

The transition of sport scholarship boys and their experiences in a privileged high school in post-apartheid South Africa

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DECLARATION

Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for Master's Degree in the Graduate Programme in Education.

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I, Leigh-Ann Moffatt declare that

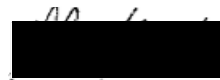
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ABSTRACT

This study is about the transition of ¹black boys from disadvantaged rural areas with rugby scholarship to a privileged high school in an urban environment. While there is much debate in the area of sport scholarships, not much has been written on how scholarship learners manage to cope and adapt with their situation in privileged ex Model C high schools in South Africa. The aim of this study was to explore the experiences of scholarship learners within the school environment and to consider their opportunities and challenges. Each journey is unique but similarities did emerge.

This study's research methodology involved a life history approach using a narrative method to analyse the different stories. Purposeful sampling was used to select five learners. Semi-structured interviews and unstructured interviews were conducted within two months of each other, with each of the participants. The interviews were transcribed verbatim, analysed, and coded (Creswell, 2009). Emergent themes were then researched for further theoretical and empirical insights before being presented here.

The research findings indicated that previously disadvantaged scholarship learners initially struggled with the transition but learnt to adapt and cope admirably in their new school, partly due to the role that rugby played in their lives and in the school. Respect and hierarchy emerged as key drivers in how the boys learnt to thrive in the school. These codes of conduct had strong resonances with their own family and community backgrounds, allowing the boys to intuitively find common ground and adapt to their new environment.

¹ *In apartheid legislation in South Africa, 'Black' was the last official racial designation applied to black African people,*

ABBREVIATIONS

BE	Boarding Establishment
DOE	Department of Education
EPG	Eminent Persons Group
ID	Identity Document
NCAA	National Collegiate Athletic Association
SA	South Africa
UKZN	University of KwaZulu-Natal
UNSECO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
1st XV	Rugby first team, (fifteen men)

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Chapter 1: Background

1.1 Background of school

This study describes the journey of rugby scholarship boys coming from disadvantaged primary schools in rural areas to a privileged high school in an urban environment. The focus is on how the boys experienced the transition and how they learnt to adapt and cope in the high school.

The study took place in an ex-model C high school. In the early 1990s the white education system in South Africa was restructured, in anticipation of democracy, by the apartheid government. Different options were proposed to the originally white schools from the apartheid era and this was a way to try and correct the past education system and have equal schooling for all races, as well as to resolve a way that could spread the resources that were diminishing in the government: Model A (private and self-funding), Model B (provincially-funded but exercising its own admission criteria), Model C, (semi-private structure, with decreased funding from government) and Model D was the name given to Department of Education and Training schools that were completely funded by the government. From the beginning of 1991, white schools were required to select one of four 'models', A, B, C, or D. 'Model C' schools were mainly situated in wealthier urban areas and charged school fees. These schools were semi-private with decreased funding from the state, and greatly increased autonomy. The Model C schools collected school fees, fundraised and received donations from wealthier past pupils, making these schools almost 'private schools' with the additional funding. They were able to compete with the private schools and offer similar education and facilities. By 1993, due to government policy, 96% of white public schools became 'Model C' schools (Radebe, 2015). Although the post-apartheid government has since abolished the form of 'Model C', the term is still commonly used to describe former whites-only government schools.

Government schools also known as 'public schools', are financed by the state; however, they are not all similar of nature or stature. Some are better resourced than others and this is because of apartheid. In South Africa, socio-economic conditions have resulted in poorer areas with government schools that have insufficient resources for providing good quality education. Learners in these schools are often subjected to

crime, poor classroom facilities, little finance and teachers who are not experienced in their subject matter or management of the schools.

In the last thirty years of South Africa's history of education, there have been many changes and transformation to its education system. As we have seen over years, social, political and economic systems change, so too must the education system. For a dynamic and working education system to change it must be able adapt and evolve to compete with global and national standards and ideologies of the world, (Hoadley & Jansen, 2002). Education seems to be the most appropriate way to change a society, as expressed by Goldberg and Morrison (2003, p. 61) the most obvious purpose for schooling is to prepare young people for a lifetime of learning, productive work, and responsible citizenship. However, although education is important to society it cannot compensate for all the ills of society, and therefore needs to be able to change that which is both crucial and to be expected of education, to promoting social responsibility, worldly mindfulness, empower people and develop moral responsibility.

Looking at learners who have completed their school years and had the opportunity to attend a tertiary institution, and those members of our society and communities who have not had the same opportunity are far less successful to earn an income, have a career, and earn a living, compared to the previous generation. In this time nationally and globally it is noted how social and occupational mobility is connected to levels of education. Therefore, it is vitally important to make education systems and policies which increase the attendance of all learners who have not had the same educational privilege in the past. The school where I work offers scholarships for both academic and sporting students. As do many financially healthy ex-Model C schools offer scholarships to students who were academically strong or talented in sports.

1.2 Background and context of study

In 2015, my first year at the high school in this study, several bursaries and scholarships were granted to black learners, mostly in Grade 8. I am currently employed at the high school as a Special Needs Educator, specialising in remedial mathematics for Grade 8 and 9. Many students at the high school were dropping Core

Mathematics in favour of the easier Mathematical Literacy and the school wanted to improve mathematics skills and encourage more students to continue with Core Mathematics. In my first year, there were 15 learners struggling with mathematics in the “special” mathematics class and all (except one) were recipients of sport scholarships.

The Grade 8 sport scholarship learners in 2015, that I have followed in this study, are now in Grade 11 and 12. When I started engaging with these learners and saw them trying to make sense of their changing world, I noticed they were experiencing a very different transition to my other learners. The sport scholarship black learners came from a variety of different primary schools with the level of education in schools varying considerably. Through ongoing engagement with these boys I learnt how different their experiences were from many of the more privileged boys in the high school.

Each year a few selected talented boys are awarded sport scholarships, due to certain criteria such as performing at a provincial or higher level in sport and participating in certain prestigious tournaments. Due to the high demand for the talented boys, especially at ‘rugby’² schools, a recruitment officer or ‘talent scout’ has been employed by many schools to watch various primary school matches, regional and national trials, competitions and tournaments, as well as other local competitions in townships. The latter are set up by ‘development sport teams’ which are created by companies, individuals, and sport bodies to promote the sport in disadvantaged communities and to foster the transformation of sport in South Africa. Once learners have been selected, the ‘talent scout’ approaches them and their parents or guardians and they are invited to come to the school. The offers vary according to the finances available for scholarships. Some scholarships are funded by companies or individual people and some through the school.

² A small number of schools began to raise the stakes in sport, specifically in rugby. In the pursuit of competitive success, and accompanying market advantage, they heralded the Age of the Specialist, “rugby”. The professionalisation of an elite sport created a potential workforce of high-profile retired performers/coaches in industrial quantity and many schools began to establish new roles to accommodate them, such as rugby. Some were more spurious than others. These people brought with them both a knowledge of the rapidly-developing world of high performance, as well as the time and inclination to apply this to rugby as a school sport, and the school accommodated them to provide a school specialising in the sport.

1.3 Learners' background and context

Most sport scholarship learners at my school came from rural, underdeveloped schools, and their home situations were very different from other learners. Their homes were often remote and far from the school, except two of the students who came from a nearby 'township'. The townships developed as dormitory settlements with "rudimentary infrastructure (public services, recreation, industry, transport, green spaces", (Fataar, 2012).

The policy of the government during apartheid was to locate the townships on the edge of the cities and they are still found on the fringes of the cities or towns, (Population Register Act, 1950.) This was an intentional plan was to keep the three designated non-white race groups – black people, Coloureds and Indians away from the urban city and they were separated either by a natural or artificial barrier. In addition, financial constraints were evident. The students relied on the school to support them financially with regard to education and stationery, sporting equipment and uniforms, and transport to and from school. Furthermore, they differed from other students in their black identity and culture. These differences had an impact on their academics, social interaction, physical and , spiritual and sport development.

Some learners are given a full scholarship, which includes staying at the school's boarding establishment. A boarding experience, (A boarding school is an institution where children live within premises while being given formal instruction. The word "boarding" is used in the sense of "room and board", i.e., lodging and meals. As they have existed for many centuries, and now extend across many countries, their function and ethos vary greatly. Children in boarding schools' study and live during the school year with their fellow students and possibly teachers or administrators. can be challenging for any learner.

It was evident that social interaction, and satisfying emotional and psychological needs, were key to the development of the scholarship learners. As Fataar (2010, 2007) noted, school learners in transition face many struggles that involve complex

personal and social battles. Self-management, discipline and single-minded determination are very important.

Over the five years at high school, the struggles of the learners in this study involved complex personal battles and social relationships within a post-apartheid space that enabled new possibilities. This opened up a path in which the learners needed to manage complex social identity issues, different expectations and traditions, and learn self-management, discipline and determination to negotiate paths forward.

Social, psychological and cultural differences were particularly evident in a historically privileged white majority high school (Fataar, 2011). Although the proposed transformation for all education in South Africa was to increase attendance to all races, (Department of Education, 1997), the effects of apartheid still lingered and for the majority of black children it was still immensely dysfunctional (Soudien, 2007).

Soudien (2007) however cautioned against trying to describe or portray the young adults of post-apartheid into a type of personality that would be unjustly or socially incorrect. Soudien, rather suggested to do research and to find out how these young adults were coping and adapting to the experiences and challenges they may be facing in today's world.

During the five years of this research in which I interacted with the learners and their families, I realised how much they viewed the sport scholarships as an opportunity for a better education and a way out of poverty. Nonetheless, they struggled to preserve their ethnicity and culture in the new school (Biesta, 2013). Interviews revealed a sense of ambivalence in students towards the school, peers and teachers – both positively and negatively valenced components were evident (Bauman, 1990). So how did the students cope and change over the five years? This is the substance of the study.

There are also expectations of parents, teachers, peers, sponsors of their scholarship and their own ambitions to take into consideration. While there is much debate in the area of sport scholarships, not much seems to have been written on how the learners in privileged ex-Model C high schools manage to cope with and adapt to their situations. In short, there is a gap in research on how individual sports scholarship learners manage their transition within privileged high schools.

Each learner's journey is different but there are similar alignments and allegiances. This is the story I wanted to explore and articulate.

By studying how the learners in this study talk about their experiences of the school environment and about competitive sport, particularly rugby, in a single sex high school, I investigate the ways in which they construct their masculinity, speak about their identities, achievements and anxieties and also how they participate within the school establishment of a masculine sport model which holds a dominant position in the school. Ultimately what is explored is the key link between the boys' experiences and the sport they play, rugby.

By observing, interviewing and talking to the boys in school and by making reference to numerous studies of the role that sport plays for young men, it was clear that boys depend heavily on the sport they play in order to adapt and 'fit in' amongst their peers. In my research, I analyse the ways the boys realise how they are able to adapt through their sport. The process is complex and there are challenges and contradictions that come with their identity and cultures and fitting into a 'white' school. Having worked with the boys over four years, I hope to shed light on their experiences and how they managed their new world. (In the context of scholarships, there is a further need to look into how non-sportsmen cope with the process; and could it be more complex or difficult for them, is an area of research to be taken further).

The high school in this study is, as has been mentioned, a Model C boys-only school established in the 1800s. It was modelled on the British school system which regarded single sex schools as ideal for boys to grow up in. A full boarding establishment provides for students coming from far away. These types of schools were popular in Britain and several can be found in KwaZulu-Natal (Bowley, 2006). The early settlers who started public schools in South Africa intended to reproduce the upper class world of England.

In many single sex boys' schools, rugby remains a very popular sport with significant school status. This popularity is partly due to the national and provincial preoccupation with rugby as a major winter sport. Rugby has become an obsession at many single sex schools, both private and public, and at primary and secondary levels (Bowley, 2006).

Sport is very important at formerly white high schools in South Africa and many traditions are attached to their main sport, often rugby. As much as it is important to the school, it is also very significant in the lives of the students. As the students in this study are on a rugby scholarship, they view rugby as a means to belong and excel in their own lives. Sport, especially sport teams, provides an opportunity for boys to bond, work together and form social interactions. There is, additionally, physical bonding in the name of team spirit, which is essential to development of their masculine identities. The team cohesion and simply playing together in a team is a key reason for the boys to play sport. Rugby builds group unity, commitment and recognition – important for students learning how to be part of the school. There is a sense of belonging in sport that goes beyond language and culture. When the boys play in a team, differences and racial identity appear to fall away; everyone belongs. However, this passion for rugby, for example, could be seen as a kind of passport to a better education. Similarly, the broader white culture of the school could be simply tolerated so that a better education can be obtained. This is significant for adaptation of students into their new environment.

All the boys in this research come from similar Zulu cultural backgrounds. It has been claimed that in South Africa, culture is “a tinderbox that we seem to nervously circumnavigate, despite, or perhaps because of the huge political and emotional investment attached to it” (Clark, 2003, 3). In response to his statement, I discuss how the boys negotiate the differences within a culture and within a connectedness to the school culture and traditions. The boys from very traditional homes found a similarity to the traditional institutional structure of the school. At the start of their transition journey, the school traditions were daunting and frightening and caused them anxiety; however, as they learnt more about the life of the school, things felt intuitively familiar and they started to adapt instinctively without realising the connection to similar authoritarian home traditions which helped them to adjust and assimilate within the new environment.

Schools play a valuable role in the lives of these boys as sportsmen. Watching the students interact within the school, its customs and among their peers, in a very traditional (157-year-old) school system, these networks slowly brought them together with other people, teachers, coaches and peers.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

2.1 Introduction

As an interpretative study with emergent themes, there was no specific deductive theoretical or conceptual framework for this thesis. Furthermore, actual research on the transition of sports scholarship boys from rural areas to a privileged urban school is also fairly limited. As a result, this chapter is a combination of a literature review and conceptual framework. Firstly, a broad overview of existing research in the area is presented, and then the chapter explores literature surrounding various themes that emerged from the data: transformation of schools and sport in South Africa; black adolescent boys and their identities; masculinity, and rugby as a sport in high school. As the themes emerged so did certain key concepts around the specific themes. Thus, each discussion of a theme combines a review of the relevant literature as well as a discussion of the core concepts that helped inform and deepen the interpretation of the data into themes.

Prior studies have identified negative and positive benefits for educational and sport scholarships in public and private schools. This literature review aims to contextualise the experiences of five sport scholarship learners in a post-apartheid previous Model C high school in South Africa. From the outset, it needs to be emphasised that this phenomenon does not appear to be explicitly researched in the literature. There has been more research into the impact of scholarships and bursaries in tertiary education such as colleges and universities, and how they affect persistence and academic success (Dooley, Payne & Robb, 2013). There are also articles on academic scholarships for disadvantaged learners in privileged high schools or independent high schools also known as private schools in South Africa such in (Greyling, 2015)

I believe that this is an oversight, specifically with regard to rugby scholarships – since the South African Schools Act (No. 84 of 1996) abolished legislation stating that school children had to attend a school located in their area. Once a new policy came about this allowed schools to invite learners from a wider field to attend their school. This created competition for certain schools wanting to entice learners who were talented academic or sport pupils to be drawn to their school. There may be a predisposition or trend in the schools whereby these particularly rugby learners are seen as ‘articles of trade’ and the school has gained an advantage over other schools.

Therefore, I position this work in that area to add to the research, with the predominant focus on the transition and experiences of rugby sport scholarship learners in privileged government high schools, (in schools that were formally designated white before 1994 in South Africa).

2.1.1 Transformation in the South African education system

The word 'transformation' gives us the following synonyms, "alteration, changes, amendment, transition, modification, evolution, etc., in the Collins dictionary, (2003), and we can use all the above words to describe transformation process in education in South Africa.

The National Education Policy Act of 1996 (RSA, 1996b) refers to "its intention to facilitate the democratic transformation of the national system of education into one which serves the needs and interests of all the people of South Africa and upholds their fundamental rights".

There is considerable research and remarks made about the South African education system and transformation. In the following paragraph I mention Christie (2008) and Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002) and I quote from their articles, Christie states "the responsibilities required from the government was to rebuild the education system. Forty years of apartheid had left deep inequalities in schooling. Among these, racial inequalities were most obvious, but there were also inequalities between urban and rural schools, between rich and poor, and between boys and girls". Van Wyk and Lemmer (2002) explain the changes made to progress South African education that, "restructuring the previous racially based and fragmented system into a single, non-discriminatory system of education which provides equal opportunities for all learners in the country". The transformation process in South African education has enabled learners from a variety of different backgrounds, languages and religions to be integrated and incorporated into schools this includes any student who has special needs or a learning disability. However, the past effects of apartheid and its inequalities still has bearing on the lives of the majority of South Africans. The consequences and result of a disadvantaged past has a negative impact that is to a greater extent aimed towards black South Africans. Statics show that on average white

South Africans still receive the highest annual income and the black population are the poorest, (Van der Berg, 2010).

Due to these reasons and socio-economics, the poorer areas with government schools on average do not receive acceptable and sufficient support or funds from the state, and therefore their education is of a lower and deficient quality. They cannot facilitate the learners adequately as there are less teachers provided to the school due to lack of funds, classrooms are in a neglected state and very little maintenance of property is attended to. As management is not able to perform on the required level often the schools are sabotaged and crime exists, these are some of the challenges the learners experience in this country. This is the case for many rural schools. The students in this study all came from rural schools which lack the physical resources and basic infrastructure for the provision of quality education as mentioned in the paragraph.

The learners interviewed are now in an old 'Model C' school. Sekete et al, (2001) found that the former Model C schools has the management and facilities or financial income to deal with the concerns of different backgrounds, languages and religions or beliefs. As the managements and Governing bodies of the Model C schools had policies in place and systems such as 'Code of Conducts' for all staff and learners, this was conducive to adopting new policies and facilitating education. In other disadvantage schools the policies were often vague, unimplemented or ambiguous. As there was little intervention by management or Governing Body to help them facilitate the issues of diversity.

Model C schools differ in that they are owned by the Government and fell under their restrictions and rules; however, they receive most of their funding from school fees paid by parents or guardians of the learners attending the school. This was established under the post-apartheid government as a means of supplementing their financial resources and operational budget to schools, (DOE, 1996). These schools were allowed to use the extra monies received to employ extra teachers, update technology resources, supply stationery and any other operational costs the learners or educators required to improve education. Schools in well-established middle-class to wealthy demographics areas could charge a higher school fee and this enabled them to keep their status of a quality school and their learners to receive a first-rate education. The schools were located in mostly previous white areas, during apartheid they had been

in a position to receive the best resources and this legacy had put them into a beneficial position of staying a quality school which parents or guardians would seek after and allowed them to keep their qualitative status. Some non-white, (previously segregated black schools in South Africa) kept their image as a good school after the 1994 period, however, many black schools' setbacks, came from the previous apartheid government lack of supporting them financially which left them in worst situation and has had a lasting effect on their legacy as not providing a decent education in their school.

For transformation to work in schools, integration needs to be considered and actively taken into account. Radebe (2015) described racial integration a process which needs to be facilitated as there are two approaches of undertaking the process for it to be incorporated and effective. The learners of diverse characters need to attend school together, however for the process to be effective they need to overcome lack of achievement and not feel a failure or concentrate on the drawbacks of their group and within this also to develop positive interracial friendships and associations. (Pathlane, 2007; Mafumo, 2010, p31).

Nevertheless, there are many challenges and concerns that come with integration as well as many pre-conditions. Pathlane (2007), argued that “ one of the fundamentals for learner integration in schools is equality of status among all learners and this must be reflected in the schools policies”. Soudien (2004) felt that to obtain integration successfully in education there had to be adaptation, diverse culturalism and anti-racism for segregation to work. Transformation, diversity, inclusivity and belonging are issues related to people, and according to Wray (2018), while we need structural changes in schools, such as new codes of conduct and new hiring and admission policies, these visible aspects of transformation are driven by people.

In high schools, one of the ways to contribute to transformation is through scholarships. This thesis focuses on sport scholarships. As Kidd, (2008) states “sport remains one of the most visible approach for producing positive change”. Sport provides on many levels a behaviour for social change in communities. And this leads to constructive and affirmative outcomes for an extensive array of concerns and personal development. This can be seen in the suppositions and research completed by the Sport for development programmes. As noted by Reis (2019), *Transformative*

Vision programmes achieve social transformations by focusing the dynamism of sport towards more far-reaching goals of development. Because sport focuses on being a shared or collective grouping of people, a social dynamic, it creates its own parameters and boundaries through peer rules, a social etiquette as it is set within a chain of command of power and honour. In the case of scholarships, for example, we need to ask who it is that confers the scholarship, and for whose benefit, (school or recipient)? There is also power involved. Similarly, the nature of sport adds to the dynamics. Within the gender and racial associations with rugby, for example, power raises its head once again. The schools will also need to do some changing and there is need for structural reform. Sport, therefore, becomes part of an approach to help assimilate and be an example to develop the participants into new positions whereby they can transform themselves and their environment. I believe playing sport is an extremely valuable part of transformation in the schools of South Africa, and that sport facilitates integration amongst learners in high schools.

2.1.2 Identity of black adolescent boys in post-apartheid South Africa

'Identity' can be defined as who you are, the way you think about yourself, the way you are viewed by the world and the characteristics that define you. Everyone struggles with existential questions such as "Who am I?" and "Who do I want my future self to be?" Answers to questions such as these are complex. Identity is made up of many different characteristics, it can include the relationships and associations people have with one another, it is both internal and external. Over the years your identity has been nurtured and developed through your positions in life. Your identity as an adolescent, child, parent or adult is influenced by circumstances and environment. Your external identity is your physical appearance and race we have little or no control over. Individual uniqueness also is made up of your morals and values, beliefs and culture and these influence the decisions we make every day. The students in this study are black and have rugby scholarships; this is an important part of their identity.

Over many years, black identity was characterised through a colonial milieu (Beyers, 2019). To understand or have knowledge of black identity, of "being-black-in-the-world" (Manganyi, 1973) the history of colonialism needs to be comprehended. And it is only of late through a political movement known as 'Black Consciousness

Movement' from the 1950s and 1960s that people were made to relook at the black identity as not one belonging to colonial perception but rather one of their own. And Fanon felt the best person to have opinion of the black identity where those originating from Africa because it is "on the African continent, where the great and intricate drama of being-black-in-the-world is taking place" (Manganyi,1973). During this time certain false identities were created (Beyers, 2019). White people still remain the measure of all things. When black people want to be white people, this can be considered a false identity: "The black man wants to be like the white man. For the black man there is only one destiny. And it is white" (Fanon, 1986). In the book 'Black skins, White masks', Bhabha, H (1986 Ed) and Sardar, Z (2008, Ed) write a forward to Fanon's book explaining certain concepts and details of his writings and publications. And they describe how Fanon felt the black man identified himself, "that the question of identity is indeed the answer to the essential question of 'what does a man want? He believed that white people were superior and black people could only be equal to them if they imitated the white people mannerisms and identity. He felt very strongly that this was a false identity, yet expressed that true identity still remains behind a white mask. He was perturbed that if asked the question "what does a man want?" The answer would a black person needs to be respected as an equal human being no matter what his race or stature. A true individuality uniqueness should not be trying to be someone else and behaving with other morals and values expected from society, it should be the persons own genuine identity to be unique and individual. Fanon indicated that black people need judge themselves and mould their identity on being a human and not just a descriptor of black people.

Identity is important to self-concept, social customs, and the understanding of oneself. All the learners interviewed during the research at the high school by myself were black learners and experienced the feeling of "acting white" (Fordham, 1985) during the transition period at the new school. Upon arrival, they had to conform to the traditions of the new school, which was established in 1863 and whose culture, traditions, codes of conduct and academics were based on a western, (whiteness) education system. One of the boys recounted that when he spoke differently to the other students, some of them laughed at him; he realised he needed to speak the 'white' boys' language, English, in a particular way like the white boys: "you are only good if you speak very good English". Some of the boys mentioned that they did not

carry out some of their daily routines as performed at home; praying aloud daily as required at the school made one boy feel intimidated and awkward. One student mentioned that he had never interacted with white people and he did not understand their mannerisms or their social nuances. He used the example of having dropped his money and a white man approached him and returned the money; this was a first for him as on the street where he lived, the money would have been taken and not returned. These differences contributed to some students struggling with issues of self-confidence and exclusion.

There were misunderstandings of their ways when they first arrived at the new school and apprehension regarding them. It is the internalisation, or rather more accurately, as Fanon calls it, "*epidermalization*" this means that a person has resigned themselves to take on dominate group or community's identity and accepted they are inferior and therefore they will adjust themselves to fit in with the dominate societies norms, and in this particular situation it is their race colour or skin colour that is being judged that makes the persons own colour inferior, Fanon, (1986).

As Fanon, (1986), describes the situation, when a black man has contact with a white society, he reacts to certain stimuli being experienced from the dominant society. Through this response, he loses self-confidence and self-esteem as he feels subordinate to the group. And he discontinues to be inspired and encouraged. And he spends his time behaving, imitating and hoping to become accepted by the dominant society.

Some of Fanon's observations are evident in many schools in South Africa. In 2016 in Pretoria young girls protested at their school, about their hair-dress, the way they spoke and the interests they shared; they felt these examples were not an expression of themselves but rather of what others expected of them, and this was an expression of a very different culture (Wray, 2018).

I questioned whether the boys coming from disadvantaged areas who had little interaction with other races would feel the same. Some of the boys did learn to mould themselves to fit in with the high school and its culture. Although this did not apply to all of the students I interviewed, some of the boys did not feel the need to completely change who they were to fit in. They felt even though they were challenged as individuals, they were able to experience and express themselves as who they were

because the school provided them with a safe environment. According to Wray (2018), when people are in environments that don't feel safe, they don't feel supported, they end up coming to school, dressing themselves in a body suit, in a "you suit" – that is a construction designed to help them to blend with and fit in.

The learners in this research were all in their teens which brings other complicated issues linked to being teenagers. Teenage boys (13 to 19-year-old adolescents), according to Erikson (1959), experience 'Identity vs Role Confusion'. Late adolescence is a sensitive and life changing time for any individual. This is when the child is changing into a young man. A teenager is seeking to establish an identity and faces many challenges from society, parents, teachers, peers and himself. This developmental stage in which physical, mental and emotional intelligence is changing requires considerable support at an emotional level (Salve & Lavalekar, 2017). Research on teenagers has also shown teenagers have many different methods to react to anxious situations. And this also differs from person to person. There are two approaches to stressful situations, positive or negative. If teenagers chose to be positive, they will be proactive and request support and assistance from family, friends, teachers and other people around them. Some adolescences are mature and will deal with the issue through physical exercise, spending time alone and working through the situation in an appropriate manner. If the adolescent is finding coping very challenging they may cope in a negative manner. Such as avoiding the issue, being annoyed and putting the responsibility on others, as noted by Simpson (2012) in a thesis in which she quoted from Bausted and Tammy (1998), Howard and Medway (2004), as well as Seiffge-Krenke, Aunola, and Nurmi (2009). Part of this teenage turmoil is linked to identity of the self; teenagers ask questions like 'who am I?' and 'how do I fit it?' The students in this research often asked these questions of themselves. Teenagers are 'desperate' to belong' and be part of a peer group. The teenagers in this research also wanted to fit in; they listened to 'white' music and radio stations, attended concerts, went camping etc. The idea of "coping with the burden of acting white" suggests that black adolescents who endeavour for academic excellence are often perceived by their peers as "being kind of white", and therefore are not perceived as truly black (Fordham, 1985). This research explored the resulting apprehension between those students who choose to act in ways which their peers define as "acting white" and

those students who opt to limit their behaviours in the school environment to those indorsed by the group.

