropriate verbal expression of emotions by Mrs Ngokha. None of the participants made comments

which indicated that they were aware of the link between self-awareness, emotional perception and verbal expression.

Participants A, B and C made direct remarks emphasising the inappropriate emotional response by Mrs Ngokha by focusing on aspects of her communication. For instance, participant A spoke of **"shout at the child,"** and participant B mentioned being **"too harsh"** with him while participant C said **"she just attack him."** However, none of them made any reference to the fact that Mrs Ngokha's reaction could be attributed to a lack of awareness of her own feelings which consequently impacted directly on her not being able to correctly perceive John's emotions. Participants D and E on the other hand, merely spoke of Mrs Ngokha's **"reaction"** being inappropriate but did not elaborate on why they felt that way. All were in agreement that the response was not appropriate but had they had a full understanding of this component their comments would have indicated so. Thus, the findings indicate that participants have only a partial understanding of what this component entails and therefore it is highly likely that they are not making optimal use of this component in the classroom.

## b. Emotional Facilitation of Thought

This component entails firstly, being aware of our emotions and then utilising them to assist with problem solving, creative thinking and decision making. No evidence came forth during the interview stage to support the idea that the participants had any knowledge or understanding of how one could use one's emotions to facilitate thought. No evidence of this came through during the observation period as well. This theme did however emerge at the questionnaire stage as one of the pre-set themes. There were mixed responses to this theme where some participants indicated that one should never be guided by one's emotions when it came to problem solving while another indicated that it should only occur rarely. Another participant felt that emotions could be used at times when solving problems. On the issue of utilising emotions to guide decision making, three participants indicated that emotions should only sometimes be used in this manner. One participant indicated that emotions should only be used on rare occasions to guide emotions and one felt that this should never occur at all.

### c. Emotional Understanding

This component entails the labelling and categorising of emotions as well as our perception of the causes and consequences of our emotions. Participants showed only a partial understanding of this component. Participants focused on how Mrs Ngokha could have been more understanding of the reasons behind John's behaviour. While this is important, according to EI, the understanding of one's own emotions is of equal importance. As Weare (2004) contends, understanding the causes and consequences of our emotions include being aware of the extent to which our emotions are triggered by factors "out there" or "in here." None of the participants commented on the fact that Mrs Ngokha should have tried to understand her own emotions and what exactly had triggered her response in the current situation. So based on the partial understanding that participants have of this component it can be assumed that they are only making limited use of this component in their classrooms. That is, whilst they are trying to understand the reasons behind their learners' behaviour, they are not giving attention to what it is about their own behaviour that causes them to react in certain ways.

### d. Managing of Emotions

This facet of EI is considered to be the most important for it determines the way we relate to others and the kinds of relationships we maintain. It refers to the ability to manage our own feelings as well as those of others. Participants all acknowledged having certain emotions which they had difficulty managing. For instance, participant B admitted that she would get cross in certain situations although her follow-up remarks further indicated some attempt at controlling her emotions when she said **"not in those words."** This participant is aware of the emotions that she displays and she is also cognisant of the fact that she has difficulty managing them. She admits to feeling frustrated and her comments also evidence feelings of inadequacy, despair and feeling overwhelmed. She displays awareness of the importance of managing emotions but she does not have a full understanding of the component.

All participants identified with Mrs Ngokha's feelings of frustration. They all commented on her lack of managing her own emotions appropriately, albeit without actually using those terms. One participant (E) made a profound statement when she said **"If you being a teacher reacts in that way the child knows that there**

**there's something (sneezes) excuse me wrong with er there's something wrong so he reacts in that manner that he's reacting at the moment."** By making the statement, this participant is saying that if the educator is unable to manage her feelings, this will be easily picked up on by her learners who will then behave accordingly. In making this statement, it indicates that this participant is very aware of how important it is for educators to manage their emotions as well as the fact that learners are able to sense when educators are out of control. Remarks made by educators pointed to their own frustrations as well as feelings of despair, inadequacy, helplessness and being overwhelmed. The very fact that the participants spoke of all these feelings indicate that they themselves have a struggle managing some of their emotions. All the participants identified with Mrs Ngokha's feelings of frustration. Participants attributed Mrs Ngokha's behaviour to reasons such as large classes, language barriers, and diversity of learners as well as management of emotions. Frustration was the emotion that was emphasised by all participants, seemingly an emotion that they could all identify with.