Identity development was described by Soudien (2001) as “a process in which young people bring resources, find new ones and constantly work to make sense of their position relative to others”. Soudien used some examples to explain this. The black learners in his research felt they were being racially prejudiced because of the language barrier, in one example the students sitting in a lecture at the University of Cape Town, (UCT, 2004, p. 4) were told to read through some notes, however the lecture was seemingly going too fast and due to the language barrier it took time for the student to comprehend the notes and they had felt they were being discriminated due the lack of understanding of the notes in class.

Another example from Soudien (2011) is:

I think my friends from back home are in a similar social class to me but my friends at university are a lot above me and sometimes they don't realise that some of us don't have money to go out all the time. Some of us don't have transport all the time. I mean, when you say, you don't have money; they'll say they don't have money but they don't actually mean it. When I say I don't have money, I mean I don't have money. That's sometimes frustrating but also at the same time, it seems to me that they are quite generous and sometimes they'll actually pay for you. It's not a big issue for them. I don't let it get in the way of things.

The teenage years highlight the struggle to be that individual and what their individualism is in relation to others. Teenagers often find these years challenging and difficult, while they discover who they are and develop their own identity. During these years circumstance and environment all influence the growth of their personal identities. For the participants of this study, their experiences may influence how their personal identity develops. For this reason, it is better to have a sympathetic understanding of the various identity they are transitioning through and how it relates to them. Their history of coming from a disadvantage schooling, to becoming a rugby scholarship recipient in a new privileged school environment will all have an impact on their growth of themselves and their identity. (Simpson, 2007).

2.2 African boys transitioning from traditional rural areas to urban and more modern environments

2.2.1 Nature and complexities of the transition for the students

Rural areas in most countries are usually geographically remote and not as developed as city or town. As a result, many of the rural schools in those areas have not been accommodated with the necessary and essential physical and infrastructure requirements for basic living, such as water for every day consumption and use, sewage facilities, road structures, transport to schools, places of work, electricity and basic technology. Due to these basic amenities not been available to parents in rural area it places the learners (such as those in this study) at a disadvantage. (Du Plessis and Marais, 2012).

The learners were encouraged by their families to enrol in affluent schools through scholarships schemes; it was then expected they would enjoy significant benefits and educational advantages beyond their families' socio-economic status. Tomlinson's (1997) research referred to schooling in Britain, in the 1990s, yet there are similarities to the South African context: in rural areas and communities, the schooling for children, particularly those residents of disadvantaged communities, where one finds a weak education structure, is compromised educationally. And generally speaking, these learners have only a considerably less of a chance of receiving challenging and rewarding teaching throughout their educational career. In this research, the scholarship provided an advantage for the parents or the community and they believed that the learners, as a result of attending an affluent school, could expect social mobility, gain access to the middle or upper classes and have more career opportunities which in turn would help the family or community with upward socio-economic advantages.

Regardless of the intended focus on transforming higher education towards widened participation (DoE, 1997), the history of apartheid means that schooling for the black majority, many living in the rural areas of South Africa, remains severely dysfunctional. Some of the obstacles to effective education include an absence of parental interest in children's education, inadequate funding from the state, deficiency of resources

such as books, chairs, desks and basic equipment, underqualified teachers and multi-grade teaching (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019).

As noted by Soudien (2011), with South Africa well into its second decade of democracy, the world, both globally and nationally is quite different to the young boys and girls in South Africa at this time. They are facing a variety of challenges which are different to the particular issues and concerns under the apartheid government. Both black and white, adolescents and young adults, are having to compete for a 'normal life'. What is a normal life for the youth of today is influenced by their race and gender. (Phillipa Garson, *The Teacher*, June 2001).

How they are defining this 'normal' life is significantly shaped by their class and gender. While the boundaries between the urban and the rural have eroded both physically and conceptually, it remains true, as Soudien (2011) suggested, that rural youth are distinctly different to urban youth, or youth with strong traditional links to those who have committed themselves to modernity. Looming large for everybody, as for young people elsewhere, are the intense challenges of globalisation and modernisation. This globalisation is pervasive and is deeply embedded in the structures of our everyday worlds. It is present in the choices teenagers are having to make about dress, leisure time, friendships, and, most significantly, careers (see Dolby, 2001) and is pushing black and white, at some levels, towards an increasing homogenisation of their adolescent identities. This is often seen at school in the way the students dress on social occasions, their hairstyles, what shoes they wear, where they go for entertainment; the boys like to 'hang' out at popular locations. After matric they all like to go to the same place for 'Rage'; this is a party experience in South Africa that is seen as a 'tradition' for learners completing high school. Rage takes place at nightclubs and restaurants mainly in Ballito and Plettenberg Bay. Many of the students try to go for a least one night so they can be seen to have gone to 'Rage'.

In South Africa history it is quite difficult not to mention race as it plays a huge role in the lives of all South Africans. Learners experience it in their everyday life, at school, transporting to and from school, in their homes, places where they live, at school amongst their peers and teachers. Being exposed to this will affect how they feel towards other races, race is invariably experienced in different ways by people of different race, class backgrounds, gender and themselves (Soudien, 2007).

A study conducted by Seekings (2008) had a very interesting method of how different race groups categorise themselves within South Africa. He states white people were more inclined to categorise themselves according to their skin colour and their line of descent. While black and coloured people categorised themselves with the tribal and cultural background rather than their colour of skins.

They recognised and retained a consciousness of themselves as Africans, but Africans with a difference. Mgxashe (2000, p.11), writes about youth in the new millennium, noted a conscious discussions taking place amongst many African youth about their acquaintance to 'foreign' cultures. He quoted a young woman called Lindi Jordan who said:

... "when we start talking about the African Renaissance we are not necessarily talking about living strictly in accordance with our traditional values ... we are more bent towards African values which are a kind of hybrid of all our exposures and experiences" (Mgxashe, 2000, p.11).

In the context of the above quotes we can research further into rurality and transitions; does this affect the way black people categorise themselves in terms of their 'blackness' or 'skins'? The literature implies this has a profound influence on how people identity themselves. We need to consider 'rurality'; Masaiti (2020) described 'spatial blindness' as "a source of concern, as it assumes students from metropolitan and rural areas have the same needs". A further serious concern is that researchers assume that rural students need to become less rural in order to adapt to the university environment (Banda, 2008). Students are expected to shed their rural skins overnight and some even speak in broken vernacular languages to appear urban. In his paper, Timmis (2019), he emphasis the difficulties students have when applying at tertiary institutions and the requirements that will enable them to enter university. It indicated that the students felt a loss of control in this situation compared to their 'home' life where they were familiar and able to adjust, however given time they found methods to overcome this fear of control and managed their coping strategies. This is important and it shows that all students from diverse background have a resolve and strength of mind through their cultural values and practices, and indigenous knowledge that empowers them to shape their encounters with the tertiary environment and allows them to navigate and transform themselves within this new context which has the

feeling of hierarchal power, through this they can reclaim their control and respect and validation as a person. (Fataar, 2018: Holland, Lachicotte, Skinner & Cain, 1998).

2.2.2. Masculinity complexities at schools

Academic literature over a period of time has described how school boys gain reputation over their peers and how this reputation correlates to a sense of achievement and needs to be preserved in order to be upheld, this comes across in a masculine form perceived by their peers, more than just reputation but also status and power.

As the students in this research are all boys, some of the complexities of becoming a young man come into play at school, especially in an all-boys high school. The boys have been guided by their parents, mentors, teachers, peers and society about masculinity. The boys interviewed were all rugby players and relatively bigger in physical size than their peers when they started at the school in Grade 8. Yet they all felt they needed to 'work out' to fit into the very masculine society of the new school and to be 'male' within their new environment. The majority of the students at the high school came from urban environments; the research participants had been attending black township schools during their primary school years and lived in communally poorer circumstances where there is often lack of basic necessities such as, parents or guardians and food, violence and crime, and a vulnerable family life and the need to be strong was a norm of the daily lives to be able to survive. Majors (2001) argued "that black males who lack legitimate institutional means will often go to great lengths to prove their manhood (including fighting, emotional and physical domination of women and risk-taking activities)". These legitimate institutional means are normally provided through schools, clubs, organised sport and activities that provide socially sanctioned and culturally recognized goals. When they are not able access these goals they tend to act with deviant behaviour. Linked with masculinity is identity. "Personal identity is often divided between what they know as their 'inside world' (home life) and their external world (their new school and surroundings)", (Soudien, 2001). Identity involves the characteristics, beliefs, personality, physical looks and/or expressions that make a person or group. One can regard the knowledge and the categorising of individualism as positive or as negative. A psychological identity relates

to self-image, self-esteem, and individuality. Thus, the gender identity for the boys is made up from the way in which they form their masculinities by, for example, how they participate in their sport, rugby, and the manner in which they conduct themselves amongst the other rugby players and their peers.

Ideas around masculinity, gender, and sport all played an extremely significant role in developing the identity of the boys in this research. They reported their sport gave them their identity, especially within a rugby orientated school, (this is discussed more fully later on in the thesis), dominated by masculine identities. Sport at school contributes to an essential part of the educational process in the development of human beings. Through sports, such as rugby, each athlete achieves physical, spiritual and psychological skills that can help with social assimilation. An article by Atkinson (2008) explained links between adolescent development and the importance of sport, which helped with understanding the transition of the learners, how they developed their masculine identity through rugby and how, through sport, they learnt to fit into their new environment. Erving Goffman used a helpful metaphor to describe a person's self-image, "(personal identity) and their public image (social image). He viewed people as actors in their own lives. The "actor" has his "backstage" and "front stage" – in other words, his public and private lives that are used to understand daily routines and interactions". Goffman also referred to "frames which are the specific settings of one's life, for example, school, where there are "characteristic meanings and rules" and where interaction between people is organised". He went on to "discuss how individuals present an image of themselves of self for acceptance of others" (Jenkins, 2004, p. 71). This is well described in Hoggart, (1970) who drew on his own experience and argued that "each boy is between two worlds: the worlds of school and home; and they meet at few points. Encouraged by some and mocked by others, scholarship boys constantly negotiated the conflicting expectations of parents, teachers, peers, and their own ambitions. According to Hoggart, they assimilated these contradictions in complex ways. Their academic achievements separated them from their class origins, which they sometimes imperfectly concealed and other times publicly celebrated. But they never felt fully at home among the cultivated elites whose habits they both imitated and deplored". As described above, this contributed to the transition and complexities of masculinity identity of the boys, and how they developed over the five years of high school. This thesis aimed to develop a clearer

understanding of what the boys said about themselves and their experiences and how this links to the impact of sporting scholarships.

Identity, individualism and uniqueness is a combination of the view and insight we have of ourselves. This includes our experiences and encounters in life that form who we are and become part of us. "Often identity theories describe identity as a developmental and progressive concept, but it is also commonly perceived as one's beliefs about oneself with regard to a particular social group", (Torres et al., 2009). As an identity can also belong to a group or community it is often associated with sport teams. The members of these team belong to, and become part of a subculture, an underlying structure of doing things that have their own rules and systems. And the persons belonging to the sport team need to adopt and embrace the team's attitudes, behaviours and mannerisms. Through accepting the traits of the sport subculture they gain affiliation and are included in the team. (Donnelly & Young, 1988).

With male sports, masculinity becomes the most significant area of identifying with the group. Masculinity in sport takes on the values of supremacy, beliefs and a certain rank which male members often aspire too.

Du Gay, Evan and Redman (2000) pointed out, "social identity is an act of power; in their example of the black-white relationship, the white race qualifies as 'human being', thus excluding the black race". Another example is between the female and male individuals, especially in relation to sport. The men are seen as more powerful and dominant. And this enforces the principles of masculinity being more supreme than feminism and symbolises the cultural values of individuals society (Chu, Porche, & Tolman, 2005). Cultural customs and their outlooks play a significant role in forming the identity of an individual, particularly when it comes to being part of a male sports group.

This study considers how boys with sports scholarships constructed their own identity and masculinity through sport and used it to help them through transitions.

Shefer (2010), suggests that our understandings of interpersonal, intrapersonal, and group dynamics, although it has been critiqued and perceived as debatable, because in the studies and reports, young boys and men are often seen as challenging and difficult and this picture is often incorrect. It is a generalisation and does not allow for a more appealing characteristics of males and their intricacies and more than likely

undermines their experiences as males, (Patman, 2007; Bhana & Patman, 2009; Shefer, 2010). Therefore, it is understandable that there is a range of demands made on young boys and men to perform and behave in certain mannerisms, particularly those who come from a male hierarchical community to conduct themselves in a certain way that exemplifies hierarchal males of their society. This impacts on the students who are under pressure to perform in their sport and as young men at a very 'masculine' high school.

2.2.3 Black students managing in predominantly white high school

The move from primary to high school, from one school to another, can be stressful, particularly if the school culture and academic expectations are very different, and also if from a black rural public school into a predominantly white high school. Learners experience many changes including changes in school environment, in teachers, curriculum and workload, and in friendship groups, all of which can cause anxiety, (Seidman, Aber, & French, 2004).

The learners' transition is complex, and perceptions are not always easily articulated especially if learners have little access to their own means of expression in their home language. Having a voice and being able to communicate efficiently while relying on the new school's language and methods, can be difficult, especially for learners who struggle with English, when it is not their home language. These learners can find themselves dependent on their sponsors, coaches and teachers with little input from themselves (Blake, Fourie, & Goldman, 2019).

For young boys who come in as outsiders to the dominant culture of a school, how they are seen by others, matters. This impacts on how they see themselves and their ability to truly find themselves (Wray, 2018). When young people enter an environment where they suddenly lack the safety and support they need for self-expression, where they cannot be themselves and are forced to fit in, they sometimes put on a 'body suit', an identity they construct in order to keep up appearances of fitting into the dominant culture. The students in this research needed to learn how to manage in a school that is very different to all they are used to.

In Singh (2008), lecture notes he explains what mimicry meant in the article written "Of Mimicry and Man" by Bhabha (1984). He illustrates mimicry in colonial and

postcolonial literature as when any other races such as Indians or Africans emulate their colonisers, say for example the British, in their style of fashion, philosophy, etiquette, language and cultural attitude. This type of behaviour pattern is seen as opportunistic in persons trying to fit in with other communities and societies, especially outsiders who desperately want to be successful and accomplish the same supremacy people in power are achieving. However, while trying to attain such a position in their 'new' society there is the possibility they will need to subdue their own individual ethnicity.

Although the above explanation might have adverse perception of suppression of cultural identity. Inzlicht (2012) had a positive view on mimicry and believed that impersonation is something that is inherent in the human race. From birth, babies learn by copying the parents and families, older persons. Through physical gestures, movements, and expressions that are performed by the people around them. This behaviour continues throughout the growth and development of children and young adults. Through their environment and their senses, they learn the skills required to survive in their world. Therefore, imitation of various groups, society, elders and individuals, supports the transmitting of cultural knowledge and practice from one person to the next. And we don't stop imitating when we grow up. Adults, when they get together, often unconsciously mimic each other's bodily movements, posture, facial expressions, and speech patterns. This all helps create a feeling of being like the others we are socialising with. Boys at school act, stand with hands in their pocket, (form of power) and use certain slang (e.g., "hey bro"), as they watch other boys and try and imitate them.

Therefore, imitation is both a cause and consequence of getting along. Studies have shown that when people do not have much rapport with someone they are interacting with, they are less likely to imitate them (Singh, 2005). However, if they mimic someone with whom they initially have little rapport, they are likely to report much greater feelings of connectedness. Mimicry also boosts trust, and the likelihood of helping someone in need and fitting in with peers.

Often young men adapt to the new school culture and make it their own. Hybridity refers to integration of east and western culture, racial, language, religious and cultural (Bhabha, 1984). Within colonial and postcolonial literature, many colonial subjects

from Asia or Africa find a balance between eastern and western cultural characteristics. Singh defined culture hybridity in terms of art, music, fashion, cuisine. Cultural hybridity is exceedingly widespread in the global world today. Due to technology and extensive information of a variety of communities and cultural groups, people have entertained others fashion, food, music and etiquette. Often, we accommodate the mixtures of cultural without consciously being aware of the influence on our daily lives. Such as in Mozambique there are many examples of Portuguese influence on the African food served in restaurants and different combination of music genres. Students spend many periods in the company of the other learners, especially those that stay in the boarding establishment and seldom return home, and often there is a mix of cultures in music, (both formal and informal songs or genre) rap, the slang the boys use to communicate with each other and when they play sport.

From a cultural ecological perspective, these identities, according to Ogbu (1978), some of the references are dated but very valuable, in explaining the way identities try to fit into a culture, and “make black students view school success, for instance, as “acting white” and as an affront to their identities”. Ogbu surmised “that black children learn these attitudes and responses at an early age from their families and others in black communities with whom they form fictive kinships”. Yet black boys can achieve school success through their own abilities and not through ‘acting white’. Also, Gobo’s research tended to focus on “school failure rather than on why some black children succeed in school”.

Fordham (1985) noted “the paucity of literature on black adolescents’ school achievement makes it difficult to document how these students have coped with the “burden over acting white” (though this is 35 years ago, it is still relevant). Information that is available suggests that “acting white” is fraught with conflict, ambivalence and, in many instances, a sense of estrangement from the source of one’s identification”.

2.3 Concept of rugby scholarships

2.3.1 Rugby scholarships for disadvantaged students from rural areas

Sport sponsorships has become the fastest growth segment in South Africa’s advertising market in recent years (Lunsche, 2006). “South Africa also mirrors

international trends with global sports sponsorships worldwide estimated at US\$ 34 billion in 2004, and recording compound yearly growth of 12% over the past 15 years". These statistics make sport scholarships for disadvantaged learners very attractive. A more recent article (Blake, 2019) has explored the importance and value of sport sponsorships and why companies invest high sums of money in athletes. There is thus a quid pro quo between the athletes and their sponsors. The boys coming from poverty areas need financial assistance and want to achieve something more in their lives than can be offered in disadvantaged rural areas. So the learners take on the scholarships in the hope of a better future and education. The sponsors and their agents/recruitment officers are hoping to make money from the boys selected through marketing.

A sport article by Zaba (2019) revealed a contradiction of views. In 2018 schoolboy rugby in South Africa was shown via many different media platforms including satellite television. School rugby as a sport has grown extensively in the past years and is receiving more attention equalled to other schools' sports offered at high school level. Due to the significant increase of media coverage matches are also well attended, for example in August 2019, 30 000 spectators attended a schoolboy derby at the Faure Stadium in Paarl. As a result of this, rugby has become a highly effective marketing and fundraising product for schools. Rugby is being used a promotional strategy to entice future learners to the school, especially one which is perceived to have good rugby 1st XV team. With immediate results and live broadcasts, companies are offering financial assistance which leads to more funding and increase in talented boys. This precedent becomes a cycle of frenzy to produce excellent results on the rugby fields. To the extent that young boys show a talent in rugby are offered rugby scholarships from various schools, (some schools occasionally try to outbid the other) and/or are 'poached' and forced to choose rugby over the other sports. In some areas in South Africa rugby academies have been developed and external coaches hired at astronomical rates to produce a phenomenal 1st XV and doping or taking steroids has been seen to be common amongst the schoolboys to cope with demand and pressure of playing for the 1st XV.

Other research by Du Plessis and Marais (2012) is positive with participants agreeing that sports scholarships helped the parents of disadvantaged learners financially and

gave them better opportunities. During the interviews the students mention their opportunities which include their families.

There has been much research on the concept of scholarships. Kaomea (2003) suggested that research on scholarships should take our understanding beyond surface appearances. There is more to offering scholarships to help disadvantaged students and we need to explore how to make scholarships work for them, by listening to their voices and experiences; this is what this research aims to do.

2.3.2 Scholarships debates: Advantages and disadvantages

There is much public debate over sport scholarships. For example, in an interview with *The Huffington Post*, Ralph Nadar (American political activist) said, “An entire industry has developed in the youth sports arena – club teams, personal trainers, etc. – to prey on families’ dreams of an athletic scholarship. The lure of the elusive athletic scholarship is the primary – sometimes the only – marketing tool these youth sports entrepreneurs use.”

Kendall Spencer, a former track student-athlete at the University of New Mexico, during a speech at the 2015 NCAA Convention, said:

“This is what seems to have been forgotten in the recent debate in the US – that there are thousands of people, ex student athletes, who now have qualifications and jobs they otherwise wouldn’t have been able to get. They are now able to contribute in ways they wouldn’t have because their sporting ability allowed them to do so. They didn’t necessarily continue to play their sport after university, but they now have jobs, businesses, pay taxes, are able to afford university educations for their children. Essentially, they are a more valuable and contributing member of our society because of their sporting ability”.

What is implied here is that sporting scholarships afford students the opportunities listed above.

Du Plessis (2012) noted “there is a tendency to regard learners as commodities who can be seen as assets to the school”. An article by Oosthuizen (2009)¹ described “the current trend to consider learners with a talent for sports or with outstanding sporting achievements as school commodities”. Oosthuizen asked the question: “How many schools have bought scholars for sport and pay all the expenses, whilst the academic

side is suffering?" Oosthuizen's plea "was for schools to employ more good teachers and fewer sport professional coaches, yet many parents and students choose schools for their sporting reputation". As a teacher in such a school, I noticed how important it seemed to many parents that their sons attended a school with top rankings in rugby, hockey and cricket. Subsequently the schools make considerable effort to employ/hire coaches and train the sport teams to achieve good results to produce better rankings to compete against the positions of the schools. Oosthuizen felt he would rather see schools employing more quality teachers than sport coaches. The study by Du Plessis and Marais (2012) revealed that "while talented learners are given more opportunities in large, wealthy schools, the practice to 'buy' talented learners can lead to discrimination against other learners. In some cases, learners could even be excluded from schools in their areas because these schools are filled to capacity with talented learners that have been 'bought'. Historically, schools' main purpose has been academic teaching and learning". According to the Du Plessis and Marais (2012) study, this should still be the main focus, and not sport.

A scholarship for a learner from a disadvantaged community and school is a rare and valued opportunity especially when "pupils have only a slim chance of receiving challenging and rewarding teaching throughout their educational career" (Ofsted, 1993, p. 43).

Fataar (2011) explored how learners negotiate between two different worlds, by considering the school careers of young people which have to be understood in the light of their navigation across living spaces and the schools they attend, with an emphasis on functional dynamics. Hoggart's (1970) article on 'Scholarship Boys' in *Twilight*, concurred and has been discussed in previous paragraphs (see section 2.2.2. Masculinity complexities at schools).

Studies on scholarship students need to include the uncovering of perspectives and life circumstances that have been written over, buried or erased. A scholarship of hope is meant to illuminate the complexity of marginal lives and accord them multi-dimensionality. I agree with Fataar (2011) that what is essentially important is the ability of young people to adopt appropriate styles in their diverse living environments that enable them to maximise their desires and aspirations. He argued that it is their ability to adapt to, and manipulate, their lived spatialities that provide them with the platform to cultivate aspirant schooled bodies. These children actively write a narrative

of self by which they pursue their educational aspirations, in the process prising open viable school careers. This observation by Fataar is evident in students in this research learning how to adapt to cope in their new high school.

During the interviews it was evident that the students simply want to blend in, which leads to alienation from, and ambivalence about, their culture (Soudien, 2007); there were many examples of adaptations and how they tried to fit in but also keep their culture. Learners can also use their sport scholarship to their advantage. According to Wilcox (1988), high status learners are given more opportunities – can this be applied to the sport learners? Yosso (2005) referred to “this type of resilience as based on the exercise of aspirational capital”.

The learners’ transition is complex, and certain perceptions and notions of the learners are not articulated, as they have little access to expression in their own language. Having a voice and being able to communicate efficiently is difficult when one has to use the new school’s language and methods, especially for the learners who struggle with English as it is not their home language. Gramsci (1971) wrote about ‘subaltern voices in education’. These learners find themselves dependent on their sponsors, coaches, mentors and teachers with little input from themselves. So how do the learners cope with being in “the state of being other or different”? It was my hope that this would become clearer during the research and the experience of the sport scholarship learners would become more accessible.

2.3.3 Sport as a vehicle to adapt and to learn to cope within different spaces

As Fataar (2011) suggested, a fruitful way of understanding young people’s engagement with their schooling is to consider it in the light of the racial – post -racial – turnover. It is crucial to understand how schooling was encountered and navigated then and how it works now. This is vital to improve the benefits of the scholarship for the learner in terms of his schooling and education.

Parents and society also need to be considered in the development of the learners; this deserves discussion since “parents from low socio-economic families are looked down upon and therefore their voices are not heard” (Karlovec & Buell, 2000, p119). Parental involvement in youth sport is a complex and sensitive issue and can influence the results and expectations of the learners’ sporting accomplishments. According to

a study in Tasmania students who received scholarships and bursaries from rural areas had mixed opinions, on the one hand they could learn about urban cultural knowledge, new notions and it gave them opportunities they would not receive in their rural community. The disadvantage to this assistance is the learners are drawn away from their families and close-knit community (Lehman, Stewart, & Abbott-Chapman, 2008). From international research parents or guardians influence their children's educational future or choices, as they seek to enhance their children's educational status and achievement. The parent's lifestyle, education, aspiration, religious beliefs and values all play a part in realising the need to pursue scholarships for the child in the hope of better prospects (Fan, Gorard, & Davies, 2012).

The learners and their families in this research viewed the sport scholarships offered in both a positive and negative light, as an opportunity for a better education and a way out of poverty; however, there was a struggle to preserve their ethnicity, culture and identity in their new school. A mix of feelings was evident; the school requires talented young sportsmen to improve their sport achievements, and the learners have ambitions to succeed in life through their sport and education, yet there is tremendous pressure and expectations from school, family and themselves. The learners may experience a feeling of wanting to be like the other learners, yet still needing to be accepted as individuals with their own identity. However, there is a 'third' space as noted by Bhabha (1984), "where cultural identity always emerges in this contradictory and ambivalent space, and in this space, may overcome cultural diversity in favour of the recognition of an empowering hybridity within which cultural difference may operate. The 'third space' is a place where hybrid identifications are possible – a place where dialogues between cultures evolve. A place where new things come into existence. Borders can separate into cultures and societies" In today's globalised world, cultures are blending increasingly. These learners are from different and diverse backgrounds yet all learners have similar identities and within this structure, they can often find an overlap between their culture and diversity. When talking to the learners, one senses their ambivalence, in the experience of having an attitude towards school, peers and teachers, that contains both positive and negative components and they decide to behave in a certain way because they are motivated to select a specific behaviour over other based on the expected result. The students know they

can play a sport, rugby, and have been chosen above others for their ability to receive the scholarship in this area. This becomes a space where they can 'fit in'.

"Coping can be defined as cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage psychological or physiological stress" (Lazarus, 1993), or "as a cognitive, emotional and behavioural response to stress" (Beutler, Moos, & Lane, 2003). In young people, sport often creates a sense of self-esteem. "Self-esteem includes the individual's general appraisal of himself/herself and his judgment about his/her worthiness" (Akcakoyun, 2018). It has been revealed that the individuals who play sports have higher self-esteem scores than those who do not and they differ significantly (Karakoc, 2010). I would like to take this further and say that through sport scholarships, their struggles, which involve complex personal battles, can open a path into school careers in which self-management, discipline and single-minded determination are decisive as these are imperative to achieving on the sport field.

Bradley (2013) stated in his article the subject 'physical education' and the extracurricular sport activities, also known as (PESS) Physical education and school sport, have been a significant and fundamental element of developing a child through their childhood years. Sport encourages and stimulates motor skills, healthy bodies, mental development, and social conduct. This positive influence of sport and general exercise is well-known and prescribed in many schools as part of their curriculum to develop healthy learners. This particularly pertains to boys in school, as young boys they find a connection and fellowship in sport which allows them identify with the values of masculinity and is "one important way of claiming to be a real boy" Bhana, (2008). Bhana considered "the significance of sport in primary schools within a racial, gender and class orientation, and how it affects and positions black, white, boys and girls". In Bhana's study, young boys begin to adapt to their positions and find a way that sport provides this space and place, and they perform their participation with great pleasure and interest. The boys who contributed towards the findings were united in sport and used it to establish a ranking amongst themselves. It is an essential point of connecting and relating to one another through strength and expertise for them. Sport was more than just a game to be played for fun and enjoyment, young boys from all diversities see sport as a way of ascertaining their status, and within this contest came particular configurations which they strived towards to establish their position amongst their peers. The boys see it as part of their identity and masculinity there must be

boundaries set and rules and regulations adapted for all to be fair play. For the rugby boys in this study they saw the sport of rugby a key element to approach the hierarchical organisation of the high school, which is produced within dynamic differentiation and policed through gender and racial polarisations.

This articulates very well with the students in my research who have used their rugby to establish themselves amongst their peers. Rugby became their vehicle to adapt and cope with their transition.

Botha (2020) discussed the use of transition theory, initially developed by Schlossberg (1981, p. 3) and described as a model “in which transitions of all kinds ... can be analysed, and possible interventions formulated”. Schlossberg et al. (1995, p51) have defined “a transition as any event, or non-event, that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions and roles”. In her theory, Schlossberg (1981) referred to “three phases of this transition theory. In the first phase, referred to as “approaching transitions”, the perceptions and experiences with which an individual enters the process of transition from one context to the next, are explored. Schlossberg et al. (1995) have referred to “this as the process of moving in, moving through, and moving out of a transition”. The focus during this phase is on defining the specific transition (in this case the decision to take the offer of a scholarship and attend the new high school from a disadvantaged primary school). In the second phase, attention is paid to investigating events and identifying strategies that are used to cope with the transition and the results of the transition (in this case considering the role of the apprenticeship of observation on a student’s perception and experiences as a rugby scholarship student). In the third phase, not addressed in her study or this one, those who transition can explore options for personal and professional growth (perhaps a career in rugby, once they leave school either provincially or internationally). This theory therefore presents an integrated and holistic overview of the process of transition from being a student coming from a disadvantaged pupil to belonging in a privileged high school.

2.4 The experience and importance of playing rugby as a sport at school

2.4.1 Transformation of rugby in schools in post-apartheid South Africa

As noted by Smiles (2012), sport, in any area globally or nationally has been a very formidable way of joining a society and community together and it intermingles with

political notions on all levels. In the South African context, the challenges of changing the political environment, sport was used as a tactical manner to help the struggle against apartheid along. After 1994 when transformation began in earnest in the country and democratisation of sporting bodies, including cricket and rugby, began to reform and restructure there was acceptance of non-racialism in sport.

Maimela (2011), in his article "The only way to change SA sporting fortunes, proposed that in the South African context, progress that produces success cannot be achieved without a combination of quantity (increased inclusivity of previously marginalised groups) and quality (excellence drawn from all groups)". He explained further "that South Africa indisputably has abundant sporting talent that is not confined to any race, class, gender or geographical space. Peter de Villiers, former Springbok coach, proposed that the word "transform" means "the progress from what you were to what you can be" (De Villiers & Rich, 2012, p. 71).

As Bhana (2008) stated, for all South Africans, any ages, sport plays a vital role in their ability to socialise and belong to a community. It is often mentioned that sport in this country is seen as a 'national religion'. And although it strives to be non-racial this not always situation, it can also be very gender and class orientated. In most township schools the historical non-provision of resources particularly sport fields, equipment and coaches has led to underdevelopment of sport in rural areas. For all young boys, both black and white sport is introduced at an early age, whether they are participants or spectators. However, during apartheid schooling, sport was compulsory for white children, (Morrell, 2001) and this put them at an advantaged compared their black peers. As mentioned above sport, especially rugby as a sport, was a substantial way for white boys to establish their identity. There was a divide between the sports of soccer and rugby, rugby was seen historically as a white man's sport and soccer a black man's game of sport. (Bhana, 2008).

Over the past few decades South African sport is changing and transforming. Sport has become an enterprise, a commodity, and beside being a place to develop social and community it also has political value. Compelled by broader social aims and transformation and the requirement to develop sporting quality and excellences, greater number of coloured players are now seen in rugby and cricket. And while there is transformation of sport, there is similar change happening in the masculinities of

men in South Africa. While the white males were previously dominant, the black men are increasing in prominence, in all spheres of South African lifestyles.

Boys and sport, specifically sport scholarships, have been discussed by Miller (1995) who noted that “sport programmes came under criticism for their unfair recruiting practice and indifference to academic standards of eligibility”. Another example of this discussion was an article in *Beeld* (Oosthuizen, 2009, p. 2) “which claimed 80% of Grade 12 learners failed Mathematics in 2009”. Oosthuizen (2009, p. 2) asked the question: “How many schools have bought scholars for sport and pay all expenses, whilst the academic side is suffering?” Oosthuizen article puts into words the current trend to ‘buy’ rugby players for the dominant schools who wish to perform on the rugby field. And this is a growing inclination amongst all schools, both government and private to offer highly attractive scholarships to talented rugby players.

Another way of looking at sport scholarships involves seeing sports as gaining respect, being a source of pride and a ‘vehicle’ for social change; however, some African American observers recognised the enormous qualifications and conditions that shadowed the potential contributions of hard work to the advancement of the race.

In South Africa sport scholarships are often criticised as part of Sport Transformation (EPG Sport transformation status report 2016/2017). Maimela (2011), in his article proposed “The only way to change SA sporting fortunes, in the South African context, progress that produces success cannot be achieved without a combination of quantity (increased inclusivity of previously marginalised groups) and quality (excellence drawn from all groups)”. He articulated further that “South Africa indisputably has abundant sporting talent that is not confined to any race, class, gender or geographical space” (Maimela, 2011). Peter de Villiers, former Springbok coach, agreed that the word ‘transform’ means “the progress from what you were to what you can be” (De Villiers & Rich, 2012, p. 71).

Another key concept is class and how it relates or influences the learners on a sport scholarship. This is a fundamental concept, as without the sport scholarships the young men might not have been given this opportunity. Mbembe and Nuttall (2004) proffered a view of scholarship based on a defamiliarising gesture. Waghid’s (2005) philosophical work on deliberative citizenship and democracy, and Fataar’s (2011) ‘scholarship of hope’, have made valuable contributions towards learners and their

scholarships and will bring insight into the emerging themes. A scholarship of hope then draws on Waghid's view that being lost, confused and unsettled is a necessary condition for scholarly approaches that lead to new pathways and discoveries. This view is shared by Case (2010).

Case (2010), described the story of a young man to illustrate this view. Taken from Mandla's story, (this is a narrative study done by Case in 2010 on a young student and how he has managed from a disadvantaged background to become a Chemical Engineer and have a successful career), to the insinuation that disadvantaged learners in the classroom do not perform academically or do not have the perseverance to partake in higher education is to be questioned. Mandla shows incredible determination and will-power to succeed and this can be related to his experiences he was subjected to in a disadvantaged society. This definition of character and choices he makes enable him to deal with challenges of adolescents and by the time he enters high school he is prepared and has a resolve to face his high school new environment. These essential characteristics equipped him to have leadership skills and ability to accept responsibilities as many black children are often surviving in child households and performing the role of adults. His story is not isolated and applies too many of our black children in our schools in South Africa, throughout the interviews it becomes notable how the rugby scholarship boys have the same resolve shown by 'Mandla'.

LeMahieu's memoirs (cited in Hoggart, 1970) of scholarship learners, even though first published in 1957, have many similarities with learners in the present day. The boys live between two worlds going backward and forward between a privileged space, the high school they are attending, to a disadvantaged space which is home in a rural poorer area. This represents a significant challenge for the students as they move between the two spaces. Hoggart knew personally that "they assimilated these contradictions in complex ways. Their academic achievements separated them from their class origins, which they sometimes imperfectly concealed and other times publicly celebrated. But they never remained fully at home among the cultivated elites whose habits they both imitated and deplored. Class allegiances confounded an evolving personal identity".

As Fataar (2011) stated, "enormous sacrifices are made in order to access the 'proper' schools on the other side of the city. School choice is understood and negotiated as a key resource in positioning aspiring children for later life". it is inspiring to note how

young people on the move have learnt what is required of them to enter and access the 'better' schools. The learners have negotiated and understood the boundaries of the school, in the sense of what is a prerequisite to acquire the necessary appropriate bodily investments to navigate the schools they attend.

They develop what Fataar (2011), argued is "a *thin connectedness* to their living spaces, and firmer attachments to becoming spatially mobile". Attending remote schools far away from their homes plays a formative role in their subjective becoming processes. Children are alienated from their space of living and inserted into their spaces of becoming and this could be a key source of adapting.

Educational aspirations have to be transacted in the midst of a struggle for survival. Dillabough et al. (2008, p. 331), argued that "young people who are tied to particular geographical spaces might be seen as engaging in 'classification struggles' over the social meaning of being. These classification struggles involve daily battles for survival and attempts to break free from the limitations of spatial containment".

"Many South Africans are frustrated with the slow pace of transformation and democracy in sport (Smiles, 2012), and especially in rugby since the new constitutional dispensation commenced in 1994. *The New Age* (2011), reported that quotas have failed to be the panacea that fast tracks integration and participation of blacks in sport codes that were previously the preserve of whites under the apartheid regime. Rugby and cricket, in particular, have proved the quota system, as well as development programmes, to be an almost futile exercise, with representatives of the majority of the population failing to break into the Springbok and the Protea teams" (*The New Age*, 2011, p. 18). Yet in this research, the students were positive about the difference a sport, rugby, scholarship is making in their lives and perhaps this is not a futile exercise. At the end of Grade 12 the boys have a determination and perseverance to succeed. "There might be some links here to the social work literature on 'resilience theory', which focuses on what circumstances contribute to successful consequences in the face of adversity (Greene, Galambos, & Lee, 2003, p. 76). Factors influencing resilience that have been identified include personal attitude, spirituality and relationships with others".

2.4.2 Masculinity and its effect in young rugby boys in high school

The perception of masculinity can be seen as vague and unclear or open to different interpretations, which would lead to considerable discussions. However, as Khan (2009). However, as Kahn (2009) argued, “masculinity could be defined as the complex cognitive, behavioural, emotional, expressive, psychosocial and socio-cultural experience of identifying with being male (p. 2). Thus masculinity is generally associated with a male-sexed, gender identity although it is, to a large extent, a product of socio-cultural and psychosocial factors. Perhaps one of the key developments in masculinity research has been the identification of multiple ‘masculinities’.

Connell (2000) argued that “the term ‘masculinities’ is more appropriate when referring to masculine identities as different cultures, and different periods of history, construct gender differently (p. 10). Using Connell’s comprehension and understanding of the various notions of masculinity could be useful in the South African context as this is a country with a diverse population and they all co-exist with one another. And because of this diversity of cultures they manage through their differences to belong and respect each other in their social context.

“Gender-segregated contact sports are recognised as leading makers of a valorised, orthodox form of masculinity, and participation in them is made near-compulsory through masculine peer culture” (Messner & Sabo, 1990; Pronger, 1990; Whitson, 1990). Bhana (2008), explained sport is replete with masculine pictures and anecdotes as seen on social media, in schools, communities and families. This notion of what is an ideal boy (man) come across strongly and influence the perception of a man, often the pictures portrayed by media are of physical appearances and how significant they are to the young boy.

Regarding the dimensions of status, in gender-sensitive research, Swain (2002, p. 98), noted that “for some boys, domination through displays of ‘macho toughness’ is an important resource for establishing status. That status, he continued, may be underwritten by violence. Violence does not bring about popularity in Swain’s terms, but earns a certain amount of respect. For some schoolboys, victory in a physical fight brought more status than to the defeated which would generally lose an appreciable amount of respect and credibility” (Swain, 2004, p. 173). In addition, some academics (Eliasson, Isaksson, & Laflamme, 2007; Klein, 2006) recognise that there is more to

masculine status than perceived by schoolboys through being 'tough and violent'. It is more than apparent popularity and not social partiality.

An essential concept is masculinity and of the learners who are boys, their gender, and how sport plays a role and how it emphasises the identity of self and the issue of masculinity in boys' schools. A sports career demands a significant focus for a person especially during their educational development and requires time and dedication. However, through their sport, each athlete accomplishes a remarkable physical, spiritual and psychological skill that enables the person to perform on a higher level of social integration.

Articles by Atkinson (2008) explain adolescent development and the importance of sport. The ideas of Erikson (1959) on identity formation and Berzonsky (1989) are significant and help to add to the understanding of the transition of the learners and how they developed and changed in their identity.

Bowley (2006), mentioned that today, in many single sex boys schools, rugby remains a very popular sport with significant school status. This has been borrowed from a national and provincial obsession with rugby as a major winter sport of (white, middle class) men. The early settlers who started the public schools in South Africa intended to reproduce the upper class world of England. Rugby was part of this British public school tradition and this was mirrored in South African schools. Rugby has now become an obsession at many single sex, middle class schools both at primary and secondary level. Today many schools talk about traditional sports, that is, cricket in the summer and rugby during the winter. While sport is important in a school's life, it is as important in the lives of its pupils. Sport "is the central experience of the school years for many boys" (Connell, 1983, p.18). Boys, from an early age, are exposed to some form of sport. While some may excel in the game, there are many that fail or do not achieve. Messner argued that "there are millions of boys who at an early age are rejected by, become alienated from, or lose interest in organised sports. Yet all boys are, to a greater or lesser extent, judged according to their ability, or lack of ability in competitive sports" (Messner, 1995, p. 103). Sport plays an important role in defining hegemonic masculinity. And it demands a high position and significance in its role of power and hierarchy. It can be violent, sexual, heroic, sporty and competitive. For the acquisition of status and identity, both which have key link into the integration of sport,

the young man must be challenged and gain acceptance into the game of sport which demonstrates his masculinity.

2.4.3 Rugby as a school sport and influence of sport on boys

Much work has been done on learners and education and how to improve facilitating the education process in the post-apartheid era. It is surprising, however, that sport scholarships which were brought in to give talented learners from disadvantaged schools an opportunity to succeed in their chosen sport remain largely unresearched, specifically in privileged boys' high schools. As Geyer (2015) mentioned, these issues including the need to consider that access to a programme, must be accompanied by the material and other support necessary to secure success and the study points to a need for further engagement and investigation with various initiatives.

Coakley (1990, p. 3) argued that "sports cannot be ignored because it is such a pervasive part of life in contemporary society. Therefore, sport is an institutionalised competitive activity that involves vigorous physical exertion" (Coakley, 1990, p. 7). According to Bainvel (2005), "sport is a central hobby in our modern society and should not be disregarded by academics". Bainvel (2005, p. 7) further cited "MacClancy's (1996) view of sport, which states that sports have become an instrument of identity, because sports are a central activity in our societies, one embodying social values and as such, as deserving of systematic investigation as any other". Accordingly, Professor Barrie Houlihan of Staffordshire University asserted that "sports have been transformed from a parochial activity arousing only passing interest among government to a global phenomenon demanding the attention of presidents, prime ministers and monarchies, (Houlihan, 1997, p. 1). From these underscored perspectives, it can therefore be assumed that sport plays out within a matrix of political, cultural and social forces" (Harris, 2008).

Today, in many single sex schools, rugby remains the most important sport at school. Rugby has now become an obsession at single sex, middle class schools at both primary and secondary level. While sport is important in a school's life, it is as important in the lives of its pupils. Sport "is the central experience of the school years for many boys" (Connell, 1983, p. 18). Boys, from an early age, are exposed to some form of sport. "Yet all boys are, to a greater or lesser extent, judged according to their

ability, or lack of ability in competitive sports” (Messner, 1995, p. 103). Sport teams, in particular, are areas for boys to bond, work together and enjoy one another’s company. Physical bonding in the name of team spirit is important for boys in their development of masculine identities. Boys say that playing together in a team is one of the most important reasons for playing sport. Rugby is a game that is played in a team and can be an opportunity to build team spirit.

2.4.4 Group cohesion, team effectiveness and commitment in rugby

Sport is fundamentally two faced, on the one hand, sport delivers fun, excitement, pleasure and self-fulfilment for the participants and spectators. It also offers the participants certain attributes such as courage, relentless effort, phenomenal teamwork, sacrifice, and perseverance. However, there is another side to sport, and these are negative images, such as fierce competition, aggressiveness, exploitation, selfishness, and greed. This makes sport attractive and pleasing as well as the ability to unity and diversify. And because of this dynamic it brings people of diverse races together, similarly it can also separate social groups. (Eitzen, 1999, p 4-5).

Cohesion was first formally defined by Festinger, Schachter and Back (1950, p 66) as “the total field of forces which act on members to keep them on working in the group”. Carron, Brawley and Widmeyer (1998) described the “concept as a dynamic process that addresses the inclination of a group to merge collectively and amalgamate due to the active purposes and also for the contentment of associates’ emotional requirements”. “Team unity” and “team chemistry” are both used to replace the term “cohesion” that is the main group variable in a study by Sabin and Marcel (2014).

Numerous studies have shown a positive correlation between team cohesion and team success. For example, Sabin and Marcel (2014) mentioned “the work researched by Carron et al. (2002) who found a strong relationship between task cohesion and team success. Cohesion is regarded as significant variable in team sports”. “Previous sport studies found relationships between cohesion and collective efficacy” (Heuzé, Raimbault, & Fontayne, 2006), “role involvement” (Eys & Carron, 2001), “leadership”, (Caperchione, Mummery, & Duncan, 2011; Hardy, Eys, & Loughhead, 2008) “and communication” (Sullivan & Feltz, 2003; Sullivan & Short, 2011). Spink, Nickel, Wilson and Odonokon (2005) “found that higher perceptions of cohesion are related to higher

levels of satisfaction and leadership behaviours for athletes”. Martin, Paradis, Eys and Evans (2013) “found high cohesion in teams increases team members’ satisfaction”.

Responsibility and dedication are used in sport to refer to the motivation required to continue to practice and often huge self-sacrifices. With respect to the young sportsmen, taking part and enthusiasm are opposite to sport withdrawal or wearing away. (Weiss & Petlichkoff, 1989).

2.4.5 Respect among rugby players and impact on peer status

“Alongside notions of respect in western moral philosophy is the concept of *ubuntu*” (Goodhew, 2004; Ross, 1999). Jansen noted that the perception of *ubuntu* can have a variety of implications which could be used to develop different political agendas. In its most positive connotation, *ubuntu* accentuates co-operation and communication in societies which brings communities and people together through compassion and humanity. This generates a sense of ‘huge family’ that belongs to all.

Respect and having sense of being valued within a community or society, allows newcomers into the ‘neighbourhood’, especially as respect creates an authority that is humble and organised. This emergence of *ubuntu* is not only for new members but between different ages and traditional cultural hierarchal system in rural areas of South Africa. (Bozzolli, 2004).

“Previous studies from different fields on peer status among young people give us reason to assume that dominant action has a considerable amount to do with respect” (Sandstrom & Cillessen, 2006; Gaskell, 2008).

As respect is highly important to boys, “the acquisition of peer group acceptance was largely about the performativity of gendered identities” (Butler, 1990). The first lesson for a rugby player is to have a profound sense of respect for teammates, opponents, referees and every person involved in the game, the match, including, of course, the fans. Respect plays a very important role for the students in both rugby and their socialising skills and learning to adapt to the new school.

Nick Clover (Appetite4Recruitment team, 13 September 2018) described respect in rugby in the following way: “Rugby is a game for animals, played by gentlemen. At every interval between junior play and professional leagues, respect is at the heart of

rugby. All of the fans know it and all of the players demonstrate it". Respect can be seen as a norm, a principle of right action binding the members of a group and serving to guide, control, or regulate proper and acceptable behaviour.

Standards and customs are an essential part of group processes and can be applied to a rugby team too. Whether or not rules, policies and systems are in place to manage behaviour, every community and group eventually will develop a set of rules about how things are done. These norms are developed by the group and they are shared notions of how things should exist and work together to form a cohesion or synergy between members of the group. This is fundamental in sport teams and specifically in rugby which is a contact sport with perceived aggressive behaviour. Trusting the other team players is essential for excellence performance, (Lussier & Kimball, 2009). The rules are unwritten and informal, however once they have been established, they become a rule to strongly follow, (Carron, Shapcott, & Burke, 2008).

2.4.6 Physicality and emotional aspect of school rugby and the effects on performance

"The root word for emotions is "to move" and, in this manner, emotions can be thought of as productive forces rather than only being reactive" (Goleman, 1994). "The systematic study of the sociology of emotions began only three decades ago" (e.g., Bourdieu, 1980, 1986; Denzin, 1984; Featherstone, 1982; Hochschild, 1983) and "has been associated with the broader growth of interest in the cultural dimension of social life" (Featherstone, 1991, p. 133). Turner and Stets (2005) regarded this "relatively late development as remarkable in light of the fact that emotions pervade virtually every aspect of human experience and all social relations" (p. 1). "Emotions, for example, are integral in processes associated with social interaction, social control, and with producing and challenging social structures, power relations and cultural traditions" (Barthes, 1990; Bourdieu, 1986; Foucault, 1978, 1985).

"Studies on individual as well as team sports have indicated that psychological factors such as motivation, attitude, focus and attention, visualisation (mental imagery), coach-athlete relationship, and team-cohesion contribute significantly to performance" (Krane & Williams, 2006). "The effects and influence of emotions in sport" have also been studied by various researchers such as Deci, Hanin and Lazarus (Robazza, 2006).

In rugby, as in a variety of sports, different factors may affect the performance of the athlete. Such factors include, environmental, physicality, beliefs, sociological, and emotive factors.

Knobel (2010), mentioned mental toughness, motivation, focus, attention and concentration, flow and intensity, routines, cue-words, personal attributes and attitude, goal setting, leadership and mental imagery as the most important psychological attributes an athlete can gain from rugby and use in everyday life. Talent and physical attributes cannot be ignored or excluded when factors contributing to sport performance are considered. Within the physicality of rugby, there are determining factors such as natural talent, genes and hereditary, physical attributes (speed, fitness, stamina, strength and flexibility) and skills.

The above-mentioned factors of rugby can be applied to the students in this research and their abilities when they need to adapt their life experiences and face challenging situations at school. The boys mentioned in interviews how the game of rugby has taught them life lessons and the ability to not let one's opponent get the better of one, to think on one's feet is important and this strength continues into their school life.

2.5 Institutional acculturation of schools in South Africa

According to UNESCO (2002), "culture should be regarded as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and this encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs. Culture takes diverse forms across time and space. This diversity is embodied in the uniqueness and plurality of the identities of the groups and societies making up humankind. Culture thus cannot be colour coded. Different races have internally different cultures".

For Berry et al. (1989), "it is possible for individuals from different cultures to coexist without compromising their cultural identities. In other words, each person maintains their culture of origin while interacting with others from different cultures". Individuals can exist in a culturally plural societies (i.e., more than one cultural or ethnic group in the population). In the new high school, there are several cultural and ethnic groups among the learners and staff of the school, and they show these attitudes (known as

acculturation attitudes) which mean the process of learning and accepting the values of the particular new white high school, and in order to maintain your own culture, yet accept the new one or you can blend in or fit in with another community, based on racial, social, spiritual and sport community.

This is part of the boys' experiences, as during their time at the school they learned how to develop, or 'fit in' and still keep their identities. However, during the interviews, it became apparent how the boys had learnt to coexist within this new culture. It seems young people overcome barriers very quickly when they are provided with an opportunity to do so and it also became apparent that there was a connection, a link with the boys and their Zulu principles that unconsciously helped them through this time of interacting with other groups.

2.5.1 School culture as an institution for traditions created and effect of implementation

All the boys in this study reported on a profound fear or anxiety when they started their new high school. Often the new traditions which they are unacquainted with and have heard as anecdotes and opinions only, create this apprehension. The learners are 'institutionalised' into this new school's 'white' traditions and structure. As Wray (2018), stated in his book, *A School where I belong*, traditions at their best are intended to allow us to identify with, to approve of, and to become part of something bigger than us, something that we can leave as a legacy. Through participating in traditions, we understand that we are serving an institution and not ourselves, drawing us, as human beings out of our self-obsession to an acknowledgment that community is more important. In participating, we contribute towards something that will outlive us. Every human being wants to leave a legacy. Participating in a tradition, upholding tradition that builds community, is one form of legacy.

Regarding the effects of education as a institution, Meyer (1977) argued that they, the schools, are organised systems of unique processes which give them their individual character. In our society's education is a highly developed institution. Its systems have been reworked and established over numerous years and these create the type of people the institutions vision hopes to be embodied. Most schools have spent decades developing their 'ideal' student and what the appropriate knowledge they would possess once they reach the final stage of their educational years. The school's

market their goals and accomplishments of learners and strive replicate it throughout their student's time. Distinctive and highly valued schools provide have an impact in society to produce such elements of learners to be the forth coming professionals and entrepreneurs.

2.5.2 School respect as a culture and intermingling of Zulu values

For Africans, *ukuhlonipha* “provides guidelines for living, including appropriate clan-based inter-generational” (Mbele, et al., 2015) “behavioural patterns, as well as ways to honour and revere ancestors”. Africans are nurtured to be respectful. Respect is seen as both an unconscious process as well as requiring conscious effort in practice. It ranges from gestures through correctly spoken language to culturally appropriate practices. Disrespect could invoke the wrath of the community and ancestors. For example, in Zulu culture the term for respect ‘*ukuhlonipha*’ has meanings of great breadth, depth and height.