This indicates that they all allowed their emotions to get the better of them in certain situations. It was also observed during the observation periods that many educators did display signs of irritability with their learners. Their responses toward their learners indicated this. Although participants acknowledged that correct management of emotions was very important in the classroom, none displayed any signs that they knew how to adequately do this. They did make comments that supported the fact that they were aware of their own feelings. However, none of them were observed to practise this component in their classroom. The observation period was not long enough to make many observations in this regard but the few instances that did occur pointed to the educators' lack of knowledge on how to manage their feelings. As already discussed in the review of literature, educators are emotionally overwhelmed by demands and expectations set by the education system, parents, colleagues as well as learners (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p. 3).

### e. Motivating Oneself

Self motivation refers to the ability to focus our emotions and use them purposefully. The very fact that none of the participants made any reference to self motivation indicates that they are unaware of this aspect of EI and as such are not utilising it.

### f. Empathy

Empathy, like managing emotions, is another key component of EI. It is only through seeing the world through the eyes of others that we can truly understand the plight of others. "Empathy is our capacity to understand and share other people's emotions without losing the awareness of our own" (Coetzee & Jansen, 2007, p. 26). It was interesting to note that most participants, displayed strong degrees of awareness and understanding of this component. Participants B, C and D in particular made many references to this theme. Some participants were also observed to be using empathy with their learners.

### g. Handling Relationships

Participants tended to place emphasis on outside sources as reasons for the behaviour of challenging learners, rather than look at how their own actions or emotions could bring about a change in the situation. Apart from participant E who commented on how she as an educator needed to be patient and encouraging with difficult learners, the others all concentrated on issues such as calling in parents, using psychological services, peer learning, one on one learning and even nutrition as the strategies to be used with their challenging or "problem" learners.

This was an indication that they were unaware of the impact their own EI skills could have on the relationships that they have with their learners.

### h. Communication and Interaction

Although communication is not one of the conventional components of EI according to Salovey and Mayer and Goleman it is nevertheless considered as important to the area of EI. The researcher therefore felt it was essential to include it as a theme. Participants all indicated that it was their opinion that Mrs Ngokha addressed John in a very unbecoming manner.

### i. Improvement of Skills

Only Participant B felt that specialist training was necessary for educators in order for them to handle varying types of classroom situations. However, she did not specify that EI skills should form part of that specialist training. Neither did any of the

others make any references indicating that EI should form part of an educator's skills.

## j. Conceptualisation

Participants' conceptualisations of good educators tended to comprise a mixture of qualities. Some participants viewed good educators in terms of years of experience, expertise, keeping abreast by networking and further studying, and being knowledgeable and being able to impart that knowledge. Others conceptualised good educators in terms of skills that may be considered important to the area of EI. These included skills such as patience, understanding and being passionate.

Intelligence was conceptualised in the traditional sense in terms of academic knowledge and good presentation of work.  This traditional view of what intelligence is seemed to be viewed in the same light as the conceptualisation of good and weak learners. Learners who performed well academically were seen as good learners while those who did not were viewed as weak learners.

## k. Classroom Climate

With regard to this theme only one participant commented on the importance of a psychologically safe and positive classroom climate where the atmosphere should be conducive to learning without fear of ridicule. It indicated that the majority of the participants did not have much knowledge or awareness and therefore understanding of how important the classroom climate was in terms of EI.

## l. Learning

Participants' responses comprised mixed views with regard to what should be important to the learning process. Some responses indicated that the learning process should follow the traditional school curriculum while others indicated that learning should also include learning about oneself.

## 6.4. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations in any research undertaken are unavoidable. However, the researcher sought to minimise limitations as far as possible by undertaking certain measures which simultaneously attempted to maintain the credibility of the research. This

included in-depth explanations of the research design, and the methods of data production and analysis.

However, even with attempts to minimise limitations some did arise. One of the limitations was related to the nature of the study. The researcher does concede that this study was largely subjective due to it being a qualitative study and this in itself could be viewed as a limitation of the study. However, the researcher relied on literature in the field of EI which served as a backbone for this study. Therefore the researcher is of the opinion that regardless of the subjective nature of the study it is still a solid study that is based on and supported by a strong literature background.

One may also argue that the results of this study cannot be generalised to other schools. That is, it is only representative of the sample. However, this study did not aim to make generalisations about a wider population. It was not the researcher's intention that the sample be representative of a wider population but rather a representative of itself.

A further limitation related to the previous limitation of the study could be that the sample size was too small. However, once again the researcher's aim was to make generalisations about a specific sample and not a wider population. Therefore the sample size proved adequate for this study.

Another limitation related to the time allocated for observation. Although useful data were gleaned within the observation period, I am of the opinion that more in-depth data could have been gathered had the observation period been longer.