In our traditional African societies and communities, owing to very patriarchal doctrines and hierarchy, command great importance to respectful behaviour for elders and the males. *Hlonipha*, this is the language and cultural system of respect that occurs in most Southern Bantu-speaking African societies.

"As stated in Mbele, et al. (2015), like in many societies, African families teach their children to respect one another especially the elders. Children are taught to respect what they see (animals, humans of all ages, natural vegetation and all that lives on earth) and that which they cannot see (*amadlozi* – the ancestral spirits, *uMvelinqangi* – the one who existed first before all mankind, *uNkulunkulu* – the one who is the greatest of all human beings). It is believed that respect is reciprocal. When you respect others, others will respect you in return. In doing so you are also respecting yourself.

As Hammett (2011), mentioned, “not surprisingly, perhaps, respect is often a key concern with regard to youth. It is something to instil, so that youth learn how to behave in society, to relate with other people and with institutions, and to appreciate the moral value and personhood of others. Respect, then, should be a value held by nascent community members and should link them together as citizens. But respect is also a tool for discipline and social reproduction in that it links people in particular ways”. As

I examined this idea in more detail during the interviews and the study, I saw a familiarity with the notion of respect that is necessitated at the school by staff and learners through the traditions. In this thesis to I hope to show how this unconscious link to home values and upbringing allows the boys to feel more comfortable and helps them to adjust to the new environment.

2.5.3 School hierarchal domain and its link with Zulu principles

Similar to the relationships of respect discussed above within the Zulu culture is also the hierarchal domain. In Africa, “there is considerable importance attached to the respect for elders and ancestors. African communities are characterised by the prevalence of collectivism as opposed to individuality”. Paulina Makinwa-Adebusoye (2001, p. 5) outlined the “major characteristic features of an African household as mostly rural, patriarchal and hierarchical, polygamous and open to kinship networks, and finally, as attaching substantial importance to lineage continuation”. The social organisation of many African families is entrenched in a male and hierarchical tradition that dominates over female and they are seen as having a less important role in the family and community than their male counterparts.

This has a parallel which comes through in the studies not verbatim but a correlation that has an interconnected link within the boys and makes the transition easier and the experiences more relevant.

2.6 Conclusion

An increased focus has been placed on research and policies that surround scholarships in education, because of the prevalence of disadvantaged learners in South Africa and other countries in the world. Research shows that there are many different opinions regarding scholarships in academics and sport, and whether they will lead to access and success in higher education and the workplace for the learners. They all agree there is a need for scholarships to improve education of learners coming from primary schools that are “poor, dysfunctional, and unable to equip learners with the necessary numeracy and literacy skills” (Taylor, Van der Berg, & Mabogane, 2013), and to provide opportunities to the students and this implies possibilities of

upward mobility for its beneficiaries of the scholarships. This study aims to look at the experiences of a particular group of black boys in post-apartheid South Africa in respect of their understanding and expression of their own stories through the transition phase between their different worlds.

The research reported in this article was focused on the transition of the learners who are black and come from low-income families in rural areas, who are the beneficiaries of rugby scholarships, to attend a privileged high school in an urban city.

Along with this, it is also clear the field of transformation in sport and education can vary when applied and continues to be studied and analysed in order to try and benefit most students and society at large. Scholarships or bursaries, advantages or disadvantages, are still being debated, though, and continue to be problematic in the discourse of community of education. This field of inquiry is very important, as at its centre is a concern with helping boys become better students and sportsmen. Helping students become better learners and getting students to see the importance in growing as independent rugby sportsman is also very important in our current society and to contributing to the transformation of sport and education.

For many South African boys, sport plays a central role in their lives and is used as a way of adapting to new environments, through focusing on their rugby as a sport. An understanding of the importance that sport plays in the gender identity of boys helped me to understand and interpret the discussions I had with the boys concerning rugby and their scholarships experiences.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This research took place at an all-boys high school in KwaZulu-Natal. The group was made up of five learners from disadvantaged backgrounds and rural schools selected to attend a privileged high school on rugby scholarships. About 30 participants are given sport scholarships at the school – mostly black learners and a few coloured and white learners. They are selected by a ‘recruitment officer’ (who is employed by the school) and started at the school at the beginning of their Grade 8 year, thus their ages were between 13 and 18 years old. The learners are mentored by a Special Needs

teacher (myself), a staff member who is known as their away from home 'mother' and the teacher whose portfolio is to recruit talented learners.

This thesis is about their story and journey and understanding how they experienced this transition. I collected data by interviewing the chosen five boys with rugby scholarships. Together we explored their feelings, anecdotes, and interpretations of events. The research thus used a qualitative approach to comprehend and appreciate their stories. The focus of the study was on how boys talk about their experiences and about themselves and how this can be related to their transition. I conducted a life history approach and also used a narrative method.

3.1 Life History Approach

The life history approach in qualitative research highlights the significance of presenting an individual's personal summary of his life experiences and providing information about their social experiences. It can be the account of a life story ongoing or completed. This method combines both oral and written confirmation, and the information gathered gives substantiation of the process and social collaboration (Baker, 2008).

My research involved a particular group of learners, whom I have worked with over the past five years during their time at high school. I have wanted to hear about their experiences of the transition from their rural primary schooling days and about how they had adjusted to being at a privileged high school on a sport scholarship. I selected the life history approach as the research design due to it involving essentially a telling or a recounting of a string of events. This works well with personal narratives which describe the unfolding history of one person's life events.

Davies et al. (2018) explained that "life history interviews are a qualitative method of data collection that elicit written and/or oral narratives through questions and answers to describe or comment upon a person's life". The method calls on interview respondents to provide a subjective account of their lives over a certain period, described in their own words across their own personal timelines. Interviews help both the researcher and the respondent to explore how events and behaviours have shaped their individual choices and actions. Their subjective nature allowed for a more

contextual understanding of how and why certain decisions were made by the boys during their time at school.

The life history approach stresses the importance of listening to voices, especially those who belong to marginal groups. I found that listening helped to give the boys a voice. A life history approach aims to penetrate more deeply than any other approaches – I found it allowed the boys to tell their stories and present their views, which required careful listening on my part. Messiou (2006), mentions that the notion of hearing children's voices used be somewhat neglected. However, after some studies in the past decade this idea has gathered traction and specifically after the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1989. Adults can gain information by acknowledging the children's right to be heard and taking the time to listen to their experiences.

Some of the core principles of the Convention included non-discrimination; devotion to the best interests of the child; and respect for the views of the child. The Convention enshrined children's right to attend school and receive a basic education, but also to express their views in a safe environment, free of discrimination and judgmental attitudes. As a consequence, researchers and teachers have felt encouraged to and found value in listening to the voices of learners and gaining insider perspectives of learner experiences.

This approach was very appropriate for this research, and it helped to provide general insight into the nature and meaning of the lives of the sport scholarships boys. Their life history began with the stories related by the boys, and this was built on using information provided through their interviews and discussions. In the life history approach, large samples are unnecessary and may even be inappropriate and in this research, it was apparent that the boys provided ample information. It was clear that it was not quantity of the data, but relevance of the data, the quality, which gave a richness to the nature of the aspect of life investigated. This approach has provided insight into the lived realities and experiences of the specific lives the boys (Bakar & Abdullah, 2008). The boys will be allowed to talk with myself listening, however there will be a loose structure of sort, such as leading questions which I will pose at certain times/junctures.

3.2 Narrative method

Within the life history approach, I used the narrative method which involved learners telling their stories. The journey of the sport scholarship learners under study fitted in well within the life history approach and narrative seemed an appropriate methodological choice (Polkinghorne, 1995).

Narrative (telling stories) is a fundamental human activity, a means by which we represent ourselves to others and make sense of our lives. From the outset of the interviews, it was evident that the boys had a clear sense of a story to tell. These were young people with a developed awareness of their personal narratives. Because teacher education is inseparably linked to teachers' lives and narrative survey is the here and now, there is a very strong link between teachers as facilitators and narrations. Humans define their experiences within the context of narratives – which serve as cognitive structures and a means of communication, as well as aiding people in framing and understanding their perceptions of the world

Connelly and Clandinin (1990) pioneered the narrative inquiry research method in their “groundbreaking research programme examining what and how teachers come to know. Human experience is nearly always communicated in narrative form: when persons note something of their experience, either to themselves or to others, they do so not by the mere recording of experience over time, but in storied form” (Clandinin & Connelly, 1998, p.154).

In my research I asked the learners to tell their stories, to narrate the actual events during their time at the high school. The life experiences of the five boys were richly textured and the reconstruction of personal stories both compelling and powerful. Informal interviews with the five learners made intriguing listening especially when they occurred collaboratively. Often heard and experienced that once people start telling a story others join in, collaborate and remember insights or incidences that add to the story and confirm the events.

3.3 Sampling strategies

The sampling size must be sufficient to provide enough to answer the research question (Maxwell & Satake, 2006). Purposeful convenient sampling involves the selecting of information-rich cases for an in-depth study when one wants to understand something about those cases without needing or desiring to generalise to all such cases (Maxwell, 2006). Based on logistics and accessibility to the learners, I worked with learners who were sport scholarship recipients at the school. This was thus a non-probability sample though purposive selection and snowballing, in order not to exclude any learners who wanted to tell their stories/ memories of their journeys and experiences.

I had chosen five boys and they were the focus of the study. These were boys I had worked with since Grade 8 in 2015 and were on a rugby sport scholarship and in the boarding establishment. My objective was to collect life histories of the learners and I used methods (group and individual interviews) through which I hoped the boys' experiences, thoughts and feeling would be able to be expressed. The learners were free to converse in their own language during the interviews yet they all felt comfortable and wanted to converse in English.

The criteria for selection included:

- Respondents needed to be learners at one particular high school and be between the ages of 14-18 years old.
- Respondents needed to be recipients of a sport scholarship at the time of the research and be boarders.
- Respondents needed to be conversant in English but not necessarily English first-language speakers.
- Respondents needed to be willing to sign informed consent to participate in the study.

Ultimately the group consisted of participants who had come from a variety of cultural groups and their participation established a rich and diverse account of the complexities of scholarship recipients. (The sporting scholarship students are a larger group, as scholarships are given in multitude of sports at the school).

3.4 Data collection methods

The data collection methods included:

1. Individual interviews and group interviews; these interviews varied from completely structured to unstructured ,free flowing conversations. (Welma et al., 2005).
2. Session notes (written documents) were made available for participants to read or question during the interviews.
3. Photo voice – this is a participatory action research method that employs photographs or the taking of photographs; the visual images and accompanying stories are tools used to encourage dialogue or memories for data collection. I had pictures and when we viewed them during the interview, they triggered memories. The boys also had pictures of various places in and around the school grounds or boarding establishment, of rugby games, social events and friends, class photographs and this prompted memories and added to the conversations.

3.4.1 Procedure for individual interviews

Potential learners were contacted and informed about the study and invited to take part. The interviews and group interviews took place at the school at a mutually convenient time and date. Both learners and their parents gave consent for the interviews.

I used a set of open-ended questions to start the sessions and to encourage the interviewees to express thoughts, experiences and feelings related to the research question. I also used photographs for visual stimulation or to prompt memories of the five-year period. A digital recording device as well as the researcher's cell phone were used to record the responses. The recorded interviews were then saved and transcribed.

3.4.2 Interview approach

Two approaches were used:

- Semi-structured (formal) interviews were conducted using a pre-prepared list of open-ended questions and/or topics of interest.

- Unstructured (informal) interviews were conducted without the use of a pre-prepared interview schedule for the second interviews and follow-up discussions. In the beginning, the boys were slightly unsure of what was to be expected but after the first interview, the second and follow-up conversations were comfortable and the boys were at ease discussing their experiences.

For the interviews, I formulated a schedule of questions. These were directly related to my main research questions. In the interviews themselves, probes and prompts were needed for boys who were not often forthcoming or whose answers were very brief. This was especially helpful with a quieter boy who seemed ill at ease and whose answers were short. The boys tended to become more comfortable as the interview progressed. The interview style was not haphazard and questioning was deliberate in attempts to elicit answers to the research questions. It was, however, important to allow boys to volunteer information and hence I would often stray from the question schedule that I had prepared. Schedules, set questions I had written down, were helpful for obtaining responses to all the questions from each boy, something that was easy to overlook in semi-structured interview contexts where unexpected answers sometimes cause straying from the prepared schedule. The recorded interviews were semi-structured and took on average 60 minutes per boy to complete, as they did tend to chat. After the individual interviews, I held focus groups which worked well as the boys encouraged each other with memories or stories. This then led to a second individual interview where each wanted to elaborate on their stories or add to them. This provided me with very rich data and helped to make sure I had understood the stories correctly.

3.4.3 Piloting the interviews

I began each interview by explaining the objectives of the research and indicating how long the interview would last. I informed the participants that they could withdraw from the research at any time. All data was treated as confidential and pseudonyms were used when reporting.

I began my research by interviewing the five rugby scholarship boys on a one to one basis, as I wanted to see how each boy reacted personally to the questions posed.

Here they were not influenced by their peers' thoughts and ideas. I was hoping this would encourage clear and honest responses from the boys. I recorded all interviews and then transcribed them. A focus group followed during which I probed issues that had been raised during the initial one-on-one interviews. There were some occasions where a boy reacted quite differently in the group compared to the individual interview. Many became far more vocal and adamant about their ideas and convictions. They seemed to fuel each other's ideas and responses to the topics and helped to jog certain memories that had been forgotten.

After analysis, I consulted with the respondents to make sure I had accurately captured their experiences. The interview process served two major purposes for my research. Firstly, it was a means of capturing and gathering information with a direct bearing on the research objectives. Secondly, it was used as an explanatory device to help develop relationships with the boys I interviewed. While I controlled the questions asked, the boys were free to add anything they felt might be relevant for my research.

3.5 Ethical aspects : HSS/0247/019M

"The main ethical consideration in a life history research is protecting the confidentiality and anonymity of the participants". Stake (2003, p. 154) highlighted the privileged position of the case study researcher": "Qualitative researchers are guests in the private spaces of the world. Their manners should be good and their code of ethics strict." He went on to "assert that it is important that researchers go beyond standard ethics requirements and exercise great caution to minimise risk by, for example, maintaining an active dialogue with the research participants, providing feedback, and in particular for the researcher to listen well for signs of concern". Confidentiality was vigilantly maintained in this research so that none of the participants would be recognized.

The nature of life histories is that they can be compromised, and so ethical procedures must be of high standard and be managed appropriately. Caution must be taken all through the interview process. During the interviews which can take up considerably time or over a long period, there could develop a personal or familiar relationship with the persons. Data must therefore be collected in a way that does not compromise the integrity of the interviewer or interview participant.

This process was conducted with conscious sensitivity as strict ethical considerations are required with minors. The letter of consent had also indicated that their participation in the research was voluntary and could be terminated at any time.

Ethical clearance was followed through the correct channels to obtain permission to conduct the interviews with the five selected boys on sport scholarships. All reasonable steps were taken to keep the learners safe and protected. A few of the learners' parents/guardians were not English speaking, they were isiZulu, and some required an interpreter for the forms to make sure they understood. This was made possible through the boys' scholarships committee; a co-ordinator takes school forms to the parents, such as indemnity/school camp and explains these to them so they can sign the forms knowing the content of them in their home language. The researcher used the same co-ordinator to assist with completing the confidential form required by the parents. The researcher then also received permission from the following:

- Department of Education
- School Governing Body
- Headmaster of the high school
- Parents/guardians of the learners interviewed
- The learners interviewed.

Learners may feel they cannot refuse participation because refusal may prejudice the support and attention they receive at school. They were reassured that refusal to participate (or drop out of an interview) would in no way undermine the support they received at school. I was aware of the potential negative or emotional impacts of the process on the respondents and I ensured this was minimised during the discussions. A school counsellor was available at the school, although her services were never required.

I am aware of the fact that interviews are often flawed particularly when they are conducted with young people. Children, (although the students were teenagers) sometimes shape their answers to please the interviewer. Their answers may thus not be a true reflection of how they feel. Being an adult and a teacher at the school means that the boys could have been on their guard when I interviewed them, trying to speak correctly and with reservation. Conducting research in the school where one teaches

poses challenges. Being a teacher, I have a position of authority and power over the learners. This may have affected the responses I received as learners may simply have answered what they thought I wanted to hear. Being a white, female teacher, and interviewing boys about their experiences, disadvantaged backgrounds, rugby and coping mechanisms could have been considered a problem. I do think, however, that because I had taught them maths during their Grade 8 and 9 years, as well as facilitated their academic process during their time in the school, and the boys knew me, that we had a mutual respect for one another and that they would have been able to talk freely and not been too cautious in the interviews. They were also familiar with me and facilitating this group of learners has given me 'insider' understanding of their transition from underprivileged schools into a privileged high school as recipients of sport scholarships, whereas I could not have gained this understanding so easily of learners at another school.

Chapter 4: Life Histories

4.1 Student A

Student A was born on 14 March 2001 in Pietermaritzburg, situated in the province of KwaZulu-Natal in South Africa. He has five siblings, two brothers and three sisters, and is the youngest in his family, the only one who has received a scholarship for his schooling. Student A grew up in a township (township residential areas in South Africa originated as racially segregated, low-cost housing developments, for black labourers to remain closer to their places of employment outskirts of the cities and towns). He went to a local primary school from Grade 1 to Grade 6. In his primary school years, he played rugby at the Rugby Development Club in the township, (this is a club initiated to develop young 'black' boys who are talented sportsmen or students who would have liked to play a sport,) and was offered a rugby scholarship by a school in central Pietermaritzburg which he attended for Grade 7. During this year he played in a rugby tournament at Woodburn Stadium and was then offered several rugby scholarships for high schools. His parents chose High School A, on the advice of his school coach and the development rugby coach.

In 2015, Student A started at the new high school for Grade 8, as a day student on a rugby scholarship. This was a quite difficult due to transport issues, travelling between the high school and his home in the township on the outskirts of the town. In 2017, his Grade 10 year, he was approached by another high school with the offer of a full rugby scholarship; they had also offered to pay the scholarship monies from Grade 8 and Grade 9 back to High School A. However, Student A didn't want to move so he discussed the offer with the recruitment teacher and was then given a full scholarship which included a place in boarding establishment at High School A which did not want to lose him to the other school.

Student A continued playing rugby for U14A, U15A, U16A and then played for the first team for two years at his high school. He has also made Craven Week and Academy Rugby, and was asked to play for SA Schools rugby but ultimately could not participate due to an injury. He studied Art, Business Studies, Maths Literacy and Geography with Art being his favourite subject at school.

Student A has been offered a rugby scholarship at the University of Johannesburg in Gauteng province of South Africa. As he is not sure what to study, the university has offered him a place in a Diploma of Sport Management. He wants to go overseas (UK or Europe) to play rugby because he believes “they judge you on your body size in South Africa, and they say we are not big enough to play rugby here, but overseas they are looking for players who are my size and with skill”.

4.2 Student B

Student B was born in Vryheid on 1 March 2001. He attended a primary school in Vryheid from Grade 1 to 3. He then changed to a dual medium school, a school where you have a choice of being taught in either English or Afrikaans or Zulu, from Grade 4 to 7, and he chose Zulu. He has several siblings but he is the only child of his parents. He started playing rugby from Grade 4. In his Grade 6 year, his school played in a tournament at Woodburn Stadium in Pietermaritzburg. At this event Student B was offered a scholarship to a primary school in Pietermaritzburg but chose to take up an offer of a rugby scholarship in the school he was attending in Vryheid for his Grade 7 year.

In Grade 6, he was offered rugby scholarships to many private and privileged public high schools. He accepted the one to High School A, as his coach recommend it and he had seen a YouTube clip about the school, which appealed to him. His mother would have preferred an academic choice, but he wanted to play rugby so he and his father chose this particular privileged public high school.

Student B wasn't involved in negotiating the scholarship; his parents were more involved in the discussions. He was simply interested in playing rugby and if he was to receive clothes, stationery and accommodation. The school never explained any expectations of academics or rugby. He presumed they discussed the conditions and expectations with his parents. Student B came to his new high school in January 2015, as a boarder on a full rugby scholarship. He attended the school from 2015 to 2019, he and played rugby for the U14A, U15A, U16A, second and first teams.

Student B intends to further his studies and has been accepted into TUKS (Pretoria University), Varsity College in Pretoria and Durban. He is hoping to continue playing

rugby in the tertiary institution he chooses. He is anxious about being in the same situation as when he started Grade 8 (a new environment) and is scared about the next step, which has many unknowns. He is clear about study choices: he will start with a B.Com and then either do a teaching conversion certificate or go into the business world. His focus is more on a qualification than on rugby for his future career.

4.3 Student C

Student C was born on the South Coast in KwaZulu-Natal. His father is a teacher at a rural school in the Eastern Cape and his mother stays at home. He is an only child. He attended a primary school on the South Coast. In his Grade 6 year he was offered a rugby scholarship to a private primary school in Durban. In his Grade 7 year he was approached by various high schools, both private and public, with offers for scholarships.

His parents were invited to visit High School A; they liked the school. The recruitment teacher at the new school had seen Student C play rugby and told his parents about the scholarship through a 'talent scout' (who is now employed at High School A, as the recruitment officer). A few other high schools offered scholarships to his parents but they chose High School A after consultations with the recruitment officer.

In 2015 he started Grade 8, on a full rugby scholarship which included boarding. He played rugby for U14A, U15A, U16A and the second team.

His school subjects, chosen in Grade 10, were History, Biology, Maths Literacy and Business Studies. He is very interested in History; his father is a history teacher and he enjoys discussions with his father on many history topics.

Student C plans to study and would still like to play rugby. He has applied to Pretoria University and University of Cape Town. He wants to study to become a lawyer, and he has applied for National Student funding to finance his studies.

4.4 Student D

Student D was born in KwaZulu-Natal. His grandfather was a white man who married a black woman. His second name is therefore a 'white name' rather than the traditional

name given to the Zulu children which came from his grandfather. He has two siblings: an older sister and a step-brother. His mother came from Lesotho and died when he was five years old. His father remarried and had another child, his stepbrother. At the age of twelve, his father died from poison, supposedly administered by his stepmother, according to the community. He was quite a lost child, without any direction, and became involved with stealing, smoking, drugs and was part of a gang. When his stepmother asked him to leave her house, he went to stay with his grandmother in another township.

Student D then moved to Pietermaritzburg, KwaZulu-Natal. He changed schools and attended the local primary school in the township. He met his friend, Student A, who encouraged him to play rugby in the afternoons with the Rugby Development Club. He joined the club and when the team went to play in a tournament at UKZN, a coach offered him a rugby scholarship to attend a public primary school in Pietermaritzburg for his Grade 7 year.

Realising he was too old for Grade 7, which would affect him receiving the scholarship, and not wanting to lose the opportunity, he changed his identity number on his birth certificate in order to have the correct documentation to get into the primary school. While at the primary school, he was offered a rugby scholarship to High School A as a day scholar. He started at his new school in 2015.

In 2015 his grandmother died and he had to move out and stay with people nearby. He had many hardships, such as lack of food and money at times. He was living in a shack made of corrugated iron with many people sharing the one room. In 2015, the school offered Student D a space in the boarding establishment, as part of an extension of his rugby scholarship. He was at the new school from 2015 to 2019. He struggled at first because of the language; his home language was Zulu, even though he was a 'coloured' and so English was hard to understand for him in Grade 8 and 9. In Grade 10 he chose Art, History and Business Studies and Maths Literacy as his subjects. In Grade 12, he was made house leader for his house (a prestigious position with a pastoral role). In his Grade 12 year when applying to write his final exams, he had to submit his identity documentation. It was then that the administrative department picked up that there was another boy in matric in another school in KwaZulu-Natal with the same identity number. Student D decided to tell his story and went to the headmaster to confess that he had changed his identity documents in

order to receive a rugby scholarship. He had to attend disciplinary hearings and was asked to leave the boarding establishment and step down from his leadership positions. He was not allowed to play rugby for the school or represent the school in his sport. Student D was given accommodation by his sponsors, who felt empathy for the young man and he stayed with one of the sponsors until the end of his matric year. Student D wants to study further without taking a gap year. He would like to study something in communication and perhaps write a book about his story. His options are to be a boarder-master in a primary school or his sponsor may have work for him in Johannesburg.

4.5 Student E

Student E was born in Empangeni, on the North Coast, KwaZulu-Natal. He went to a local school from Grade 1 to 3. He then moved to another primary school in the area from Grade 3 to Grade 7.

During primary school in Grade 7 he attended a tournament in Durban. Recruitment teachers came to watch his rugby game. His friend from the same area, who was already at High School A, had discussed this school with him. In addition, he told him about the rugby scholarships available. Many schools offered rugby scholarships after the tournament; however, his parents and rugby coach chose High School A.

In 2020 Student E will be in Grade 12 with subjects Geography, Business Studies and Art. He is very talented at Art. Academics have been very hard for him, as he came from a dual medium school and has found learning in a different language quite challenging.

Student E started Grade 8 in 2016, as he repeated a year, and played rugby for the U14A, U15A and U16A and first team.

Student E has made Craven Week, Academy rugby team and South African Schools rugby. He has already been made an offer by the Sharks Academy, Bulls and Lions for when he leaves school and has been approached by an agent who would like represent him and find placements for him for after school (he matriculates in 2020). The agent is trying to get him a place in London Club rugby, or a club in Ireland or

France. Student E is very keen to play rugby overseas, especially after his rugby tour to London with the school.

Chapter 5: Data Analysis

5.1 Dynamics of the transition

5.1.1 Introduction

Qualitative research leads to great deal of information being collected. To collect concise and perceptive findings, one first needs to go through the procedure of analysing the interview transcriptions and records. There a several different approaches to analysing data, Gibbs,(2007) describes them as “within the phenomenological approach, analysis continues from “the assumption that there is an essence to an experience This “essence” can be identified by analysing what each participant has said about their experience as a bursary learner, and then comparing individual experiences with one another” (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, 491-504.).

Individual interviews and focus group discussions were digitally recorded, then transferred to a computer and saved onto a hard drive. These recordings were transcribed electronically and saved on the computer in a folder requiring password access. “The interviews were transcribed verbatim and analysed by means of coding” (Creswell, 2009). “Coding involves going through the data and identifying and assigning codes to key concepts” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). “Once the data was coded, it was categorised and analysed to identify themes” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014). Key issues were identified from the codes. Ary, Jacobs and Sorenson (2010, p. 480) described data analysis as the “process whereby researchers systematically search and arrange their data in order to increase their understanding of the data and to enable them to present what they learned to others”. The challenge facing researchers is to “make sense of copious amounts of data and to construct a framework for communicating the essence of what the data reveal” (Ary, et al., 2010, p. 480). For the purpose of this study which seeks to explore the experiences of the boys’ transitions, it began with a content analysis and then moved into finding the key themes resonated in the interviews.

The participants were all from historically black primary schools situated in rural areas and all five students received a rugby scholarship to attend a 'model C' high school in an urban city. The findings are a reconstructed view of the participant experiences during their transition. They were interviewed in Grade 12 and gave accounts of their understandings of their transitions from rural primary schooling to a new secondary school on a rugby scholarship, over a five-year period of high school.

Due to the nature of the research and as I was a teacher at the new school, I formed a relationship with the scholarship boys, in their first two years of high school. In Grade 8 and 9 they were in my maths class and I saw them every day, and over the five years they able to talk to me about their experiences and confide in me, telling their stories.

5.2 Findings

In presenting the findings, codes were used to identify the respondents and keep their names confidential. I used the code names, Student A, B, C, D and E. Qualitative data from the interviews is presented with references to observations and literature, where appropriate.

During the analysis and collecting of information, I began to see a variety of rich data and valuable information given by the boys and once they were transcribed, patterns began to emerge. Throughout this research project, the aim has been to tell the story of how the boys experienced their transition from rural disadvantaged primary schools to a privileged high school on a rugby scholarship. Boys had had different experiences in the school owing to the different levels of support they received, their academic abilities, their peer groups and parental support (financial and emotional). However, although some of the experiences are different, there are several experiences that were noted by all of the participants. We looked at similar key points that had been raised by the boys and grouped them together under logical topics. Many themes arose initially and we examined them and selected the most pertinent key theme, within which I came up with four main headings. We deliberately decided to concentrate on what the boys actually experienced at school, how were they affected and how they coped over the five years of school. The themes followed their life histories journey. Where did they start, in their rural environment, what was their first

experience at the new school, how did the rugby scholarship influence them and how did they adapt?

The themes included:

- Impact of rural environment. During the interviews I became to realise how much the boys' past and their home place had an effect on them, their characters, morals and values and how their responses of their experiences and as well as how they learnt to adapt to the new environment.
- New school, new society within westernised mannerisms. What were the new traditions and culture in the new school?
- Rugby scholarship as a vehicle for a better life. How did they see their transition and how did they cope and adapt in their new environment?

Each of the themes are discussed in detail below.

5.2.1 Impact of rural home environment

All five students have come from rural townships in KwaZulu-Natal and Eastern Cape provinces. Township residential areas in South Africa originated as racially segregated, low-cost housing developments, for black labourers to remain closer to their places of employment within the cities and towns during the apartheid era.

Government schools also known as 'public schools' in rural areas are financed by the state, however they are not all similar of nature or stature. Some are more financially stable and have more resources than others and this is because of the apartheid outcome. In South Africa, socio-economic conditions have resulted in poorer areas with government schools that have insufficient resources for providing good quality education. Learners in these schools are often subjected to crime, poor classroom facilities, little finance and teachers who are incompetent in their subject manner or management of the schools.

Due to these reasons and socio-economics, the poorer areas with government schools on average do not receive acceptable and sufficient support or funds from the state, and therefore their education is of a lower and deficient quality. And nor are they in a position to expect school fees from the community to improve the situation. They

cannot facilitate the learners adequately as there are less teachers provided to the school due to lack of funds, classrooms are in a neglected state and very little maintenance of property is attended to. As management is not able to perform on the required level often the schools are sabotaged and crime exists, and anything that resembles a decent sporting structure is typically absent, these are some of the challenges the learners experience in this country. Parents in these rural areas are mostly employed to do unskilled work or are unemployed and have a lower level of education, and usually do not attach much value to education and therefore cannot afford the extra items schooling requires to be properly prepared for lessons on a daily basis.

It was clear that this rural home environment impacted on the boys in this study and affected how they felt during the transition to their new schooling. One of the students stated in the interview:

Student A *“but then the place where you come from also has an impact on you and it changes you.”*

The first student I interviewed differed from the other students as he grew up in a fragmented family, his mother having passed away when he was five years old and his father having remarried. The death of a parent can deprive children of a source of guidance, advice, love, and a model for their own parenting style (Gertler, Martinez, Levine, & Betozi, 2003). The student had to make most of his own decisions and choices. He was the most mature and articulate regarding his life history of the students I worked with. He began the interview by telling me where he came from and who he felt he was when he arrived in Grade 8.

“I didn’t know anyone from my father’s side and my mother came from Lesotho, and I didn’t know anyone from her side, so didn’t know how to manage at home cos I’m like a [states surname]” [he believed his surname did not have social class or social standing in the community]. So the only person I knew was my stepmother. So I got involved in some bad guys as I didn’t know where to fit in, we did some bad things. The community didn’t like me cos I was a [states surname] and then my stepmother kicked me out. That was not good as if she kicked me out the community is allowed to do anything to me. I had nowhere to go and so became a street kid. So you become

part of it and you join in the things the kids do on the street. It becomes you and get into you, so yeah it wasn't good, but it was a way of living."

This is how he coped as a young boy, struggling to find a place for himself. There are many children in the township without parents or guardians and they group together in order to gain a sense of belonging. These groups give the children an identity and a type of respect that is gained by fights and getting into trouble.

The community was hard on him as he came from mixed race parents. When his grandmother passed away, he felt he did not belong to any particular family, as his stepmother did not include him in her family. In the Zulu culture one's surname is significant and indicates one's belonging to a particular family.

Student A, *"Well my grandmother showed me my grandfather's ID and he was white. He was actually white and he married my grandmother who was black. My mom was a Lesotho and I wanted to belong to her family name. This is a very sensitive topic. Okay, the Zulu culture where I grew up there is a hierarchy system which is different to the western culture. When it comes to the white side, everything is about you, it's about what you make of yourself. But in the Zulu culture where I was growing up it's about where you come from. I look at my family history, and I don't really know much. So if I were to rank myself and if I were to use my title, surname, I'll be at the bottom of the list. Because come on, I don't have anyone who is a king or chief in my home. So that means no royalty and so even if I managed to accomplish a lot of things I still would be at the bottom."*

Growing up in this environment had a huge impact on him throughout his high school career; it motivated and influenced how he coped and adjusted to the new school as well as his future and he had to construct his own masculine identity. He grew up wanting more for himself and navigating more than one space. He saw that there was a way out of the life he had, a better life with prospects. He knew he would have to learn to manage with other people and other races.

Some of his anxiety was linked to having come from an environment where he was not exposed to other types of people, specifically white people. He had seen them but never interacted with them. This led to misunderstanding of their ways and apprehension. Yet he wanted to know and understand them particularly due to his heritage. He wanted to receive recognition, be fairly treated and feel worthy of respect.

In his community, he often was made to feel inferior. He may have been seeking acceptance from white people in particular, as the part of his heritage as yet unknown to him. This may have been experienced as anxiety of wanting to belong and having to 'fit in' with them. Fanon (2008) was concerned with internalisation or what he called *epidermalization*, of this inferiority towards 'white'. A true individuality uniqueness should not be trying to be someone else and behaving with other morals and values expected from society, it should be the persons own genuine identity to be unique and individual. Fanon indicated that black people need to have faith in themselves and mould their identity on being a human and not just a descriptor of black people.

Student A described an experience with a white person: *"Well like I was literally scared of white people. Like I'm saying, I remember once I had some money from home and had to go buy some groceries at the shop. But I dropped the money now, I wasn't sure what to do, as I knew if I went home and told them I had lost the money it would been a big deal, as it was R200. So I went back along the road and this white guy with blue eyes is calling me. I was so scared, am I in trouble? Did I steal something? And then he asked if I had lost something? I said yes some money. Ha... and then he gave me the money, he said he had found it on the road where I had been walking. Then that something changed in me, because to me if it was me I'd take the money off the floor and no one else can see whose money it is and there's no real proof then I would keep it."*

"Liberation begins by recognising these constructions for what they are". According to Fanon, in his book *Black Skins White Masks*, "the first impulse at the arrival of awareness is self-loathing: as I begin to recognize that the Negro is the symbol of sin, I catch myself hating the Negro" (p. 159). Here, Fanon is articulating a common feeling. "If all you represent — your history, your culture, your very self — is nothing but ugly, naïve and wicked, then it is not surprising that you do not see yourself in a kindly manner. But this neurotic situation is not the route to emancipation. There is only one solution: to rise above the absurd drama that others have staged around me, to reject the two terms that are equally unacceptable, and, through one human being, to reach out for the universal" (p. 159). This student reflected on his feelings, *"but then you know I started to think, I just wanted to find out, like, what's the story with these white people? What type of people are they? Don't they like money? Where I came from"*

there are no white people and you never see them or communicate with them, in fact the rural areas very black and racial."

This student wanted to get to know the 'white people' and learn their ways as it was part of his past and he did not know where he fitted in, and desired to belong to a family and community. He grew up with little contact with other races, noting that children and adults do not often leave their areas unless for school or work, which can lead to a very narrow minded existence.

Student B also had a struggle with his identity in the beginning of his first year at high school: *"because we come from different backgrounds and my background is not very good"*. This idea of not having a 'good' background is his opinion and reflects what has been discussed above by Fanon. He was judging himself and his past. When asked in the interview if he had behaved in a way that was disobedient or immoral he said no; thus this was a statement that reflected a belief that his background was bad. He had both parents and came from a family that was caring and nurturing. He did not have a problematic background yet he felt intimidated by the backgrounds of the other boys at school.

The experience of the third student, Student C, was different in that he found the situation tough but did not feel overwhelmed or anxious in the presence of the other boys. He was confident in himself and proud of his background. *"It was quite different; it was quite tough. The first few weeks of term, I thought of leaving, it was like a new environment it was quite difficult"*.

The fourth student, Student D, was far away from home and found the situation in the beginning daunting and he was apprehensive. The environment was so different to what he knew and he felt like he was 'in between' and was not sure how to cope: *"It was scary. Scared because I didn't know many boys, so very scary in the beginning especially Grade 8"*.

The students' views show how their personal backgrounds influenced their experiences and how they saw their transitions.

All five of the students expressed anxiety, apprehension and nervousness when starting their first year in high school (Grade 8). Even though, of the five students, three came from different rural areas in South Africa, they all come from similar

environments and there is a similarity of their experiences in the first year of high school.

Hoggart (1970), "drawing from his own experience, argued that each boy is between two worlds: the worlds of school and home; and they meet at few points" (p.1011). "Encouraged by some and mocked by others, scholarship boys constantly negotiated the conflicting expectations of parents, teachers, peers, and their own ambitions. Hoggart knew personally that they assimilated these contradictions in complex ways. But they never remained fully at home among the cultivated elites whose habits they both imitated and deplored. Class allegiances confounded an evolving personal identity". There is a devotion or loyalty to one's 'class', a group of people that one associates oneself with may be through birth, marriage, and/ or wealth. As these boys find themselves among new class groups, this may cause confusion and influence their identities, as they develop into adults.

Student B said *"it was really tough coming from a township school where they teach Zulu and it was tough for me to understand English. At the beginning sitting in class and you don't know what is happening because you don't understand the English properly and you get to the exam and you don't know what is happening."*

"While good proficiency in English is perceived to be an outcome of education at a former white English medium school, the data shows that not all learners are equally successful in their mastery of the kind of English proficiency necessary to succeed academically in this environment" (Mckinney, 2007).

Following these examples, the work of Kapp (2000) "makes clear how the desires of young people, particularly their preference for English over their home languages, is shaped by an awareness that they live in an internationalised world". The youth, and their parents, want to learn English because they want to be members of a wider community. They recognise and retain a consciousness of themselves as Africans, but Africans with a difference.

In all the students' interviews, the notions of the learners are not always articulated as they have little access to their own means of expression in their language, having a voice and being able to communicate efficiently and have to rely on the new school's language and methods.

“things they do are just different from township schools and everything. Like studying, no-one forces you to study at home or in the township schools, only your parents encourage you, the teachers don’t really care. You can sleep in class they are not going to say anything, not do your homework. But here at the new high school if you sleep in class or don’t do your homework they punish you, like give you detention. Back home you make your decisions. At the new school they are always behind your back checking on your studying and if you do something wrong you get punished”

“you need to be straight. Everything shapes you, how you can you be a man and respect, is very crucial at the new school, like stand up, take off your basher [hat]. In township schools, the respect is not that important, you don’t stand up or greet. It is really different.

A great deal of emotion was voiced, especially in their first year at the high school. For all five students, it was the most strenuous year with many challenges in trying to move from one environment to the next.

They underestimated learning the hierarchal structure of the new school, which is very important to the ethos of the particular school and which keeps the boy students ‘in line’. Fear among all the boys was evident as they were institutionalised into this new school’s traditions and structure. As Wray (2018) stated in his book, *A school where I belong*, traditions at their best are intended to allow us to identify with, to approve of, and to become part of something bigger than us, something that we can leave as a legacy. Through participating in traditions, we understand that were serving an institution and not ourselves, drawing us as human beings out of our self-obsession to an acknowledgment that community is more important. In participating, we contribute towards something that will outlive us. Most human beings want to leave a legacy. Participating in a tradition, upholding tradition that builds community, can be considered as contributing to a kind of legacy.

Student A described how he was treated in his first year:

“They gunned for me very much as I wasn’t fitting into the system. Because I was still very rural, very rural. I didn’t wait at the door, stand up for them, greet them, look into their eyes, I did not do all the traditional hierarchy things that the high formers expected me to, I was just doing my own thing. Then when the

boys start noticing you, all of them, they target you. They noticed that I was very disrespectful to them, so realised I needed to change and not push my luck, or you are not going to fit in. I got tired of doing this and started fighting back. So ever since fifth formers saw me fighting back at the matrices and started standing up for myself. I realised I had to sort out this 'barking', before I can deal with my own situation. The matrices (grade 12s) started respecting me, but I did not know how to deal with all the situations, so some higher formers helped me and had my back because I played A team rugby."

Student A felt the senior boys were pursuing him aggressively and in particular. In his opinion, it was because he was 'rural boy'. A rural boy in South Africa is one who has lived out of town, not in the city. Yet he referred to being 'rural' as a person who lives in extreme poverty. "Most rural areas are remote and relatively underdeveloped. The houses lack the necessary physical resources and basic infrastructure for sanitation (Mulford & Johns, 2004), water, roads, transport, electricity, and information and communication technology are underdeveloped". The deprived socio-economic status of parents in rural areas places the boys at a disadvantage. Parents in rural South Africa mostly do menial work, have a lower level of education, and usually do not attach much value to schooling. His lack of quality of education and sometimes absence of parents influenced his upbringing. He did not know enough about westernised manners to respond correctly and he had not had the guidance from parents to support him through this time. He also made a decision not to submit to the seniors. This was seen as disrespectful and disobedient. He realised this was unhealthy behaviour and he needed to do something about his life at school. The importance of this 'aha' moment is that the student was able to reflect on his past and make a decision about his choices in his life. By doing so he becomes responsible for his own destination. This type of choice is very mature and shows the cognitive developmental process he has obtained over the years of schooling. This becomes a key point in his personal and individual growth. And as the interview progressed it became more apparent of this construction of his own identity in relation to his life.

He recognized the importance of rugby, especially at this high school, and how much the boys look up to rugby players who play for the first rugby teams and the seniors respect the juniors who play rugby.

Coming from vastly different backgrounds, the scholarship students found it exceptionally challenging adjusting in their first year to a high school. They found it particularly challenging as no-one had explained the ethos or traditions of the high school to them. Expectations come with new and unfamiliar territory such as a new high school. As with all journeys, they had some expectations. There were some things they understood and others, which made them feel uncomfortable. They were also concerned with uncertainty, which could make them nervous. They chose this school, even though they had been offered a scholarship by other high schools because they were encouraged by their parents or rugby coach. They had not seen the school or spent any time there getting to know it – most high schools have an orientation day or weekend that allows new boys to become familiar with where they are going for high school, but none of them had participated in this. They all confirmed were that their parents believed this was the best place for their future education and would give them opportunities for a future career, as is evident in the quotes below.

Student B: *“Because my teacher wanted me to come here and my Development Rugby Coach told me it was going to be a good thing to come to High school A. So, I decided to come to high school then in Grade 8, but I never had a chance to first come to school and have a look. The first time I saw the school was when I arrived in Grade 8.”*

Student C: *“I came to High School A, because I had this guy one of my teachers who had played Blue Bulls [a rugby franchise in South Africa] and he was my coach in Grade 6 long time ago and he convinced me that it was the best school.”*

Student D: *“High School A offered a scholarship to my parents but they made the decision to send me to the school, not me. I am happy they chose this school, as I didn’t know any better, I didn’t know how schools operate at that time, but now looking back I think I would have made a different choice.”*

Student E: *“I did not even see the school. I just spoke to my friend, as he was in the same primary school as me and he told me about the school. Recruitment officer just spoke to my parents and they liked the idea of the school.”*

The students arrived in 2015 at their new high school and began their Grade 8 year. Three of the students were in put into the boarding establishment (BE) as part of their

scholarship and the other two boys were day scholars and travelled to school from their homes in the township every day.

Travelling between the two areas every day was a challenge for Student A and B as they had to go back to their 'old lifestyle' each day and see how different it was from the one they experienced at school. They had to move between these spaces and adjust to them daily.

5.2.2 *New school, new society, westernised mannerisms*

"While most schools have embraced the racial transformation of their learner population, many still bear vestiges of 'Little England on the Veld' (Randall, 1982) in their school cultures, religious traditions, uniforms and language of instruction". "The scholarship recipient must assume the position of the grateful beneficiary of the school's hospitable gesture, accept and internalise the hegemonic norms of the host school and make necessary adjustments to 'fit in'"(Geyer, 2015). I asked the students about specifics of their new school and how they experienced the 'new society' and westernised way of life. It was interesting to hear their views, as they often did not reflect what I had read in articles during my research. Overall, their views were positive and encouraging.

Student A : *"There's a world where you can do this and be something for yourself, like a teacher, doctor. So you see that's something I've learnt over the years and that is where education can help you to improve yourself. So of course, it has changed me, because you will never understand the world without education. Like my mom can do this for me or buy this for me, but I can never really understand. There are certain people who are still behind, education helps you catch up. And they may come from what.... a mentality of still being frightened by someone who is lighter than I am, because they don't understand the different culture and with education it teaches you to understand different people."*

Education shifts one from dependence and being looked after by a mother to understanding what the possibilities of life are, and to be braver, not scared of difference, able to adapt and to work with different cultures and people. By becoming educated, one can choose to do something that interests one and make opportunities as long as one keeps learning. One can have a profession and a career rather than

simply a job. Having marketable skills learned in a good education system gives one abilities that many without will not have. One learns about diversity and how to adapt to different situations, if one experiences these circumstances at school and this can give teach the skills needed to cope.

All the students experienced a feeling of ambivalence, at times positive and at other times negative, towards their new school. The learners and their families viewed the sport scholarships both positively and negatively; they were seen as an opportunity for a better education and a way out of poverty; however, there is the struggle to preserve their ethnicity, culture and identity in the new school. MacLeod (1987) “illustrated how the educational aspirations of disadvantaged youth are levelled by their everyday experiences in school, on the streets, and at home”. His case study revealed “that minority youth maintained higher aspirations and remained more optimistic about their future than the white youth”. The students all wanted to come to the privileged high school even if it was different to what they were used to; this desire was expressed by all of them to improve their lives.

As Student A said: *“You need to learn to communicate with people, just for example respect, how we respect people or show how we respect is different in cultures and me coming to this school I have learn this type of respect and understand it. If you want to ‘go’ places and make a business and earn money, but how are going to do this if you cannot communicate with ‘bigger’ people?”*

This experience was then linked directly to what he described as his personal growth, to becoming more open-minded: *“One thing I’ve realised over the years, you have to have diversity, yes it comes with a price of course but then it helpsSo it’s like that with diversity, you need to know other people who can do things better than you, because you will be good with one thing and they will be good with others and that will make you a success in business. But diversity comes with a price. It could be a good price, could be a bad price depends on what you guys are trying to do at that time.”*

Student A was thus exploring the advantages and disadvantages of diversity. He was able to recognise, looking back over his past years at school, that different people do different things, and they can do it better than you, but this is a good thing because

together, all the different skills lead to success. This is the same as playing rugby, where different positions have different skills but the team needs to work together. Soudien's (2008) assessment of young South Africans noted, that when they are in a situation that is poverty-stricken it propels or forces the young adults to advance to adulthood and develop an identity earlier than most students their age. However, this could develop into quite problematic lifestyle later in their lives.

The world, both globally and nationally is quite different to the young boys and girls in South Africa at this time. They are facing a variety of challenges which are different to the particular issues and concerns under the apartheid government. Both black and white, adolescents and young adults, are having to compete for a 'normal life'. What is a normal life for the youth of today is influenced by their race and gender. (Phillipa Garson, *The Teacher*, June 2001). And this is articulated by the student in the above paragraph.

"I wasn't ready in to let that one go, I could have spoken about my age in Grade 8 or Grade 9 and try push new things and new cultures. But when I got here I realised these are wonderful people, because I knew exactly from you, (the interviewer) and had to make a decision. Okay, they take away your scholarship and you go away from this school and you go back to what?? It would just be me; I don't know, for me it would be life torture. As I have experienced something new and then if I go back I can't have it. And there was no other way for me. I didn't even know if I would make it living my old life as you live it, you become it. You come here and you do exactly how they do things. When I came here they did special things for me, it is much easier if you have support and guidance, yes I did have some support. So it was like this, it's not just all about myself, I need a new picture so I can make it and they can help you with this. Boy you are here and the rest is up to you, I'll just try and make something for myself."

The paragraph above shows the importance of support and how it gives one a new picture, a new way of making sense of things, an overall perspective but ultimately one has to run with it, take responsibility. Drawing on the research of the social psychologist Erikson, Soudien (2008), contended that to develop an identity for young people they require a social network, and he noticed that the majority of young South Africans were not amongst a community that could provide family and social group networks.

Student A actively created networks both in the class and the broader community to provide him with feedback as he continued to develop his identity and through the support he received, he was able to take on his own responsibility and have confidence to run with this in his own direction.

All the rugby scholarship boys that were interviewed came from poor backgrounds where the parents or guardians did not have the financial means to send their children to this type of privileged high school. Their first years of schooling were in township schools. The parents of three of the boys wanted their sons to have a better education. Two of these parents were teachers in the rural areas of South Africa and as Geyer (2015) mentioned in her article, the South African education system is beset with problems, with many primary schools “poor, dysfunctional, and unable to equip learners with the necessary numeracy and literacy skills” (p. 338). Scholarship programmes offer a select few the opportunity to escape the poor educational outcomes associated with underperforming schools. The other two students desired a better life and realised a rugby scholarship was a means to improve their lifestyle and education. Although the intention of the Department of Education in South Africa was to transform and promote participation, due to the history of apartheid education for the majority of black learners remains severely dysfunctional (Soudien, 2007)

Student B: *“I say cos ... I couldn't afford to come to this high school, I didn't have what the kids at High School A have, it doesn't make it bad but behind.”*

While not being judgmental, the student did recognise how High School A was ahead in relation to the quality of education found in the rural schools. This school holds students accountable for their actions and it makes them ‘straight’ respectable and upright.

Student B *“So they gave me an opportunity to come to this school and a lifestyle that kids from my home don't have.”*

“Things they do are just different from township schools and everything. Like studying, no one forces you to study at home or in township schools, only your parents encourage you, the teachers don't really care. You can sleep in the class they not going to say anything, not do homework. At High School A, if you sleep in class or don't do your homework they punish you, like give you detention. You make your own decisions. At the high school they are always behind your back checking on your

studying and if you do something wrong you get punished. So it sort of gives you a guideline. You need to be straight. Everything shapes you how you can be a man and respect is very crucial at the high school, like stand up, take off your basher [hat]. In township schools the respect is not that important, you don't stand up or greet"
"Grade 8 was the most difficult year even though I played for the first team. Grade 8 was difficult; you don't understand anything."

Student C: "It was quite different; it was quite tough. The first few weeks of term, I thought of leaving, me and my close friend. It was tough we thought maybe we go somewhere else like another acclaimed high school which also offers good rugby scholarships because of the traditions. It was like a new environment it was quite difficult, my other friends would leave and go home and we were just stuck in this trouble in the Boarding Establishment, while they go home. As they were not in the Boarding Establishment in the beginning. I thought maybe if I go elsewhere it would be better."

"The traditions are hard and made me homesick as you can't always phone your mother or speak to her. There was a 'ticky' box, but there was a long line, sometimes you wake up early to phone, but then they don't answer or they are not there, waste of R2. I did miss home a lot; it was the first time being away from home. I missed my father, especially my father, as I was very close to him. I was the only sibling away. It was quite hard, not nice."

"Something was always new and Grade 8 was quite scary. It is easier when you get to play rugby and for the U14A team. It was hard for me to study when I first got here as I had come from an Afrikaans primary school in Vryheid. You get to the point where you just listen as you don't understand and so you can't ask questions and it's difficult to study."

Student D: "First I must say it's nice and but sometimes I felt different about it. I feel like I am caught between two worlds, between my home in the Eastern Cape and school. When I go home I don't mention my school and they don't know where I go to. Obviously I feel the difference, but the smaller things make a difference, like talking English and Xhosa, if I want to make them uncomfortable then I talk English as they don't understand English, only Xhosa or wear nice clothes, not just on Sundays for

church but on a normal day, that would make them feel uncomfortable, but I don't do that. I don't feel like I'm an outsider, I feel very welcome there, very warm at home"

Student E: "It was scary. Scared because I didn't know many boys, so very scary in the beginning especially Grade 8. But then I saw that I knew most of the boys, the other scholarships boys, it was so bad. Ja, it had its up and downs. I enjoy the shouting and the traditions. The downs were getting to know the different traditions; it was very hard."

"It is a better feeling coming and getting surprised at what they do, without having any expectations is better. Because if you already know what's going on you will have your doubts about coming but actual its cool. Cos someone like me, who didn't know anything about the school or knew what a Grade 8 does, I wouldn't have come. If I just told you what happens it still doesn't really make any sense until you experience it yourself, it wasn't going to make any sense. So today they tell you one thing and tomorrow another thing. They didn't really tell me much just a need to get good grade and keep on improving in rugby. But if I was not doing well they would offer support and help."

"Sometimes I would be feeling down and it was really hard with the language especially coming from an English and Afrikaans rural school in Empangeni and speaking Zulu at home."

"I just felt that Grade 8 was the worst year as I was very physically tired and had to cope with academics."

To interpret the above, for all the students their first year at the new school, Grade 8, was the most difficult year; they all experienced apprehension and nervousness. Rudwick's (2004) research in "the KwaZulu-Natal township of Umlazi showed how adolescents simultaneously acknowledge the instrumental role of English, and have come to perceive the English language as the ticket to success". Learning the many traditions of the new school, such as where they are allowed and not allowed to walk as juniors, was tough. This hierarchy for the boys was a new way of life and they were expected to maintain it at all times. The boys had not seen the new school before entering their first year and were unsure of what to expect. Fear of the unknown or unexpected can create this 'scary' feeling in the first year and one of being overwhelmed by the new environment.