## 6.5. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDIES

This study was limited to just the foundation phase of one primary school. Perhaps futures studies could concentrate on educators from both the foundation as well as the senior primary phases.

Possibly other studies could also include more schools rather than just one school. This study could also be replicated over a wider area, that is, researchers could look at schools in other geographical areas.

Perhaps educational training institutions need to seriously consider including emotional intelligence as one of their training modules in their pre – and in- service teacher training courses for foundation phase educators.

## 6.6.    RESEARCH CONCLUSION

It was not the intention of the study to arrive at conclusions. However, certain themes that emerged resulted in answering the research questions. The research questions are restated below:

1. What do educators understand by the concept of emotional intelligence?

2. How does their conceptualisation of emotional intelligence influence their teaching?

The review of literature has shown EI has much merit in the field of education. As Okiakor (2001) contends in order to survive in today's increasingly complex and competitive world, the youth require more than an education where traditional intelligence is favoured above other types of intelligences and where the emphasis rests almost solely on academic performance. Indeed many researchers are of the opinion that emotional intelligence is the missing link that should complement traditional intelligence (Obiakor, 2001, Goleman, 1995, Mortiboys, 2005).

In fact, Day (2004) and Goleman (1995) argue that in order for educators to facilitate their learners' emotional literacy, i.e. the understanding and application of emotional intelligence, educators themselves need to have a sense of their own emotional intelligence. Weare (2004, p. 14) also contends that emotionally intelligent educators are able to relate more effectively to their charges, manage their classrooms better and teach more effectively and are also able to manage their own stress and respond to change more effectively. According to Coetzee and Jansen (2007, p. 1), educators who demonstrate emotionally intelligent behaviour in the classroom are more effective in achieving their academic goals and also convey a sense  of caring towards their learners and create an emotional climate that enhances the learning environment, reduces peer conflict and facilitates a more desirable teaching context.

Educators who use emotional intelligence have the potential to enhance a variety of aspects in their work as teachers. For example, discipline issues may be determined

by how the educator handles the feelings of the learners concerned. Even more important, the use of emotional intelligence, is more likely to develop in learners a state which is conducive to learning, with an increased likelihood of learners being engaged, motivated, ready to take risks in their learning, positive in their approach to learning, ready to collaborate, creative and resilient (Mortiboys, 2005, p. 4).

Cohen (1999) is in agreement that the capacity for educators to be effective is dependent upon knowing and understanding their learners from a developmental, academic, psychological, as well as a social perspective. Kaufhold and Johnson (2005) contend that an educator's best practice involves dedication to lifelong learning and a commitment to personal and professional growth. Their argument is that a critical aspect of a healthy, personally accountable and successful person is that of emotional intelligence. They hold the view that educators who understand and improve their own emotional intelligence skills have the added advantage of being able to not only develop their own professional and personal strengths and improve areas of weakness but also lessen the risk of psychological burnout.

Morris and Casey (2006) maintain that educators' understanding and use of emotional intelligence in their teaching should be a fundamental part of the teaching process. However, the findings of this study are contrary to this argument.

From the summary of findings discussed above it may be concluded that whilst all participants recognised and acknowledged the importance of emotions with regard to teaching and learning they failed to recognise how the construct of emotional intelligence can offer a new approach that can be utilised to address the importance of emotions in intelligence. So despite their acknowledgement of the importance of emotions, it was found that participants did not have a thorough knowledge or understanding of the concept of EI. Participants did, however, show higher levels of awareness and understanding with regard to some of the EI components. For instance most of the participants had a good understanding of the component of empathy. That is, participants commented on issues of empathy or used them in the classroom.

This finding can be viewed in a positive light as both of these components are regarded as the cornerstones of EI. Participants also displayed strong awareness of

their own feelings, especially with regard to the emotion of frustration. For example some participants identified with Mrs Ngokha's feelings of frustration or expressed their feelings of being disheartened. Participants also voiced, quite emphatically, that appropriate communication with learners was a key requirement. Likewise, with regard to other aspects of EI, participants displayed varying levels of understanding of EI components. There were certain components of EI that participants viewed as important to educators. For example, all participants thought that the managing of emotions was a very important aspect. Although participants felt this way, they themselves were not aware of how they could better manage their own feelings. Managing of feelings is another crucial aspect of EI and it was found that all participants expressed difficulty in this area. Most participants displayed only a limited or partial understanding of the other components of EI. For instance, with regard to emotional perception and expression and emotional understanding, participants only indicated awareness and understanding of one facet of these components. During the observation period it also emerged that participants had difficulty managing their emotions as was indicated by their actions as well as their verbal and non-verbal responses.