5.2.3 Rugby scholarship as a vehicle for a better life

The rugby scholarships allow access for students who would not have otherwise have access to the privileged high schools. This 'vehicle', or channel to a better life, is what drives the students, especially the student in despair who is desperate to leave his former (sometimes even dangerous) lifestyle. When they were offered the scholarships, this became the turning point in their lives, an 'epiphany'.

Student A: " So I knew this boy who is my friend from the area in our township and he told me to come to the primary school in the township where we lived and he told me about the rugby and I was so glad to find it and to have a good friend, like he wasn't doing bad stuff. But I had never played rugby before."

In township schools in South Africa there is little sport or no sport at all. According to Bhana (2008), "many township schools do not have playing fields, and access to coaching facilities is limited. Black and white boys alike enjoy sport and both are initiated from an early age, particularly as spectators. For white boys, however, sport was compulsory at school" (Morrell, 2001). Sport has transformed social and political views and is encouraged by media, advertising and corporate business. It is motivated by a bigger vision and transformation, as well as the requirement to develop sporting excellence, more talented black players are now seen in rugby and cricket.

In addition, middle-class privilege allows white boys access to other kinds of 'boys' sport' including, but not limited to, judo, karate and swimming. At the township schools there was no organised sport, neither was there a sports coach or teacher assigned to teach physical education. Boys play soccer on a makeshift pitch during breaks, and once a year an athletics meeting is held in the school grounds. South African schools thus bear the legacy of apartheid policies with sports such as rugby, cricket and swimming maintaining a high white/middle-class profile (Nauright & Chandler, 1995).

Student A: I never knew if I was good at sports, as in the rural areas you go to school and there is no sport just school. So I went to the school and had many black people looking at me, that kid, that kid. This can lead to struggle, as the community never accepted my father's death and me leaving home to join a group of boys and the community knew I was very rural. So I had to adapt first and then I joined the development rugby team."

But the face of sport in South Africa is changing, especially following the South Africa Paper on Sport and Recreation Act, which associates sport, including junior sport, with unity and social equality (Department of Sport and Recreation, 1997). Policies in South Africa, including sports policies, are now based on equity and redress. Sport has developed social and political value and is fuelled by advertising, media enterprises and corporate business. Driven by broader social goals and transformation and the need to develop sporting excellence, greater numbers of black players are now seen in rugby and cricket. Sport development clubs or unions, which are financially sponsored development clubs by businesses or foundations, coach and assist sport teams in the township areas to promote sport and develop young children.

Student A: "I didn't know the opportunities until I became part of it. So it was just some sort of union and no-one knew me, so it was easy for me to come in and say I could play rugby. So from then on I was the last person to tell them about our family the incident, because even the people I was living with, they don't really know me, so from being rejected by some members of the family, but that's like home stuff, I knew I had to make it work for me. I decided I had to look the part as you realise what is on you plate and what could come of you if you decide to continue that way of life. So I went with my friend, he encouraged me because I had no friends at that time and I was just a kid and I was a kid trying to figure out where I'm going to fit in, in this place so I attended the rugby club in the afternoon. I was then offered a rugby scholarship to go to old 'model C' School in Pietermaritzburg. And everything changes, well my life changes, too, especially when I was offered a rugby scholarship to go to high school."

Student B: "I was playing for a primary school in Grade 6 (one of the township schools) against local 'model C' School when they saw me play rugby. And they approached me and offered me a scholarship to this primary school for Grade 7. Then one Friday night we were playing in a rugby tournament, and after that I was offered a lot of options of scholarships from many private and public schools in KwaZulu-Natal, but my coach chose high School A. One high school even came to my dad with lots of food and groceries to make sure I came to them, but my parents chose High School A."

In South Africa many tournaments are held to promote sporting talent and for 'talent scouts' or recruitment teachers be able to identify talented sports youth and offer sport scholarships. These tournaments are very popular with the children as they are aware of the talent scouts. Disadvantaged learners know these are opportunities to be

noticed and offered scholarships for high school which will improve their quality of education and future prospects.

Student C: "I wasn't there on a scholarship at my previous school in Vryheid but then a primary school offered a scholarship to me so I said I was going to leave and then they offered me one so I stayed, I loved the school. I was playing rugby we came up for a tournament and they came to watch me play and offered me a scholarship that was for final year in primary school, for Grade 7 with a scholarship to High School A to follow. But when I said I am going to stay in Vryheid they said they will still keep the high school offer for rugby and I can go straight there after primary school. It was very quick like I mean I was playing the one day and the next day they offered the money and the scholarship to come to high school. I was also offered at other prestigious private and public schools, which my parents were very interested in."

As Fataar (2007) noted in his article, the cultural or aspirational social responsibility shown by young people in need of educationally based mobility is one of the interesting and amazing examples of young learners refusing to be bound by geographical location. The students often show remarkable agency in finding new assistance and support to be able to find their way across the city.

Fataar (2010, 2007) argued that "trans local transactions (movement across the city space to attend school) are fundamental to their cultural navigations. Access to former white, Indian and coloured schools is a prized possession for non-white families and youths who have invested in class aspiration".

Attending remote schools far away from their homes plays a formative role in their subjective becoming processes. The example of translocating urban youth illustrates the complex and spatially generated individualising processes out of which they navigate and establish brave new educational routes. The individualising ethos of the post-racial order on display here is both spectacle and spectral (Fataar, 2007). Children are alienated from their space of living, be it geographical or personal, and inserted into their spaces of becoming. The school careers of young people have to be understood in the light of their navigations across the living spaces and the schools that they attend.

Educational aspirations have to be transacted in the midst of a struggle for survival. Dillabough et al. (2008, p. 331) argued that “young people who are tied to particular geographical spaces might be seen as engaging in ‘classification struggles’ over the social meaning of being young”. “These classification struggles involve daily battles for survival and attempts to break free from the limitations of spatial containment. Their struggles involve complex personal battles to open up a path into their school careers in which self-management, discipline and single-minded determination are decisive” (see Fataar 2010; 2007).

As mentioned in the above articles and listening to what the boys said in the interviews, one can see how they were all pursuing the opportunities afforded by a rugby scholarship to a better life and education.

Student A: *“And I realised in this group of people, the scholarship boys, I had an opportunity. I was chosen, okay, yes, you know there are other individuals who can play better than me, but they gave me a chance and an opportunity.”*

All the scholarship boys were given a scholarship in their Grade 7 year with a promise of one into a high school. The scholarship opens many doors.

Student B: *Well my family were really happy and they supported me wherever they can. We were really grateful that I got a scholarship. I am getting a good education, so my Dad is really happy, cos he doesn’t have to pay anything. I have five siblings, three sisters and two brothers and I am the youngest. I do not go home often because of my safety. My father is very concerned because of my safety so I stay at school in the boarding establishment.* (With reference to Boarding establishment and a day scholar is a topic to be look into and could be researched in light of the interpretations of the students’ conversations).

It is a really big thing to be offered a scholarship because here you get everything food, accommodation, safety and a good education. It is a really good opportunity. It is really a big thing coming here you get everything like, tuck and food, to get into High School A, it is a very good, really a good opportunity. If you are young boy in townships, that’s the main focus that you want to get onto these main schools. There is no pressure from your parents, but it comes within yourself, you want to be a better person. Because I remember I was going to quit rugby before I got a scholarship in Grade 7, and then how I am going to get a scholarship to go to high school, and then my mother

said I needed a scholarship to get a better education. The parents don't push you but then you do not know a lot about things, you just want to play rugby. But you see guys get rugby scholarships and how they change and you want the same thing. They change you for the better and you get a good education. It is worth it, as you have the knowledge now of the outside world. The only pressure you get from your parents is if you mess around at the high school and you might lose your scholarship. It means so much to them as they will come hard at you, it means a lot, and its good opportunity for them and the family to get into a better place. My siblings are very proud of me, that I grew up in this environment."

Student D: "My dad didn't want me to go to the rural school, my dad wanted me to get a scholarship and go to a better school."

Student E: "I went to school in Empangeni, it was an English and Afrikaans school. I wasn't there the whole of primary school, I went there in Grade 3. I was at a rural school, before that. Parents wanted me to go to better school so they put me there, I had a scholarship for my Grade 7 year in Empangeni as they choose you in your Grade 6 year and place you for Grade 7 with an offer for your high school scholarship. I used to play soccer and then decided to change to rugby as I was better at rugby. I started playing rugby in Grade 4. I realised I had more opportunities in playing rugby.

During primary school in Grade 7 in Empangeni we had a tournament. So what happened was we had a game and teachers from the high school came to watch my game, but before they came to speak to me, my friend, who was already at High School A also told me about the school. They came and spoke to me and told me that the school was interested to offer me a scholarship. I didn't really know anything about the scholarships and stuff, I just told my parents and they really wanted me to get a scholarship and I asked my coach back at school what is this all about? He explained it to me and that's when I started thinking about it and I didn't have any other plans for high school, my parents were very keen for me to get one but a lot of other schools had approach me during the year, not just at the tournament. So, after the tournament in town I came out here. Everything was really great, I was in Grade 7 and a lot of schools had approached me. My parents were so happy and glad that I got a scholarship it means a lot to them as I am the only one in the family to get a rugby scholarship."

Fanon (2008), proposed that action does not follow automatically from understanding or theorising. Action requires aspiration and desire. That is what he sought to communicate and tried to promote (Fanon, 2008). This statement from Fanon was evident in the students' interviews in the previous paragraph regarding their desires to improve their lifestyle through the rugby scholarship at the new high school. There is a form of desperation in their voices to get a better education believing it will lead to a better future.

Student A was desperate to improve his life; he had a sense of maturity and recognised how essential it was to him to leave the 'township boy' behind and make a new life for himself. So he grasped the opportunity of joining the rugby team and made sure he was chosen for a scholarship. He did admit that people where he comes from disagreed with him wanting to be better person. Stereotypical views of what it means 'to be a man' may have played a role too.

5.2.4 Adapting to their new environment

"On any given school day, adolescents move from one social context to another" (Phelan, 1991). "Families, peer groups, classrooms, and schools are primary arenas in which young people negotiate and construct their realities. For the most part, students' movements and adaptations from one setting to another are taken for granted".

So how did the students adapt to their new environment and cope within this very different context? The words of the students indicate that they all struggled with academics because of difficulties with language. To adapt, they all attempted to learn the school language, English. The same applies to having a social network. This is very important and played a major role in all they did and in their choices. Having a network is perceived as a strong support for one's integration process, especially when students succeed in establishing closer contacts with their 'local society', or the other boys at the school.

The challenge of learning English was highlighted. The boys knew from the start that they had to be able to converse in English. To be understood by their peers or the seniors and teachers, they needed to comprehend the language. "Speaking a particular brand of fluent English, often identified by learners as 'white English', apart

from being valued as an economic resource, is already a signal of being well-educated" (Kamwangamalu, 2003). Besides learning the language, they had to learn to 'read' non-verbal insinuations within the English language. Misunderstandings often led to confusion and challenges within the classroom and social environments.

The students felt increasingly connected with the school as they adapted and this 'sense of belonging' was associated with growing proficiency with the language and feeling increasingly part of social networks. In the quote that follows, the student explained how he adapted at the beginning of Grade 8, using rugby as a tool to bond with the other boys at school.

Student A" *Because it's like this [when he started in Grade 8], you get different kinds of people. And you are comparing yourself to them. I am better at playing rugby but they say, "so you can play sport but you're still dumb". Okay so since when are you dumb? If you don't or if you're not able to speak their language, so now you're dumb and your marks are bad, because you don't understand their way and you feel down by the fact that your marks are bad.*

It took me some time, time to actually understand this new language. So what does it actually mean? They came from schools that they were taught properly. Then they will 'tune' me about that I act dumb, but this scholarship thing changes you."

The boys formed their own group, one could refer to it as a 'scholarship team', made of the few of them on a rugby scholarship. The 'scholarship team boys' derived strength from this identification, reinforcing the recognition that they were special and skilled.

Student A: *"These things that I didn't have, when you go to high school with your help, Mam, you helped me. I realised I didn't want to jeopardise the 'team', the scholarship team boys. You always said tell us if we need something we can come to you, but then if for example, if you go and steal something then you will lose the scholarship and you don't want to lose it, so it made us, hold us accountable and kept you disciplined, knowing you have the support.*

They're not knowing where you are coming from so you know that's okay, I have to respect certain individuals and never mind the rest. You feel like you don't really know what's going on and who is actually helping. But that's a good thing, but then someone would say but you need to make sure that at the end you are happy. And it was you,

you made us happy. And I realised in this group of people, the scholarship boys, I had an opportunity. I was chosen, okay, yes, you know there are other individuals who can play better than me, but they gave me a chance and an opportunity. After that everything started to change, in fact coming to this school, a multi-racial school, that help me a lot, because of where I came from.”

The multi-racial school helped; the student realised that he had not previously been exposed to other racial groups and by socialising with other groups, he learnt how to associate with them. He was actively reconstructing his own world. As noted by Soudien (2007), “there is a sense among many young people that they have to learn *how* to be in the new environment in which they find themselves”. These experimental trends, which, of course, also take interesting forms in all communities, are striking and reveal the complexity in both positive and negative terms of our South African hybridities. What this hybridity or syncretism reveals is the increasing presence amongst youth of a strong sense of individualism and a weakened sense of their attachment to the values of the groups with which they have been traditionally associated.

When the boys began to focus on why they had been given the scholarship (i.e. to play rugby), this gave them the self-confidence to adapt to their new environment. “It seems they derived confidence by positioning themselves individually as the deserving winners of a legitimate contest”. This belief served as an asset (Fergus & Zimmerman, 2005), or as a protective factor that promoted resilience (Hall-Lande et al., 2007) and enabled them to navigate the challenges such as the academic demands of the new school. Adapting through sport is an important and significant part of how the students adapted. “Individuals who play sports have higher self-esteem scores than those who do not and they differ significantly” (Karakoc, 2010).

Student A: *“I started to concentrate on rugby, because that’s the only thing that got me here and so stick to it. Well I didn’t really know your high school. If you were to ask me what school, I wanted to go to? I would say a school that’s gonna be close by, like High School A. Because the closer, close to home and you don’t really want to go too far, you want to go away from home, you want to run away from that, but you also don’t want to go too far that you get lost. And of course it has to be with people you can hang out with, the majority of black kids are comfortable here.”*

This student indicates a sense of vulnerability that would be the result of moving far away from home. Student A is mature but is still an adolescent trying to figure out how to fit in and develop his own identity; he does not want to go too far away even though he had no 'normal' home life. He had a sense of security in knowing he was geographically close to his past background. He mentioned he would get 'lost' if he went too far; in this case he was not referring to a geographical sense of being lost, rather about navigating spaces where he feels more self-assured. All the boys interviewed emphasised how important friendships were and these played a decisive role in their choice of school, where they were given the choice. This is also how scholarships are promoted in the rural areas, by word of mouth via friends. Most people feel more comfortable going to schools where they know people. This is because adolescence is a challenging and a time where many developmental changes are taking place, part of this effect is wanting to be an independent adult and to develop a clearer sense of being as an individual. (Erikson, 1968).

Students choose to associate with friends who are similar to them; they are also influenced by their friends' attitudes and behaviours (Wentzel, Donlan, & Morrison, 2012). The two students who did not receive a boarding scholarship found it difficult travelling between school and home each day and this added to the complexity of their adapting.

Student B: *"I was given a rugby scholarship, which didn't include boarding, it was hard coming to school every day. I had to get money for myself to come to school, leave very early in the morning, walk, catch a taxi, and then after school you only leave at 5pm, and by the time you get home its already 7 or 8pm. I realised I was going nowhere, I needed to be in the Boarding Establishment (BE)."*

Being in the boarding establishment is seen as an important part of the scholarship; some of the boys' scholarships did not include boarding as part of the package. As mentioned by two of the students, this was significant in learning how to adapt or 'fit in' with the new high school and the other students. It takes longer to adapt as a day student. This is compounded by the physical difficulties involved in travelling between two different environments daily. In addition to the amount of time required for travelling, day scholars feel more separated socially from other students who are full time boarders. This adds to the difficulty of learning to adapt to a new school culture.

It can also be difficult when students are seen as different from those at home, and are not supported in their educational endeavours. As noted by Student A, *“So some of the adults back where I come from where asking me what’s the point of finishing school and be what stupid? I wanted to finish school not just sit like the rest of them, which sit down for the whole day.”*

This point is mentioned in an article by Kao (1998), ‘Educational aspirations of minority youth’. According to Sue & Okazaki (1990), “As structural and social barriers to educational and occupational success, blocked opportunities lead to two theoretically distinct reactions. On the one hand, an ethnic group can overcompensate for the liabilities of minority group status by overachieving scholastically” (p.356). “On the other hand, blocked opportunities can lead to educational underperformance if a racial or ethnic group becomes sceptical about the value of educational success as a means to upward mobility” (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; Ogbu, 1991). Student A clearly did not want to become like some of the adults he has seen doing ‘nothing’ but sitting around all day; this motivated him to want to be educated.

“So I decided let me just at least go to school where I can learn the language of English. So that’s exactly what I tried to do. Then things started to happen for me which were good, you helped me get into the Boarding Establishment and now I had no worries for money for transport, food and a proper place to stay, as I was not allowed to stay at home and was just staying with these other boys in their shack. There were downfalls at school, some people are against what you are trying to do and react to it. Well it comes at some point you, you grow yourself and you realise these people are only doing this because they are intimidated by you Because no-one is going to get you, even my marks were not good even though I was trying. The first thing was the communication, it wasn’t there because we didn’t understand the language properly.”

We see through the stories the students tell how important their friends are to them as well as mentor teachers: *“But because of the teachers it was changing me. I don’t know what I did to come to this place but I know it was a positive thing. But thanks to you, you helped me.”* The students often needed some advice or support from me and other teachers when they were away from their home towns and families. With all its varied forms, the human individual’s activity is a system in the system of social relations. It does not exist without these relations. Therefore, when the boys

experienced pressure, their friends helped them through learning how to adapt in a new school, as illustrated in the quote below.

Student A: *"I think there is pressure for every boy, but then sometimes you have that 'one' that can help you and that was you. I was kind of pressurised and had expectations, the expectations you have to reach at High School A and I wasn't meeting the standards (academics), my pressure was academics. In the school at some point they were like, hey, you don't belong at this school why don't you go. Firstly, I didn't understand when I was in class, the different language for all subjects was difficult, so I would spend time in class trying to understand, the language and the work, then trying to do the academics, it was important to all of us.*

You also always want to come to a school like this, you want to be that good rugby player and to be acknowledged you know, how you play. And when you don't feel like you appreciated sometimes you feel you should go where they appreciated you. You know it is always nice to have someone that you came here with and it was for me my good friend. He was my 'coach' and friend and so if we stick here we all stick together and we stuck together like brothers. I did not quite know what was expected of me, we knew we had to play rugby and we wanted to play rugby as that was where we good at, but academics were hard and if it hadn't been for you and some teachers, I don't if we would have passed. I was trying so hard because for me I asked my friend and he helped me push through, I was just a baby when it came to rugby he knew what to do and which positions to play. So I made a decision to stick to the rugby and commit myself to it, and try to better yourself, that was what I wanted. It was not only about playing rugby and improving in academics. But to be safe, because to be safe, be with people who could speak a different language compare to me and you learn a lot about other people and so I was pretty much just doing that."

The development of intimate friendships during adolescence is initiated by the adolescent's physical, cognitive and social developments. For example, the student's feels the need "to belong" and he sees that playing rugby allows him to belong and to fit it within this new structure. I felt when we started speaking about this stage in interview, the boys saw a way they could adapt and there was shift in their attitudes as they realised how to cope with the new environment.

Student A chose to focus on the racially diverse class context, and how much he liked having his 'comfort zone' challenged in this way. This experience was linked to what he described as his personal growth, to becoming more open-minded. The diversity he talked about below refers to a combination of peers in the grade, teachers, seniors in a hierarchy where all need to blend together. One needs to work within that structure. But he wasn't sure if he was ultimately gaining or losing: *"But diversity comes with a price. It good be a good price, could be a bad price depends"*. He thought about this and comprehended the intricacy of connections that help one construct one's identity and for him it was his masculine identity.

Student A experienced a turning point in his life and he provided an argument for 'unhealthy behaviour'. In looking ahead, he knew that he was experiencing changes within himself and these had to be made for him to succeed and progress at school. *"But when I got here I realised these are wonderful people, because I knew exactly from you and had to make a decision. Okay, they take away your scholarship and you go away from this school and you go back to what? It would just be me; I don't know, for me it would be life torture. As I have experienced something new and then if I go back I can't have it. And there was no other way for me. I didn't even know if I would make it living my old life ... as you live it you become it. You come here and you do exactly how they do things. When I came here they did special things for me, it is much easier if you have support and guidance, yes I did have some support. So it was like this, it's not just all about myself, I need a new picture so I can make it and they can help you with this. Boy you are here and the rest is up to you, I'll just try and make something for myself."*

"First when I got here it was soooo nice, cos I liked the school and they sort of understood me so they were trying to help me. I wasn't getting support from home. They gave me a lot, like tuck, (sweets, chips, toothpaste, soap, toothbrush, biscuits, nice stuff). But then at some point someone very smart decided that not only me should get tuck but the other boys on scholarships who come from poor backgrounds as well. Obviously this scholarship thing has been there before me, so all I had to do was try and make sure I don't mess it up for someone else to come after me. So that's a responsibility I knew. No-one told me that. Because when you first get the scholarship you are really happy about it, but it's a responsibility." This is an interesting point which also shows developing maturity.

“Giving me scholarship in Grade 8, yes I get it but it’s a human nature wanting more. I don’t know, it’s not that you forget, what it really meant the first time, but they (the teachers) are reminding you that they care, because there are people who wake every morning and go away to their jobs so that at the end of the day they have to contribute to you for an education. Some people can say that not everyone is a good scholar, everyone need support. As in my case it wasn’t the people I knew but my friends and the teachers and coaches. The coaches they can sometimes use it to their advantage to try and make the boys ‘work’ extra hard at rugby.”

Senior peers are very important to the students, especially because of the very hierarchal system at the new high school. The seniors gave them advice on how to deal and cope with the new situation as can be seen in the following extract within an informal and formal environment.

Student A: *“Yes, the seniors, they do help you a lot, there was my older friend in a higher grade, he gave me advice on sport and discipline at the high school, as it is all about hierarchy. But you see he helped when the other boys tuned me (like you guys are what? But by tuning us he was motivating us) and motivated me. He also listens to me, just to see where you are yourself. Cos most of the black boys come from different backgrounds. And sometimes when you see things lying around that are not being used and theirs an opportunity for you to take it, so when you take it, you not really taking it from someone, but you taking from all of us. Yes, the power of knowing that and the older boys told us thing like that. You cannot do thing like that here, just like at home you cannot do those things as you will get punished at home, same at school.*

When I came here, I was fifteen years old. There was someone from my area, so you go to the school where you know somebody. There were higher formers and I never really wanted to listen to them because of my age, I wanted to challenge them. So, I pushed it and they came back at me and they said to me you push it once, even if it’s not to me but I have seen you doing it to someone else and you are not going to do it again.

So if someone else tunes you and some of them also shouted at me and I didn’t know what to do? They gunned for me very much as I wasn’t fitting into the system. Because I was still very rural, very rural. I didn’t wait at the door, stand up for them, greet them,

look into their eyes, I did not do all the traditional hierarchy things that the high formers expected me to, I was just doing my own thing. Then when the boys start noticing you, all of them, they target you. They noticed that I was very disrespectful to them, so realised I needed to change and not push my luck, or you are not going to fit in. The matrices started respecting me, but I did not know how to deal with all the situations, so some higher formers helped me and had my back because I played A team rugby.”

The experiences described above mobilised the student towards personal growth and academic success. He was able to realise what was required in the situation to fit in; his experiences seemed to have equipped him with the necessary skills to adapt into a society different from his own.

Student A: *“You hear people who are racist especially to me because I was very rural they could say something to me face to face and I thought it was very racist but then I realised they were tuning me, as they did it to all the other boys no matter what colour they were and because they were in second form. It wasn’t racist, it is just the way the boys treat each other. I learnt to understand it and grow from it.”*

Learning how to adapt to a new culture is challenging. “The process of coping with second culture contact has generally been called acculturation” (Berry, Poortinga, Segall, & Dasen, 1992; Coleman, 1995; LaFromboise et al., 1993). The boys had to accomplish two processes of adapting to a new culture: a westernised culture and a school culture (as the latter in their particular school was very dominant, one could say an institutionalised culture). In schools with many years of traditions, generally all the students are made to buy into the ‘school culture’. There are arguments both for and against this ‘culture’, which is based on traditions created by former old boys and the school students themselves. It sometimes creates fear and anxiety but also can result in the boys feeling they belong to a particular society regardless of their differences or races. This is enforced, and encouraged by the seniors. The students are encouraged from Grade 8 to stay together in groups. For example, if one boy is not wearing a jersey then all take jerseys off, so they become a group of boys who belong together. If one is shouted at by a senior, stay in a group as it is easier to overcome the situation when one is with friends.

The perception of the boundaries of different cultures or worlds does not prevent the students from managing crossings or adapting to different settings. However, this does

not mean the crossings are always easy or that adjustments are made without personal costs.

Student B: *“Obviously when you come here you have to apply to the new system of High School A and your culture has to stand out. In the white culture they always say you have to look at them when you talk to them, this is hard as in our culture this is not respectful. Zulus are the most respectful, but there are some that are not. It takes a matter of time, so this is a moment when education comes in and we learn more about each other’s cultures. Our sameness I suppose is what I was against, for example gay people, I don’t know why we have been told its wrong. But the more you get used to it, which is something I didn’t really do in second form, the more you accept everyone’s differences.”*

The account above shows how Student B adapted, and he emphasised how important friends were in the process. The experience can also engender a degree of stress, uncertainty and emotional discomfort, as students must relinquish some of the security of the familiar and readjust to the uncertainty of the new. His friends were the familiar and we also see the how the seniors encourage collaborative relationships by making the junior boys ‘stick’ together as one group; this forms friendships and a bond. In the new school this ‘brotherhood’ is very important and creates a feeling of belonging. Student B experienced how things were different, yet began to grasp that the way things were structured were conducive to improving his education and environment.

Student B: *“Things they do are just different from township schools and everything mam, like studying, no one forces you to study at home or in township schools, only your parents encourage you, the teachers don’t really care. You can sleep in the class they not going to say anything, not do homework. At high school A if you sleep in class or don’t do your homework they punish you, like give you detention. You make your own decisions. At high school they are always behind your back checking on your studying and if you do something wrong you get punished. So it sort of gives you a guideline. You need to be straight. Everything shapes you how you can be a man and respect is very crucial at the high school, like stand up, take off your basher. In township schools the respect is not that important, you don’t stand up or great. It is really different at the school. So you have to adapt. My friends helped me adapt and in Grade 8 by looking and watching other people and talking to other boys and Senior Formers. I was lucky I knew a Senior Former, so every time anything happened to us,*

they would help us and show us what we needed to do. You also learn to stick together as if we are in a group and a prefect shouts at you it's not so bad when you are altogether. So, we learnt to stick together. Your friends' input is very important. I think that is the most important thing at the school. If your friends are good obviously, you are going to enjoy the High School A.

Often there was a misunderstanding obviously my English was not great, I did not understand a lot of things. Like, team testing it was really tough having to learn all the prefect's names, first team captains and first team names of all the sport teams and then spell them correctly in the test. My friend got a paper with all the names which I use to study, so I used to sit and study and they witnessed me studying and saw how difficult it was for me. But you see it was difficult for everyone in Grade 8 and so we formed friendships. “

Moving between two worlds is difficult and can be very challenging. Hoggart argued that “each boy is between two worlds: the worlds of school and home; and they meet at few points” (1011,2014). Student B did not have a scholarship that included boarding so he travelled each day between the township area and the city. His experiences suggest it was harder and his home was vastly different to the relatively luxurious school environment. He decided to take up another offer where he could stay at the school, as he desperately wanted to become more part of the institution. As mentioned in an article by Meyer (1997), the dominant view is that schools process individuals. They, the schools, are organised systems of unique processes which give them their individual character. In our society's education is a highly developed institution. Its systems have been reworked and established over numerous years and these create the type of people the institutions vision hopes to be embodied. Most schools have spent decades developing their 'ideal' student and what the appropriate knowledge they would possess once they reach the final stage of their educational years. The school's market their goals and accomplishments of learners and strive replicate it throughout their student's time. Distinctive and highly valued schools provide have an impact in society to produce such elements of learners to be the forthcoming professionals and entrepreneurs.

Student B wanted to belong to these institutions and so approached the school to see if he could change from being a day scholar to full boarding to be part of and 'belong' more to the school.

“Yes, it was very difficult. I would get up very early in the morning and catch a taxi to school and then after rugby practice at 5pm, I would walk to the taxi rank and catch a taxi home at 5:30 or 6pm. Sometimes only getting home at 7 or 8^o clock at night. Then I am tired from practice and didn’t often study just bath and go to bed. I often missed the captains’ rugby practice on Fridays because I wanted to get home early one afternoon. Saturdays I also had to catch taxi back to school and home, which is hard as on Saturdays they are not always available. So get home late and you are so tired, it is really hard, I tried to explain it to my coach how hard it was, it really was hard.

I realised it was very hard being a day student and I wanted to be a boarder, a Private school in the area, had been offering me and phoning me, so I went to see them and they offered me a full scholarship which included boarding, they even offered to pay High school A back the money of the scholarship. So, I went back to Sir, the teacher who recruited me and told him, and they then put me on a full scholarship from Grade 10. I did not want to move because of my friends, my friends were very important to me. I didn’t really want to leave, but they didn’t want to put me into the boarding establishment, not sure why? It was really nice once I got into the boarding establishment at school, life becomes so simple, there is time to eat, and practice rugby and study. It is sooo nice. We finished sport, you can shower and just walk to the dining hall and eat. There is time for everything and you can do anything, everything is around here like gym. Being a rugby scholarship boy from a township is not easy. Moving into the boarding establishment in Grade 10 was also easy as no-one really cares about you as you are in the middle of the seniors and juniors. It was much better. Once I was in the boarding establishment (BE) it was much easier, as travelling everyday was very tiring and I would often sleep before I would finish my work. At the BE in school you have time for practice to shower and eat. We have study time in the evening you are not allowed on your phone, you have to study in your dorm, there is time to study, but it depends on you as a person if you want to study or not, it depends on you as there is time to study.”

In the following interview, Student C who had a very positive outlook and was always optimistic regarding his life history, revealed that nonetheless, his first years were similarly challenging and even though he was in the boarding establishment, he found it difficult. His was quite a different perspective from the previous student who wanted to be in the BE. According to Meyer (1977), “a student is in a position of experiencing

(a) the immediate socialising organization, (b) the fact that this organisation has the allocating power to confer status on him, and (c) the broader fact that this allocation power has the highest level of legitimacy in society. The education he receives has a very special status and authority: its levels and content categories have the power to redefine him legitimately in the eyes of everyone around him and thus take on an almost overwhelming ceremonial significance". The student wanted this special status, especially given that the particular school has a very good reputation.

"It was quite different mam; it was quite tough. The first few weeks of term, I thought of leaving, my best friend and me. It was tough we thought maybe we go somewhere else, to another school, like because of the traditions. It was a new environment it was quite difficult, my other friends would leave and go home and we were just stuck in this trouble in the Boarding Establishment (BE), while they go home. As they were not in the BE in the beginning. I thought maybe if I go elsewhere it would be better. Well mam, how did I cope? If we are all in it together then we all fight it together and stay strong. If I was alone then I probably would have left, but cos my friend was here with me and I convinced him to come here to the school I can't just leave him. So I stayed.

The traditions are hard and made me homesick but you can't really phone your mother. There was a 'ticky' box, but there was a long line, sometimes you wake up early to phone, but then they don't answer or they are not their and it's a waste of R2.00. But that helped as you had to just get on with it. I did miss home a lot; it was the first time being away from home. I missed my father, especially my father, as I was very close to him. I was the only sibling away from home. It was quite hard, not nice. After the first term and in second term then it was better and quite nice as you know the traditions and you are playing rugby. Rugby was nice and shouting war-cries was exciting. Going to other places on exchange for rugby was nice. I had never been before or know of even know of these places and this school gave me that. It gets easier when you get used to the traditions, that they are actually teaching you respect. The seniors that are older than you and you have to treat them with respect and give them their space. So it does work and I found that ok. I need to learn to greet older people, put a smile on my face and greet them with respect, they teach you that and I'm fine with that.

Something was always new and Grade 8 was quite scary. It is easier when you get to play rugby and for the U14A team. It was hard for me to study when I first got here

as I had come from an Afrikaans primary school in Vryheid. You get to the point where you just listen as you don't understand and so you can't ask questions and it's difficult to study. My friendships are really strong, and they make me strong and people have helped me. Friends are always there for you; they help to go into the right direction. Every time you do something wrong you know you are doing it, you just sometimes do it because it's fun. But then you always know the line, you may push the line but you just want to be a boy. Like if you go out after lights to touch the bell, you know you may be caught but it's fun and maybe you get punished. But don't do smoking cos then you going to be expelled you need to know that line. It's the friends that you have that make a big difference on your behaviour. But I know I want to be good at sport so I don't go with those guys. You can sit with them and talk, but as soon as they do something then that's when I leave, even if it's not easy. Just pick up your phone, even if it's nobody and just say you coming and leave, that will save you.

My father and I talk, but not always talking. Like we sit together, sometimes he gives me advice but not like straightforward, like if there's a party and say drinking. He won't say don't go to that party but will say thing in a low key way that gives me guidance, a lot of guidance. He has been watching me play rugby over all those years, even though he doesn't know much, he will never say anything bad about my rugby, just stay strong when things are not going my way. Just keep doing what you do, just stay strong, you are good enough at what you do, just play. But academics wise, he just tells me listen just get the points you need, take a step back from rugby and do academics now and focus on rugby next year, do what you need to do.

I was so close to leaving this school and I don't regret staying here. Other schools kept phoning me and phoning me, saying if it's tough this side come to us. The guys from a private school actually came to my house and said come, cos I had friend from Vryheid who was at this school and kept pushing me to come. It was tough because of the traditions, and I couldn't actually speak to someone as we didn't have a phone, so could only speak to each other about it."

Many researchers have found a positive relationship between interest invested by parents in the education of their children and children's academic achievement. In general, most adolescents seek guidance and reassurance from a parental source or

mentor. Student C often chatted to his father and his friend who was with him in the Boarding Establishment and was also on a rugby scholarship, and had a similar relationship with his father. Both the boys were very stable individuals for their age with a positive outlook on school and rugby. Through his parents he could seek advice on how to deal with social morals and he learnt how to deal with uncomfortable or tricky situations. This guidance, in particular by his father, enabled him to make the right choices and develop a maturity which helped him cope in the new school.

Student C: 'How I got through is my parents, they played a huge role, who told me once you go out, there you are going to meet people who drink, smoke, have an influence on you and you need to be able to sit down with all of them but know that's where I don't go. That's where you guys go but I don't go. You can sit down and have fun with them but when they do other stuff you take a step back

To be honest you can't get any better, you get provided with Boarding Establishment, academics, extra lessons, food and sport. As well as my school fees get paid, my studies, my food, for which I am so grateful. Traditions help you believe in a school, for example not having cell phones in Grade 8, actually helps you get closer and bond more with your friends, rather than phoning home all the time and complaining. When you have brotherhoods and strong bonds you are not going to run away or try and do something stupid, it makes you strong. It is important to choose the right people for scholarships as there are a lot of opportunities at the high school for the right candidate.

Whatever happens just stay strong. Whether things are going your way or not just stay strong. If you can't stay strong speaking to other people and letting them know how you feel and listening to advice makes you strong. I think friends who are on the same level with you will help you and understand what you are going through. It helps sometimes to get advice from like someone in Grade 10 or Grade 11 but it's not so easy because the other forms are in the same position. I know that's how you get away with stuff but it's part of the tradition and that's how you have to respect those rules if you know everything what you are supposed to do then it will be easier and you will be fine."

Student D's perception involved some negative aspects in adapting to High School A. In Grade 12 he found it difficult being a prefect and being in a leadership role. As these

research interviews were all conducted in the students' last year of schooling, Grade 12, he was looking back and analysing previous years from his perspective in matric. Being a prefect in this school was demanding and serious. He found disciplining younger boys difficult and more complex than he expected. He also felt he had experienced the hardships in Grade 8 as very demanding and tough as opposed to the new Grade 8s coming into the school, who he felt were having an 'easier' time. During his Grade 8 year they had to participate in a development programme which included waking up at 4am and doing an obstacle course; all the boys were in this together and the aim was to encourage teamwork and group dynamics. It was challenging but everyone had to support each other and seniors were also encouraged to support and help the juniors.

"Mam when we started in Grade 8 as juniors there wasn't so much protection, protection from the traditions, there things you didn't expect like 'Bootcamp', you had to crawl on muddy small stones which they don't do now and face testing, which you don't do now. You do get those kids now that are not prepared to go hard like we did. Everyone loved me when I was part of the U14A, so it was easy for me and I was big and tall. I was a very confident boy, which came from home. The first three weeks when we got here was hard, as we couldn't make contact with our parents but I was fine. We learnt how to stick together and make friends.

You had to stick together. The seniors told us to do that all the time. Whether you were in boarding establishment or school you stuck together when you walked around. So, if higher formers found you they shouted at you as a group it made it easier. The seniors emphasised brotherhood in this way. They did this to make sure that we Grade 8s did everything together. For example, if one person does not have a jersey then you all take your jersey off, so we can be a unit, they kept emphasising that."

Prior research generally has focused on families, peers, and schools as distinct entities. "We know that many aspects can powerfully affect the direction in which adolescents will be pulled. For example, dynamic teachers, vigorous schools, and programmes targeted to override the negative effects associated with low socio-economic status, limited motivation, and language and cultural barriers can produce committed, interested and academically engaged individuals" (Phelan, 1991). Student D concurred with the other students and realised the importance of playing rugby and how it affected his relationships with his peers and the school. Yet in his Grade 12

year he had a different outlook and perhaps it was a sense of anxiety of leaving school and figuring out what he was going to do once he left school. He expressed concern for his academics and I believe he had an idea to study further and perhaps become a lawyer and he realised the need for education to further his success. In the following quote from the student below, one is conscious of his feelings and the importance of this 'aha' moment is that the student was able to reflect on his past and make a decision about his choices in his life. By doing so he becomes responsible for his own destination. This type of choice is very mature and shows the cognitive developmental process he has obtained over the years of schooling. This becomes a key point in his personal and individual growth. And as the interview progressed it became more apparent of this construction of his own identity in relation to his life.

He had a type of reflective conversation with himself; this showed further evidence of the focus on his personal growth, looking back over his past experiences at the school.

"It is, because it is necessary to mentor the younger boys, as when I got here it was rugby, rugby, rugby, everything is about rugby, this is a rugby school, there was no one to emphasise the education for me, beside you mam. It only comes from you mam and my parents. Very few people place importance on academics. I feel like that can influence you and channel your mind-set in another direction. It's just rugby that's important at this school. Not everyone is going to make it in rugby. What are the chances of me making it? It's a belief in me and not what other people believe in, I still believe I can make it in rugby. I feel like I have just started having an interest in books, like only now I enjoy reading, especially history and life values, I feel like that's the start to learn something, of all of a sudden I am so much interested in being educated. I feel like reading is starting slowly and I am starting to understand the importance of being educated for me. Education is the way to start and to do the profession I want to do; I need to be educated. Because I have been reading these history books, I like learning about history now and I want to learn more about the 1800s and about the first black intellectuals, it's something as small as that and listen on people on YouTube, it has actually wanted me to do something, it's the start of education.

I feel the boys from Grade 8 need to be channelled to do better, the teachers need to be more involved in the rugby scholarships boys more, because they will ask you about your rugby but not your academics. When I get asked I say it is about academics, I

know I am embarrassed but I put it out there and say I need help, but I know the other boys don't say anything as they are embarrassed. But if you ask me about rugby I can talk about it all day.

My dad was very sick in 2013 and when he wasn't working, as he was in hospital for a long time. And then he stayed at home for a long time. My education was better as I had someone who was interested in my schoolwork and teaching as my dad was a history teacher. But we used to sit and talk for a long time, even now we sit and talk about apartheid area. He didn't want me to go to the rural school, my dad wanted me to get a scholarship and go to a better school. Mam to be honest at black households you get told to go and study, it is your duty to do it, but nobody checks up on you. My dad checked up on me but normally nobody does check; you are expected to go and nobody will follow up on it. Those boys who come to school often don't do well as they have had nobody to guide them in their studies, even at prep in the BE they just don't really do anything."

His opinion that nobody checks up on the boys when they have to study or complete homework, has been mentioned before by the other students in the interviews. As Manilal (2014), mentioned in his thesis, "poverty also reduces the educational resources parents can provide and reduce the effects of home involvement. Some poor parents avoid the school because they feel that if they become too involved they will be asked for a financial contribution. Poor parent's mental health can also be affected by poverty and increased stress of making ends meet, which reduces parental involvement in school" (Hill & Taylor, 2004).

"Being a prefect was quite hard as you have to be very serious and strict all the time. I often felt like I was a bully. You can never relax. I saw the school counsellor as many of the boys thought I was bullying them as a prefect. But it was very hard to discipline in a nice way for me. At home I am much more relaxed and a nicer person as I do not have to discipline anyone, I can be myself."

Some of the students found this particularly challenging, moving between home and school environment. Not simply the geographical spaces but the adapting to the people, setting and milieu and what they become, is as a result of their interaction with place and space, and is crucial to understanding their shifting selves. This student in

his life story expressed his concerns and feelings about how he shifted between his two 'homes' school and family.

"My life has improved since I have been here, with how I communicate with people, as I met a lot of different people here. I know who to go to when I need help and I know what to do when I need help. High School A has improved my life, and friendships that will last forever. I know who to call when I'm in trouble. You must get an education while you can when you are here at the school. You will have more knowledge to know how to deal with something. I have learnt to always be strong, not get my parents involved with things, learn to sort it out yourself. As one day when you grow up and leave, you need to know who to be strong. The strength that comes from your background. Like my 'fag' doesn't even know how to fold clothes and when you use a cup to wash it up and put it back from where it comes from. So something as simple as that should be taught at home, he comes from a good family but from different background. I look after myself and clean after myself. To do things properly. "

We use the terms 'social setting', 'arena', and 'context' to refer to places and events within which individuals act and interact: "Students employ cultural knowledge acquired from their family, peers, and school worlds in social settings and contexts. Social settings and contexts may be found within the bounds of any one world (e.g., a student having dinner with family members) or may include actors from various worlds (e.g., students interacting with friends in classrooms or friends visiting in each other's homes). In the latter case, people in the same social setting may or may not share the same cultural knowledge acquired from the constellation of their individual worlds" (Phelan, Davidson, & Cao, 1991, p. 92). "The terms 'boundaries' and 'borders' refer to real or perceived lines or barriers between worlds".

"Integration conceptualisation assumes it is possible for individuals from different cultures to co-exist without compromising their cultural identities"" (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, & Bujaki, 1989). In other words, each person maintains their culture of origin while interacting with others from different cultures". 'Fusion conceptualisation' (LaFromboise et al., 1993; Coleman, 1995b) "assumes that individuals from different cultures who are in consistent contact with each other will eventually fuse to create a new culture that subsumes individuals' cultures of origin". Student D appeared to have found this process quite complex and found himself comparing his life back in the

Eastern Cape and to the school environment. He preferred the way he behaved at home to the way he conducted himself at school, as shown below.

“At High School A, you must put some traditions from home behind you. I feel I would do it differently. I used to pray as my grandfather was an elder in the church and I used to pray often like in the morning, but when I came the school I don’t do it anymore. You forget about those things as other things, as you are drilled into your brain like when to eat, shower etc. ... so you forget about those things.”

Student E, a quiet young man, struggled with languages mainly due to attending different primary schools, where he was taught variously in Afrikaans and then English, and his home language was Zulu. Young people such as Student E are usually viewed as disadvantaged and relatively powerless simply because they cannot speak English properly. But Student E adapted by making rugby his most important goal. He repeated a school year and was in Grade 11 when the interviews took place. This separated him from the previous four students who, although he played rugby with them, were not in the same grade.

“It was scary. Scared because I didn’t know many boys, so very scary in the beginning especially Grade 8. But then I saw that I knew most of the boys, like rugby scholarship boys so it was not so bad. Ja, it had its up and downs. I enjoy the shouting and the traditions. The downs were getting to know the different traditions, it was very hard. I stayed with the right guys and that helped me in the Grade 8 year. I think with me I stayed with the boys in the boarding establishment on the weekends which helped me learn about the traditions and made it less confusing, as it was very confusing until you understand the traditions at the start.

Making friends for me in Grade 8 was easy as some of the guys would come to me for help, as I was one of the biggest guys. Also from my side, I am like the first one in my family to play rugby and I wanted to make it something big for my family, for the whole family. It’s finding that goal you want to achieve. As some of the boys come from different places and try and change who they are and people see that.

It is very difficult sometimes to keep motivated as training is very hard and you have to be pushed every day to keep up with the training and schoolwork. Me, I want to see some guys who have changed quite a bit and trying really hard, I see sport is really important to them and keeps them going. And we must keep company with the right

boys in school. It is a big thing when you have something to focus on and that stops you from being distracted and getting involved in the wrong things. I don't have time as I am busy all day with training and catching up on my academics. I don't think people realise how hard academics have been for me, I don't think some of the teachers even realise, you try and push and push to do well. My favourite subject is art, which I am very good at and much easier than studying. Sometimes at school it is easier to keep quiet for me than explain why I don't understand or be tuned and laughed at.

Mam, I think if you look at my situation from 2nd form to now I feel a lot of people wouldn't have survived, because of my struggles with academics, a lot of people would have done drugs or something stupid. I don't know how I kept it together, I have seen people around doing drugs but I'm not interested, not going to entertain it. Like if you know want you want, you won't waste your time everyday doing other things. Academics has been hard, people don't see it, how hard, as other people who do badly get depressed and start doing stupid things, so you see them experiencing it, but I always try and find positive things. Much easier now, I have found a way of studying and I will have more time and my own space next year to cope better with academics.

They I am say I am quiet. Yes, I am quiet because when I was a young boy they told my parents I would never make it at a 'normal' school and I was to be put into a special school. But then I got a scholarship in Grade 7 to play rugby in Empangeni. I realised I couldn't be that dumb if I can play rugby. And now I am at this high school and playing rugby and I have made it to matric. You can choose your decisions if you work hard, you can go in the direction you choose to believe."

It can be argued that "young boys' association with sport is centrally about identity, and doing sport, or at least establishing an interest in sport, is one important way of claiming to be, real boys" (Bhana, 2008). Throughout the interviews, it was clear that one of the main identities that facilitated the process of adaptation was the size of the students and their ability to play rugby. Playing rugby at this school is seen as prestigious and has many benefits amongst the boys; it can also be seen as a measurement of being accepted or excluded. Being in the first team has immense kudos amongst both senior and junior boys. This respect and status is how all the rugby scholarship boys I interviewed adapted and coped with the transition which was so difficult in other aspects.

Student D: *"There were some scholarship guys in Grade 8 who found it very difficult because of the traditions, not getting used to it and missing home at the same time. Sometimes the boys can give you a hard time but I was lucky as I knew some of the higher former boys in matric from rugby and they looked after me. Those that didn't have seniors had a harder time.*

Sometimes I would be feeling down and it was really hard with the language especially coming from an English and Afrikaans rural school in Empangeni and speaking Zulu at home. It was actually quite easy to fit in with the other boys and even when you are struggling with academics there were other boys who were also struggling with you. I found it easy to talk to you and Sir, if I needed anything and help, that helped me with school. My parents were so happy about my scholarship as they could not afford me to come to this school, they feel really good.

I feel like in Grade 8 I should have done something with my difficulty in languages, maybe worked harder with English. It was very hard for my academics and to talk to teachers about them even though they were the ones that were going to help. My rugby has really improved and my friendships here. This year I struggled a bit with the coaches in the first team, as most of the time when I wasn't really doing so good and I was down and wasn't performing as I used to perform, but it changed a lot and work harder I think it was because of my injuries. My best year was last year when I was the junior in the first team there were really good mentors with the senior rugby players and my worst year was Grade 8 'Bootcamp', just mental game as the seniors are shouting and you are getting confused and you don't know what to do.

Coping with academics especially at senior level is hard as sometimes I want to go do some extra work but it's hard to fit it in. My training schedule is very busy. In Grade 8 it wasn't so bad as we had off days but not from senior rugby and first team. Mondays we have two sessions, gym and practice and Wednesdays. Tuesday and Thursday are team practices and Friday is Captains Run [when the Captain of the first team coaches, controls the practice for that afternoon usually a game]. During rugby pre-season we have early morning practice that starts at 5am then school and after school every afternoon more rugby practices and gym training. It is the whole year as we start with preseason training in third term through to February before we start with rugby games in March. It has been difficult with all the different coaches, like last year there was a different coach and it changed again this year. The new coaches sometimes

have preferences and prefer to play the boys in certain positions it takes time to get to know their game plan. But I think next year in matric is going to be hard, hard to cope with academics and rugby.

I just felt that Grade 8 was the worst year as I was very physically tired and had to cope with academics. Some boys also tune you about your academics, but I learnt to keep quiet and just to do my best. It is easier not to talk sometimes. If senior boys shout at you, you must just keep quiet then they will leave you alone.”

Young South Africans are clearly experiencing immense social changes in their lives that emanate out of the rapidly changing socio-political environment of South Africa. All boys are not the same; however, there are many similarities and common ground.

Student A: *“One thing I realised we are all at school now that’s it is coming to an end. Nobody seems to be finished ‘schooling’ we might get colonised, if you like, but at the end of the day your roots will come back to you and live in the way that you were brought up. Such as if you are a kind person and get mixed up with evil people, ‘like you get colonised to be evil’, the bottom line you are yourself your kindness will come back to you. So I think you don’t really get colonised. Yes, you do get influenced. You get colonised by the environment, whether you want to leave this place to become yourself that is your decision but the environment you live in you and will be part of the decision.*

If we were told to, not to be unified, we wouldn’t have this unification ever. It gives you some sort of identity, like wear a uniform, and it’s very important and to have that authority that you have always have to abide by, like a law otherwise we wouldn’t have listen, like to you as a teacher. I think it’s a good thing”.

According to Soudien (2007), for many young black people the personal and collective stakes are particularly high. Flowing in apparently opposite directions, but holding to the same general principle of excess in identity construction, new developments are taking shape amongst young African men in particular. Both, significantly, revolve around the processes of accommodation and generativity, coming to terms with their circumstances and then taking initiative to change them.

Student A: *“Being in different classes, smarter kids and the ‘dumb’ classes at school shouldn’t really mix. I was struggling with the language and I knew I was in the right place and class, even though sometimes it was a bottom class, they should just accept*

people always divide people, provinces, people live in different places, etc... that's where race comes in, but race doesn't really matter. I have seen a lot of white people, I'm black and supposedly I should be able to dance and make those moves, but I have seen white people dance to my music better than I do. It comes down to your own personality. We still compete against each other, in a good way, no matter what but to improve yourself.

Even though you struggle with academics and it is hard, it doesn't mean you can't be the best you can be. And that being the best you can be, you can deliver results. You don't have to be a prefect or a house leader, but you can end up in a responsible position because you are a good person.

For me it was an easy decision as I wanted a better life and was too busy with my rugby to get involved in the wrong crowd or make wrong decisions. Some of the boys made mistakes but it is not right to give somebody all of this and then take it away, it's tough one, he will grieve a lot and be angry. One thing a lot of the kids should be reminded is that it is not just for me. It happens to be an opportunity but not just for me. It must not be me who is going to shut the doors for someone else who comes after? I tried so hard to be good and not to be a rebel. I had no parents to come to my meetings at school, there was no one for the teachers to phone or to call in for anything. I am a Christian which helps, I was fortunate enough to be shown the way to change when I was at the high school. The people make you focus and when they see the reports, marks, there are some of you that show kindness and get involved. I also saw all the privileges I was getting so I knew I needed to keep focused in the right direction.

Some scholarship boys I think it's they forget why they are here, I think it's just motivation, it's about been hungry for something that you really want and having like a big goal in life that you really want, that is what pushed me."

Listening to the voices of the students, three main themes emerged: respect, hierarchy and sport (specifically rugby). These three themes are also interwoven within the culture of the boys who all came from Zulu homes and backgrounds. The themes are interconnected. The boys in this research appeared to have a place and an identity to which they could relate and through these themes, they learned to adapt and cope with the transition. Considering each one in more detail we can see their relevance

and the role they played in the boys' lives and how they link or differ to each other. It was possible to compare the traditional Zulu form of respect and hierarchy and the significance of rugby as a sport with the new school culture of respect, hierarchy and rugby.

5.3 Respect

"The concept of respect, *ukuhlonipha*, is an essential component of African culture, and it forms the foundation for existence. For Africans, *ukuhlonipha* provides guidelines for living, including appropriate clan-based inter-generational (Mbele, et al., 2015) behavioural patterns, as well as ways to honour and revere ancestors". Africans are nurtured to be respectful. Respect was both an unconscious process as well as a process that required conscious effort in practice. It ranged from gestures through correctly spoken language to culturally appropriate practices. Disrespect could invoke the wrath of the community and ancestors. For example, in Zulu culture the term for respect '*ukuhlonipha*' has meanings of great breadth, depth and height.