The aim of the study was to determine what understanding the foundation phase educators had of EI and how this influenced their teaching. The EI models were used to determine what degree of understanding educators had of the different aspects of emotional intelligence. The frameworks used to underpin the study were considered comprehensive in their discussion and articulation of EI. Consequently, a combination of both EI models was used as the researcher was of the view that both models comprised of necessary components that allowed for an investigation of EI within the field of education. The EI components of both of the models were also the ones that I looked for in the foundation phase educators in the course of my study.

The findings have evidenced that there is a need for educators to become more aware of EI and how these skills can be used in the classroom. Results have indicated that the foundation phase educators of this particular school have a very superficial understanding of EI. That is, while they recognise and acknowledge the importance of emotions in teaching and learning, they lack an in-depth understanding of emotional intelligence as has been evidenced by the data gleaned

during the study. Participants showed particularly low levels of awareness and understanding of the components of emotional facilitation of thought as well as the component of self motivation. Save for two components of EI, participants' comments and actions indicated limited understanding and use of EI components and skills in the classroom.

It is hoped that the findings of this study will pave the way for further studies that might lead to the inclusion of EI skills into teacher training programmes or other professional development courses for educators.

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# ANNEXURES

1. Informed Consent Document
2. Questionnaire
3. Teacher Observation Schedule
4. Interview Schedule
5. Turnitin Report
6. Ethical Approval Certificate

**INFORMED CONSENT DOCUMENT**

**Title of study:** Foundations Phase Educators conceptualisation of Emotional Intelligence and its influence on teaching.

**Principal Investigator:** Ms A. Ranjith

**Institute:** University of Kwazulu Natal

**Introduction:** I am currently engaged in study at masters level at the University of Kwazulu-Natal. I will be researching the area of Emotional intelligence. As part of my studies I am required to observe and interview Foundation Phase educators as well as administer a questionnaire. Lesson observation is likely to be done on one day from morning till noon. The interview should take no more than 45 minutes of your time and the questionnaire should take no longer than 30 minutes to complete. The interview sessions will be tape recorded, with your permission.

**Possible Risks or Benefits**

There is no risk involved in the study except your valuable time. Neither is there any direct benefit to you. However, the findings of the studies might be beneficial to all Foundation Phase Educators.

**Confidentiality**

The information provided by you will remain confidential. Only the principal investigator (myself) and the project supervisor will have access to the information. Your name and identity will not be disclosed at any time.

**Available source of information**

If you have any further questions you may contact the following persons:

Ms A.Ranjith  - principal investigator (083 552 4485)

or

Mrs Linda Jairam  - project co – ordinator (082 770 0509)

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

## QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Educators

This questionnaire is part of a Masters of Education Degree. The 11 questions should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. For the purposes of anonymity and confidentiality you are not required to provide your name. I appreciate your participation and support in completing this questionnaire and I thank you for your time.

## SECTION A

**Please answer the following general questions.**

1. Gender

| Male | | Female | |
|------|---|--------|---|

2. Age

| 18-30 | | 31-40 | | 41-50 | | 51+ | |
|-------|---|-------|---|-------|---|-----|---|

3. Your formal qualification is:

| Below M+3 | | M+3 | | M+4 | | M+5 and above | |
|-----------|---|-----|---|-----|---|---------------|---|

4. Nature of employment

| Permanent | | Temporary | | Seconded | |
|-----------|---|-----------|---|----------|---|

7. Years of teaching experience

| 0-5yrs | | 6-10yrs | | 11-15yrs | | 16+yrs | |
|--------|---|---------|---|----------|---|--------|---|

## SECTION B

Please choose your response to each statement from one of five options for each item.

1. It is important for educators to be aware of their own feelings (frustration, anxiety, disappointment etc) as they experience them.