Respect is also one of the core values of the high school in this research. According to the schools' website: "We believe that by creating an environment in which a strong sense of tradition is upheld by our core values of honour, integrity, courage, self-discipline, commitment and respect, our boys have every opportunity to grow and thrive." Thus in both major areas of the students' lives, at home and school, we see respect as a major emerging theme and a link between the boys and their school.

At the school, respect is very important and valued and is enforced from their first year, Grade 8. It similarly becomes what a 'High School A' boy is defined by when he has completed his schooling years. The school's code of conduct policy is "The personal conduct of a 'High School A' learner shall exemplify the following principles: 3.1 Courtesy founded upon a respect for others regardless of their age or status. This involves standing up to greet staff, visitors and prefects and assisting them, when the need arises, with good grace. "

As noted by Hammett (2011), "respect is often a key concern with regard to youth. It is viewed as something to instil, as youth must learn how to behave in society, to relate with other people and with institutions, and to appreciate the moral value and personhood of others. Respect, then, should be a value held by nascent community

members and should link them together as citizens. But respect is also a tool for discipline and social reproduction in that it links people in particular ways. That particularity is conditioned by context and by visions of what good societies and good citizens should be". In the high school in which this research has been conducted, sometimes respect is almost demanded from the boys and expected; disrespectful behaviour is met with some form of reprimand or a punishment. Examples of respectful behaviour include standing and greeting an older person, being punctual, respect for female staff as in carrying a basket or waiting outside a door before entering a classroom. Many of these codes of conducts are told to the boys over and over again and if they do not obey them they are given some form of punishment.

In considering the Zulu concept of respect, we see that disrespectfulness is likewise seen as requiring correction that should be meted out by the community or parents. The child respects adults and vice versa. Lack of respect may result in disharmony and imbalance in familial, communal and societal cohesiveness. For instance, it was unthinkable in Africa that a child could quarrel with his or her parent(s), let alone to beat them. Such an occurrence was considered as a symbol of bad luck for that child, if not for the family. The elders would call a family meeting to discuss the matter (*ukulungisa*) and the perpetrator would be punished. The degree of harm would determine the type of punishment to be meted out (Mbele, et al., 2015). There are similarities between Western and Zulu cultures in terms of respect, such as respect for elderly people, especially parents and elderly family members. The differences may be slight, for instance in a Zulu household one may not enter a homestead and simply stand upright as this shows disrespect. One is expected to either kneel or find a spot to sit before engaging with those one finds within the homestead. Similarly, one may not enter through the front entrance and walk straight out the back entrance. Nor can an individual cut through two or more people and walk past them. In westernised cultures it is also considered ill-mannered to walk between two people having a conversation.

As I read more about Zulu culture, I discovered many values regarding respect that corresponded with values at school and which may have helped the boys in providing a sense of familiarity, as there was a link between how they behaved at home and at school. The only student who really struggled with understanding the respect process was Student A. He had lost his mother and father early in his life and did not have any

other close family members who could teach and guide him. As with many societies, African families teach their children to respect one another especially the elders (Mbele, et al., 2015). Children are taught to respect what they see (animals, humans of all ages, natural vegetation and all that lives on earth) and that which they cannot see (*amadlozi* – the ancestral spirits, *uMvelingqangi* – the one who existed first before all mankind, *uNkulunkulu* – the one who is the greatest of all human beings). It is believed that respect is reciprocal. When you respect others, others will respect you in return. In so doing, you are also respecting yourself.

Student A had to learn from his peers and friends how be respectful and to ‘fit’ into the new school society. It was difficult, but through this, he learnt about socialising and how to behave, which as he noted became an important coping mechanism for him in his five years at the school.

“You need to learn to communicate with people, just for example respect, how we respect people or show how we respect is different in cultures and me coming to this school I have learn this type of respect and understand it. If you want to ‘go’ places and make a business and earn money, but how are going to do this if you cannot communicate with ‘bigger’ people through respecting them for what they are.”

The high school emphasises the importance of respect in the boys’ daily school life and prides itself for being known as a very respectful school. For every outing, students are reminded about their core value of respect and the seniors and teachers highlight the fact that they are a “High School A boy” and must remember the value of this statement with regard to respect. A young Zulu boy is also reminded by his seniors of the value of their culture with regard to respect. During the interviews all the boys mentioned the importance of respect. Respect was a fundamental moral value which they learned growing up in their homes and so even though sometimes there were translation issues with the language, they were able to adjust and adapt relatively easily within this structure.

5.4 Hierarchy

Hierarchy is closely linked to respect in both areas of the students’ lives. It has been noted that a large number of African societies place great significance on respectful behaviour towards males and elders. Rudwick (2008, p.153) “believed this emanated

from the fact that many social practices and cultural customs in these societies are based on strict patriarchy and seniority principles". Mills (2003, 2004) argued that "respect and politeness are fundamentally based on particular approaches to class, race and gender".

Again, we see similarities between school and home life. At this high school, hierarchy is important and it is fostered with the aim of helping with discipline and structure within the school. The school's website describes the history of the school and includes how hierarchy is encouraged and highlighted as a significant part of their code of conduct. Additionally, it ties in with the 'privileges' which the boys are inspired to aim for. This is taken from the schools' code of conduct.

5.5 Privileges, traditions and duties

One of the school's distinct features is its hierarchical system, which is underpinned by a long-established set of privileges, traditions and duties. The most well-known include 'team-testing', which is the rote-learning of the names of school sports team members by juniors, 'running', which is the carrying out of small errands by Form 2 boys for prefects, the saying of the word 'please' when a junior is addressing a senior boy and 'waiting-at-doors'. Possibly the school's most time-honoured tradition is the wearing by all boys of straw boaters, known as bashers, which are hurled into the air at First XV rugby matches.

Because of its potentially contentious nature, the hierarchical system of privileges that underpins the school's ethos is carefully monitored by the staff, hostel masters and senior prefects. High School A's rigorous structure of traditions and related concepts date back to similar styles found in pre-1900 British boarding schools, and it is perhaps the only school in KwaZulu-Natal where this concept is retained, albeit in a modern and responsible 'whiteness' manner.

According to Eccles et al. (1993), "the effect of the moral atmosphere of school on real life moral judgment and behaviour is particularly strong during adolescence because during this phase, acceptance by the peer group is of utmost importance for individuals. Studies of different traditions have suggested that the moral atmosphere in schools has had long-term consequences for students' developments, that boys

'oblige' with the formal school culture, because they have to and not because the attitudes and values are being internalised in any substantial way.

Moral atmosphere can be described as "a shared culture or mutual understanding of what is an appropriate or inappropriate form of behaviour based upon the interactions among group members" (Power, Higgins, & Kohlberg, 1989). A moral atmosphere comprises certain characteristics of the environment including the presence of collective norms that influence the moral actions of the group.

In this high school, hierarchy is interconnected with privileges. So the higher the grade, the more privileged the student. The person with the most privileges (other than staff) is the head boy. The school feels that hierarchy provides something for the boys to look up to achieving and gives them a sense of direction. So in Grade 8, the boys have very few privileges and in all the interviews, the students say that the Grade 8 year was their hardest when they had to learn about school privileges, traditions and duties and how they are expected to behave in a particular way in the school environment. For example, Grade 8s may not go up certain stairways and have to run past a boarding house, as it is a seniority privilege to walk past. They must address all senior students with the word 'please', such as 'morning please', to a senior boy. They must give way to seniors in corridors and entering classrooms. These are only a few of the hierarchical privileges. In the beginning, it is hard for them to remember all the traditional rules; however, they really look forward to advancing up the seniority ladder of age, grade and respect. In the interviews, they often mentioned enjoyed being a senior – when they looked back at the 'now' juniors and if the school had taken some of the harsher, or so they felt, traditions away, they believed the school was becoming 'soft' and the juniors were less disciplined.

Most traditional African societies, due to strict patriarchy and seniority principles inherent in their cultural systems, prescribe great significance to respectful behaviour towards males and elders. Respect for seniority was rated very high among the interviewees. The same individual (quoted above) referred to the paramount importance of respect for older people at a later point in the interview. "Although friends respect each other, the respect one shows towards one's relatives, in particular those that are older or of higher status, is substantially more profound and significant" (Rudwick, 2008). In the Zulu culture there is similar reverence for older people, be they parents, siblings, other family members or people in the community. This goes hand

in hand with the school system and once the students were introduced to the school code of conduct, they learnt to fit in with the hierarchical procedures of traditions and respect of seniors. They coped better and found the transition less complicated than other students who came from a less structured background where there was little or no conformity of seniority. The boys looked up to the seniors as their mentors and had a desire to become seniors themselves in the years to come. The students came to realise that amongst their Grade 8 peers in their first year, there was also an 'internal hierarchy'. Those that played for first teams in their age groups, such as U14A teams, were placed higher on the school ladder of importance and were allowed a few more privileges. Once the rugby scholarship students realised the importance of rugby in this high school they had found another way to adapt and cope with the transition.

5.6 Rugby as school sport

Respect, hierarchy and tradition are all part of the ethos of the high school. The high school also prides itself in being known as one of the dominant rugby schools in KwaZulu-Natal and has a long rugby history dating back to 1870. Rugby almost becomes a culture in itself at the school and the boys playing rugby (especially in the first teams for each age group) are given higher accolades compared to their peers. Rugby is very important to the students, old boys and staff. The emphasis, rightly or wrongly, is placed on how many wins they have each season. The boys are also very involved in the rugby season, where they accommodate each student who would like to play rugby for their age group. Some age groups will have 10 teams for their age group and there is no limit to participation of boys playing rugby as a sport. Besides the players, all students are taught war cries (shouting that is practised regularly before a rugby fixture and sung during the first team rugby game). It is also compulsory for all the boys to attend the first team games. The competition is fierce amongst the high schools and rugby is often classified as the main school sport.

The students interviewed were all on rugby scholarships in this high school. It was a considerable honour for them to have been chosen for a rugby scholarship particularly for a school where rugby is seen as so important. When I asked them if they would

have chosen another school (and some had had offers from other schools), they all said no, this was the school they wanted to attend and to play rugby for.

The parents of these students who come from diverse backgrounds are aspirational for their own children; they valued education for what it could do for their children, especially in helping them to get a job. Nevertheless, they had to overcome geographical and social access barriers in order to achieve their aspirations. The boys' parents hoped their children would achieve a higher level of education than they themselves had achieved. Parents with no Grade 12 education wanted their children to go beyond and to 'do better' than they had done. All the parents of the interviewees hoped for a tertiary qualification for their children. Through a rugby scholarship to a prestigious high school, they hoped to see their children obtain a good education and help support the family in years to come.

The students arrived on a rugby scholarship in Grade 8 and began learning the new ways, the traditions, privileges and code of conduct of the high school and how to 'fit in'. They soon came to understand the importance of rugby and how this would facilitate their adapting into the new system. Thus they worked hard at their rugby and staying in the first team; as one interviewee said, *"just stick to what you know and what you are good at and you will get through the first year"*. This allowed them some extra privileges and seniors who played rugby help and mentored them. Some of them were made 'fags'. A 'fag' is a junior boy who is in the boarding establishment who is chosen by a senior prefect or first team rugby player; the junior then does certain duties for the senior, such as polish shoes, make him coffee, go to the tuck shop, make their beds etc., whatever the senior requires within reason. In exchange for this, the junior gets extra privileges like being able to use the senior's microwave, have coffee. Most importantly, however, this relationship is one in which the senior 'protects' the junior and will support and advise him. It is quite an esteemed position to be a senior's fag. Only prefects and first team rugby players can have fags.

Some areas linked to achieving a rugby scholarship need to be questioned. As Geyer (2015) noted, "in the case of learners who experienced barriers to learning in South Africa, the condition of inclusion is a school's capacity to cater for their needs. This is a concern with regard to scholarship programmes. Although previously disadvantaged

learners are given scholarships to attend affluent independent schools, there are often explicit or hidden conditions linked to the awards. These academic, behavioural, sporting or other expectations make for a tenuous stay at the school, as scholarship recipients must meet conditions for continued enrolment that their fee-paying peers can avoid". These expectations may include meeting certain academic and non-academic standards, and continued involvement and performance in sport. Education in rural schools is often not at the same academic standard of privileged high schools, and the students from the rural schools will require support to be able to pass and achieve a National Senior Certificate at the end of secondary schooling. The students have to organise their academic timetable and their sport practices, which can be quite demanding. This takes time to adapt to; one of the interviewees expressed how different it was being in a township compared to a privileged school, in terms of academics.

The students, while in primary school, came to realise that if they played rugby well they had an opportunity to be offered a scholarship at a privileged high school. In areas where their primary school did not offer rugby, they joined a rugby development side. Rugby became very important to their families and to the boys and they were encouraged to participate. To the students, rugby was a chance to improve their lives and could lead to a promising career. The school also benefitted by having extremely passionate students who would put rugby first and had scholarship contracts to uphold. This relationship benefits both the school and the students who find themselves within this structure and identify rugby as their space and a 'place' which helped them through this transition.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

How did the rugby scholarship learners experience their transition from a rural disadvantaged context into a privileged high school in post-apartheid South Africa? This question guided the research behind this study. Everyone has a story to tell of their own life, which offers invaluable raw material for history; the experiences of scholarships in secondary school are no exception. This thesis is a story, a life history journey of the transition of five students over five years, from Grade 8 to Grade 12. Using qualitative methods and listening to students in both individual and group interviews, I tried to understand their experiences.

In South Africa there is a notion that in order to improve one's life one needs to receive a quality education. The black boys who are offered a scholarship have a belief that if they attend formerly white dominated schools and receive a good education this will cultivate the necessary requirements to enter middle class employment and lifestyles (Fataar, 2007).

Fataar (2007, 599-612), primarily focused on the “negotiations of young people in their interaction with schools that are culturally incongruous with their domestic places. Their daily mobility across the city is a key element in accessing their schools. Mobile bodies combine with a number of affective processes to substantiate the adjustments they make in order to fit into and mediate the hegemonic cultures of the schools they enter”. As he noted, “learners had to negotiate the hybrid materials in their social world, of race, religion, and language, in order to successfully navigate the spatiality of their place of living and the schools they attended”. I saw how the boys were affected by the complexities of moving around. One of the boys started off as a day scholar moving between home and school on daily basis and had found this challenging. Once he moved into Boarding Establishment he felt more included and part of the school environment. I asked him, if he thought scholarships should be offered to boys if they did not include boarding and his reply was the following;

“They should offer the scholarship even if you can’t be a boarder, it is a tough one, travelling to school from home every day, but I would rather have the schooling and all that, you get education, and all that, that it gives you. The hardships you take as a day boy; you can take it like a man rather than nothing. It is a really big thing to be

offered a scholarship because here you get everything food, accommodation, safety and a good education. It is a really good opportunity”

The boys learned how to navigate themselves within the new environment crossing spaces between their ‘worlds’. They began to relate and develop a remarkable flexibility and knowledgeability to adapt to, and” come to own culturally novel terrain” (Fataar, 2007).

The students in this research were in my maths class, which was a small class for learners who find mathematics challenging and it proved a conducive space to get to know them. It was a privileged environment where the high school is well resourced, for a public school, with many state of the art facilities to attract learners and staff. In these schools it has, however, become increasingly common for management boards or governing bodies of privileged schools to provide scholarships to historically disadvantaged or underprivileged learners who show talent in either academics or sport. These students were all on a rugby scholarship, although there are other scholarships awarded at the school, for my research I only concentrated on students that were all on a rugby scholarship. Learners who enrolled in affluent schools through these scholarship schemes could be expected to enjoy significant benefits and educational advantages that their families’ socio-economic status would not normally afford them.” As a result of attending a privileged public high school, these learners could expect social mobility” (Randall, 1982); “access to the cultural capital of the middle and upper classes”; and beneficial preparation for National Senior Certificate, in their Grade 12 year. However, the most important thing to them and their families was to be part of a school that has a reputation for producing very good rugby players; in the past, certain old boys had made it to provincial and national level in South Africa. This was for them, their opportunity for a career and better future prospects for their families and themselves.

According to Geyer and Walton (2015), awarding scholarships to academically promising learners from disadvantaged backgrounds, means the elite and affluent independent school is able to diversify its learner population, without jeopardising the school’s academic reputation. They thus suggest that there are important and uncomfortable questions that need to be asked of scholarship programmes at school levels. These include: To what extent do we further ghettoise schools by removing their top performers and concentrating them in already high performing schools and

how are school communities disrupted by the removal of those deemed talented? Although this research was based on academic scholarships, it is also appropriate to sport scholarships. Another article claimed there is a tendency to regard learners as commodities, who can be seen as assets to the school, especially if these learners show a talent for sports and have outstanding sporting achievements (Du Plessis & Marais, 2012). Is this seen as using black bodies to achieve the quota policy or to benefit the school? However, Maimela (2011), in his article “The only way to change South Africa sporting fortunes’, proposed that in the South African context, progress that produces success cannot be achieved without a combination of quantity (increased inclusivity of previously marginalised groups) and quality (excellence drawn from all groups)”. Two very different opinions, yet pertinent to the boys. During the interviews, I asked if they ever felt as if they were a commodity. “*Not once*” they all replied. To them it was a privilege, an honour to be offered a scholarship and they were very grateful for this opportunity.

My observations throughout were positive, though after reading many research articles, I was uncertain as to how their stories were going to unfold. Many articles mentioned racism or had a negative connotation to the idea of scholarships, whether academic or sport. Learners appear to perceive themselves as being fortunate and are although they are conscious of the huge advantage they have been given, and/or earned, they are also very aware of the limits of benevolence. However, my own experiences and reflections of their stories told of their journeys were positive and encouraging overall the scholarships process and their consequences were seen in a positive light.

I am a white female in a privileged high school for boys. When I began in 2015 with the boys, I did not understand the transitions they were experiencing. However, as teachers, we are “trained in pedagogical theory and to understand how children learn values, how they absorb issues relating to integrity, how their characters are formed and how their thinking is shaped” (Wray, 2018,50) I was unaware of the implications and experiences of their situation until I took the time to get to know them. As a teacher one can help and support and create an emotional safe space for them to be challenged but also a place they can be themselves. As I grew to know them, I began to realise, there was more to rugby scholarships than I had first realised and I wanted to tell their story.

This analysis has highlighted the importance of rugby as a sport and being part of a traditional school. A consequence of South Africa's socio-political history is that most professional rugby players come from pools of players that have attended the best schools in South Africa. Some of the best schools in South Africa have a rich history in the development of South African society and rugby (Bam, 2019).

The students were boys who came from disadvantaged rural environments in KwaZulu-Natal, in South Africa. Through recruitment programmes and 'talent scouts', the boys were chosen for rugby scholarships in their final year of primary school to attend a privileged high school in an urban environment for five years (their total remaining years of high school).

Rugby scholarships provide student-athletes with funding to pursue higher education and attend prestigious high schools that provide better education and career opportunities. This thesis found that sport, and in particular, rugby, is a central feature of boys' adaptations to cope in their new environment.

During the transition, the boys try, and often do, live up to the ideals of 'fitting in' to the new school, by watching how the other boys behave, and how the teachers and coaches, respond to them. In South Africa there are many complexities and dynamics associated with 'fitting in'. The five scholarship boys are black and came from segregated black townships, which had acquired the reputation of being degraded, violent and dangerous (Durrheim, Mtose, & Brown, 2011). Their previous education had been of a lower standard to most of their peers in the new high school. The education system of forty years of apartheid, and the post-colonial years, have left deep inequalities in schooling. Among these, racial inequalities were most obvious, but there were also inequalities between urban and rural schools, between rich and poor, and between boys and girls. Throughout their schooling, the boys had to learn how to adapt to circumstances they found themselves in. Identity is produced in everyday school contexts and the game of rugby is one way that the boys can develop a gender identity. The image of sportsmen portrayed on television is emulated and copied by boys at high school. They develop a fantasy in their minds of the ideal male. They struggle to find an identity and acceptable masculinity, but being actively involved in rugby seems to help with this. Hegemonic masculinity linked with toughness and power, plays a major role in the accepted, dominant masculinity (Bowley, 2006). It also holds the most authority and status. Rugby players, due to the nature of the game, are

therefore important role models in this masculinity. The recognition of peers fuels the processes by which the first team's values are plugged into the hegemonic masculinity of the school itself. Recognition by their peers was important for the boys. This recognition was secured by public symbols that distinguished first team rugby players from the rest of the school boys. They were entitled to wear special rugby jerseys with their numbers (indicating their positions in the team) on their backs of their jerseys. At the start of each season, there is an official 'handing over' of jerseys. A tour squad is announced and then when they return from the tour, the 'official' fifteen are announced and jerseys are given to these boys. The boys in the team and their peers hold this session in high regard. It establishes status for the boys amongst their peers and provides an opportunity to form bonds and a form of belonging to the privileged school. "A key thread was the importance of bodily strength and prowess, as opposed to weakness. In this way, sport encouraged the development of masculinities but also can exclude – through racial and class polarisation" (Bhana, 2008). This was discussed by the boys who, when asked during the interviews if they had they experienced a form of racism or class distinction, said no. (Yes, perhaps one might need to consider they did not have any other option open to them, they had to "fit" or return to the townships school), however they seemed to have been able to negotiate their new spaces comfortably and found an association with their new school through rugby.

Within these dynamics are transformations of education and sport in South Africa. The post-apartheid years have tried to transform education to improve the quality for all learners in underprivileged schools as well as of the level of the sport in South Africa. All schools are supposed to receive equal quality of infrastructure, equipment and teachers; however, in South Africa the apartheid government's underfunding of black schools has left a lasting legacy on their functional status and they have found it challenging to provide equality in education for all. Scholarships are an educational intervention to provide to some, (albeit a small minority) students the opportunity of attending good quality schools and of receiving a good education as well as benefitting the school by adding talent, whether academic or sporting talent.

Sport remains one of the most visible institutions for producing positive social change and facilitates the integration of students in schools. South African sport is important to many people in the country. It has played a notable role in the reconciliation of the

new South Africa as witnessed by Nelson Mandela's celebration when South Africa won the African Cup of Nations (soccer) in 1996 and the World Cup (rugby) in 1995. Since then, the Springbok side has had victories in 2007 and 2019. Sport can assist in the process of breaking down class and race barriers: "Our young democracy witnessed the ability of sport to act as a catalyst to bring people together, share excitement and build a nation" (South African Minister of Sport, Steve Tshwete, quoted in Nauright, 1996, p. 2).

This transition affects the learners on so many levels that educators, parents, peers are not always aware of, and to do the scholarships justice we need to understand the emotional, physical, social and academic demands and accountability that is required of these particular students. The forces that come into play during their scholarship years, which give them the mental and moral strength to overcome these obstacles is part of what has been explored in this study. The boys learned and began to understand how important rugby is and especially when they are selected to be a rugby scholarship player. The implementation of the scholarships in schools is however, controversial, because at times it begins to replicate the exact system that we are trying to get rid of and may come across as reverse discrimination. In addition, it may appear as favouritism. Favouritism in the classroom or sport field is seen as fundamentally unfair and contributes to inequities that affect student success and failure. Such favouritism can have a negative impact on a teacher's or coach's reputation; students who are not favoured are likely to develop negative attitudes toward the teacher and perhaps toward the school.

However, at this particular high school, which was built in 1863, its traditions and hierarchal system helped the boys adjust to the school, and improved what might have been a negative, experienced for the students (such as unhappiness, hard to fit, racism and differences of cultures). There was this unaware or unconscious familiarity that came through during their interviews. During the first year when the boys arrived at the school, they unconsciously began to find similarities between themselves and the school. The boys were all Zulu and found similarities between the school's traditions and Zulu traditions. Listening to the voices of the students, three main themes emerged: respect, hierarchy and sport (specifically rugby). These three themes are also interwoven into the Zulu culture zone (home and backgrounds) of the boys. The themes are interconnected and gave the boys a place and an identity to

which they could relate and working with these themes, they learned to adapt and cope with the transition. In previous chapters, we see their relevance and the role they played in the boys' lives, how they linked with or differed from each other, the traditional Zulu form of respect and hierarchy and the significance of rugby as a sport.

During the research process, especially when interviewing the boys about their Zulu culture, I saw many corresponding values and respect, and realised how these values being similar helped the boys to successfully manage their transitions, as there was a link between how they behaved at home and at school. Similarities in showing respect were helpful. Differences may be slight but were problematic at times, for instance not looking directly at a person to whom one is talking.

In the same way, hierarchy is closely linked to respect in both areas of the students' lives. In the school, hierarchy is encouraged and highlighted as a significant part of their code of conduct. Additionally, it ties in with the 'privileges' which the boys are inspired to follow. The seniors enforce the hierarchy as a form of discipline and tradition. Most traditional African societies, due to strict patriarchy and seniority principles inherent in their cultural systems, prescribe great significance to respectful behaviour towards males and elders. Respect for seniority was rated very high among the interviewees at school and in their family (here there are differences and similarities of different power structures and hierarchies, the students found a link between the two systems and in the interviews this came across that they felt a certain comfort within the school structure.)

Rugby almost becomes a culture of its own at high schools in South Africa, and in particular at the formerly white high school in this research. The boys playing rugby, especially in the first teams for each age group, are given higher accolades compared to their peers. Rugby is very important to the students, old boys and staff. Thus, the scholarship students worked hard at their rugby and staying in the first team. As one interviewee said, "*Just stick to what you know and what you are good at and you will get through the first year.*" Their rugby skills allowed them certain extra privileges and seniors who played rugby assisted and mentored them.

Linking the above themes that arose from the data in this research (respect, hierarchy, tradition and rugby) gave me greater insight into how the boys had adapted and learnt to cope through their transition. Rugby gave them a place to express themselves in a

physical and intellectual way that differed from the class environment. (It would be interesting to take the research further and explore non-rugby boys and how they managed through the transition). Boys who excelled at the game by playing for the first team, saw the sport as not simply as a game, but as playing a key role in helping them through their experiences, giving them a reputation and accolades amongst their peers, teachers and coaches, which facilitated their ability to survive, adapt and cope, and even thrive.

This research process has illuminated what was important to the boys and their ability to cope. It sheds light on understanding how these boys got through their experiences and managed to adapt through the transition from their primary to high schools, from their disadvantaged relatively rural to privileged urban schooling. Scholarships appear to be an effective, valuable means of improving education, and access to education.

The recipients of the scholarships, however, need to be mentored and supervised, so we can complement and understand the complexity of the learners' experiences to be able to help shape their future and schooling, which will ultimately contribute to uplifting society and education. Supervision for the scholarship students at this particular school started with a teacher who was also their Boarding Housemaster and had recruited them. Over the past few years since this I started this study there has been an adjustment of the process and the school now has separate recruitment officer, a scholarship 'mom' to support and assist the students. By understanding the intricacies of their situations, we can give more students a chance to improve both in education and society.

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