| | |
|---|---|
| **ALWAYS** | |
| **USUALLY** | |
| **SOMETIMES** | |
| **RARELY** | |
| **NEVER** | |

2. Educators should use feelings to make major decisions in their lives.

| | |
|---|---|
| **ALWAYS** | |
| **USUALLY** | |
| **SOMETIMES** | |
| **RARELY** | |
| **NEVER** | |

3. An educator who feels overwhelmed can still be effective in the classroom.

| | |
|---|---|
| **ALWAYS** | |
| **USUALLY** | |
| **SOMETIMES** | |
| **RARELY** | |
| **NEVER** | |

4. It is natural for an educator who is angry to blow his/her top or fume in silence.

| | |
|---|---|
| **ALWAYS** | |
| **USUALLY** | |
| **SOMETIMES** | |
| **RARELY** | |
| **NEVER** | |

5. Only educators who are genuinely able to feel the hurt, pain and sorrow of others can be effective teachers.

| | |
|---|---|
| **ALWAYS** | |
| **USUALLY** | |
| **SOMETIMES** | |
| **RARELY** | |
| **NEVER** | |

6. Learning about the world should be an important part of the school curriculum.

| | |
|---|---|
| ALWAYS | |
| USUALLY | |
| SOMETIMES | |
| RARELY | |
| NEVER | |

7. Learning about one's self (thoughts, feelings, behaviours) should be important in the learning process in schools.

| | |
|---|---|
| ALWAYS | |
| USUALLY | |
| SOMETIMES | |
| RARELY | |
| NEVER | |

8. Talking, thinking and reading about experiences and ideas should be central to the learning process.

| | |
|---|---|
| ALWAYS | |
| USUALLY | |
| SOMETIMES | |
| RARELY | |
| NEVER | |

9. Experiencing one's self and one's surroundings should be central to learning.

| | |
|---|---|
| ALWAYS | |
| USUALLY | |
| SOMETIMES | |
| RARELY | |
| NEVER | |

10. Problem solving at school should be based on sound reasoning rather than feelings.

| | |
|---|---|
| ALWAYS | |
| USUALLY | |
| SOMETIMES | |
| RARELY | |
| NEVER | |

11. Educators should allow emotions to guide them when problem solving.

| | |
|---|---|
| ALWAYS | |
| USUALLY | |
| SOMETIMES | |
| RARELY | |
| NEVER | |

# TEACHER OBSERVATION CHECKLIST

**Name:**                                                                                                              **Date:**

| Teacher Observation<br>Type of Activity | Observed | Not Observed | Not Enough Time | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Has a good rapport with learners | | | | |
| Displays effective listening skills | | | | |
| Body language matches verbal response | | | | |
| Displays effective control of emotions | | | | |
| Addresses issues calmly | | | | |
| Appears composed when handling discipline issues | | | | |
| Able to identify learners' non-verbal cues appropriately | | | | |
| Displays irritabilty | | | | |
| Displays  a positive demeanour | | | | |
| Appears composed for most of the day | | | | |
| Tone of voice | | | | |
| Management of conflict resolution | | | | |
| Displays empathy | | | | |
| Is approachable | | | | |
| Is acceptant | | | | |
| Makes eye contact with learners | | | | |
| Addresses learners by name | | | | |
| Is respectful towards learners | | | | |
| Does not make assumptions | | | | |
| Is open | | | | |

**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE**

*John is a learner in Mrs Ngokha's class. He finds it difficult to concentrate on his schoolwork and tends to isolate himself in class. Mrs Ngokha is an excellent teacher. She feels frustrated and tense because, once again, John is not concentrating. When she asks him a question, he merely stares back in blank surprise. This makes her lose her temper. She shouts at him: "John, you idiot! I hate learners like you! What are you doing in my classroom anyway.*

**Questions:**

Q1: What are your thoughts on Mrs Ngokha's reaction to the situation?

Q2: What factors do you think could have played a role in the way Mrs Ngokha handled the situation?

Q3: In the story Mrs Ngokha is described as a teacher of excellence, what qualities do you think make a teacher of excellence?

Q4: What do you think has influenced Mrs Ngokha's approach, teaching approach?

Q5: Have you at any point in your teaching career experienced a scenario such as this or anything similar?

Q6: If you were Mrs Ngokha how would you have handled the situation?

## TURNITIN REPORT

Turnitin Originality Report
Foundation Phase Educators' Conceptualisations of Emotional Intelligence and its Influence on Teaching by Ameetha Ranjith
From Thesis (Masters Dissertation)

- Processed on 23-Nov-2012 6:10 PM CAT
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# ETHICAL APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY OF ™
**KWAZULU-NATAL**
INYUVESI
**YAKWAZULU-NATALI**

26 November 2012

Ms A Ranjith (202511461)
School of Education
Edgewood Campus

Dear Ms Ranjith

**Protocol reference number: HSS/0464/010M**
**Project title: Foundation phase educators conceptualization of emotional intelligence and its influence on teaching**

In response to your application dated 30 June 2010 the Humanities & Social Sciences Ethics Committee has considered the abovementioned application and the protocol has been given **FULL APPROVAL.**

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. Please note: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years.

I take this opportunity of wishing you everything of the best with your study.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steve Collings (Chair)
HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES ETHICS COMMITTEE
/ms

cc: L Jairam (Supervisor)
cc: Dr MN Davids
cc: Mrs L Naicker