

**EDUCATION TOWARDS
INTEGRATION:
AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMME**

by

TONIA T. LENNOX

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SUPERVISOR: PROF F.E. GOUWS

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Student Number: 754-707-2

DECLARATION

Student Number: 754-707-2

I declare that this dissertation, "Education Towards Integration: An Alternative Programme" is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

MISS T.T. LENNOX

DATE

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EDUCATION TOWARDS INTEGRATION: AN ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMME

SUMMARY

The main aim of this study was to attempt to establish by the use of an environmental specific Personal Growth Programme, whether it is possible to assist students towards a more 'holistic' personal formation. It also aimed to investigate whether a move away from traditional education in the form of alternative or parallel programmes, would assist in bringing about an integrated individual, who is more capable of dealing with life as a whole (Krishnamurti 1953). The research was undertaken with adult students between the ages of 21 and 60, at the multi-cultural and extremely diverse residential theological College of the Transfiguration, in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape Province.

An overview of Holistic and Mainstream education was explored in this study, which included also the challenges and influences which each type of education faces. The study then went on to investigate whether it is possible to bridge the gap that exists between holistic and mainstream education using various methods of alternative education.

In the qualitative study, the Personal Growth Programme Annual Review Questionnaire was used to obtain feedback from the students to assess the usefulness of the Personal Growth Programme in their journey towards wholeness. This, together with the student's responses from the in-depth interviews were used to ascertain the study's limitations, credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability.

KEY TERMS

Personal Growth Programme
College of the Transfiguration
Holistic Education
Holism
Experiential Learning
Making connections to the world
Mainstream schools
Mainstream education
Mainstream
Outcomes-Based Education
Traditional Education (content-based)
Apartheid era
Globalisation
Science and Technology
Inclusion
Students at risk
Social and familial dysfunction
Alternative education
Alternative schools
Alternative programme
Life orientation programmes
Self-efficacy
Under-preparedness
Qualitative research
Annual review questionnaire
In depth interviews
Daily life challenges
Phenomenological methodology
Limitations
Credibility
Transferability
Dependability
Confirmability

ACRONYMS

PGP: Personal Growth Programme
COTT: College of the Transfiguration
OUP: Oxford University Press
OBE: Outcomes-Based Education
DOE: South African Department of Education
SAQA: South African Qualifications Authority
UNESCO: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
ICT: Information and Communications Technologies
UDL: Universal Design for Learning
NMMU: Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University

**The highest function of education is to bring about
an integrated individual who is capable
of dealing with life as a whole.**

– J. Krishnamurti 1953:24

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CHAPTER ONE

MOTIVATION AND DIRECTION FOR RESEARCH

“If we knew what we were doing it wouldn’t be research.”

– *Albert Einstein (1879-1955)*

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Throughout the centuries, Education Systems have always been vast and ever-changing. Reasons for these changes have ranged from change of governments, to changes in society as a whole.

South Africans, like the rest of the world, are today facing ever increasing and demanding challenges in their everyday lives. Since the dawn of the ‘New South Africa’ in 1994, western norms have become the ‘ideal’ in a once ‘conservative’ society. Today, South Africans are being exposed to new and challenging living standards and ideals which have resulted in new demands and stressors.

Education can never be separated from its society. Therefore whatever the changes are that occur in a society, the society’s education system needs to make a paradigm shift to adjust to the new societal demands. In South Africa this statement is justified by the policies and curricula that the South African Education Department have put into action since 1994.

Policies and curricula such as the Schools Act of 1996, the White Paper on Education and Training, 1995, Curriculum 1997 and Curriculum 2005 have largely been a response to the current ideology of the marketplace dominating our society and therefore our education system as well. Attempts have been made with these skills-based, learner-centred education policies to promote ‘better citizens’, and prepare people for skills-based employment. However, if one takes into consideration the increase in crime, unemployment, poverty and

corruption in present-day South African society, one would question whether the present education system is sufficient.

Many attempts have been made worldwide to determine the core competencies or skills students would require to assist them to cope with their future studies and life in general. It has been felt that if students or any individual for that matter had the following core competencies their coping mechanisms would be more effective (Wood 2003; Woolard 2003):

- Work ethic
- Time management
- Be able to work independently
- Take personal responsibility for actions
- Ability to organise and structure assignments
- Ability to conduct basic research
- Critical thinking skills
- Self-motivation
- High level of literacy

With this in mind, the researcher as an educator and counsellor has been led to question the quality of person that is being 'produced' in what would seem a consumerist society. There seems to be a lack of ability for people to cope with the challenges and stresses, e.g. depression, anger, loneliness, belonging, etc. that we face in our everyday lives. The researcher investigates in this dissertation whether a move away from traditional education in the form of alternative or parallel programmes, would assist in bringing about an integrated individual who is more capable of dealing with life as a whole (Krishnamurti 1953:24), thereby assisting in their journey in becoming a well-rounded, whole person.

1.2 **PROBLEM STATEMENT**

1.2.1 Analysis of the problem

The demands and changes in a modern society are so fast and radical that they often leave people with little or no time to respond. People are often expected to deal with the changes themselves with very few, or often incorrect knowledge sources to tap from.

It has been well documented that school-leavers need to possess certain core competencies in order to help them cope with the demands of life after school (Greyling 1995:197; Lindhard & Dlamini 1990:6; Vermaak 1995:1). The experience of the researcher has been, that the challenge that exists in both our educational system and our mind-set when it comes to educating people, is that we are treating people like products instead of taking a personal, humanistic approach. Here we just need to look at the White Paper on Education and Training of 1995, where it sets out reasons for the need of the current school curriculum: “There is a strong emphasis on economic growth and job creation. South Africa is part of a global economy and we have to be able to compete with other countries for part of the world market”.

1.2.2 Awareness of the problem

According to recent research (Wood 2004:5), schools are not adequately equipping learners with the necessary skills to cope with their everyday challenges. The researcher believes that the result of this is being part of a society that has been reduced to having impoverished senses, narrow thinking, and undermined bodily and emotional health and that has largely become incapable of insight and creativity.

In retrospect, it has seemed that although the government had theoretically, by passing the Schools Act of 1996 put all plans in place to assist in national interest and answer post-apartheid needs in education, in reality the practical implementation of the Act has proved to be not so effective or simple. The researcher’s opinion is that the present culture of education in South Africa is not interested in educating holistically, but rather is making people into “characterless abstractions”, who are merely creatures to be socialised, computers to be programmed, units of production to be harnessed and utilised and consumers to be won. The

present Outcomes-Based Education System qualifies this statement, as learners of this system are assessed on the general outcomes of a learning programme and the skills which they have or have not acquired, and yet students in South Africa have still been left under-prepared for life after school.

The causes of student under-preparedness in South Africa have been extensively discussed in literature (Hutchinson, Cantillon & Wood 2003:810; Lethoko 2002:246; Wood 2004:89), but it results in the student arriving at tertiary education lacking in the skills needed to cope with the academic and social demands of the tertiary environment. People's values are deliberately manipulated by marketing. We know from research that childhood insecurity often produces psychological wounds that are very difficult to heal and that childhood pathologies are a source of social and familial dysfunction in adults (Holistic Education Inc. 2003).

1.2.3 Statement of the Problem

In order for us to respond to the needs of our modern society and help people to develop a resilience to cope with life as a whole and in the process become integrated human beings, this research will take a closer look at how we can educate people more holistically, providing them with coping strategies and knowledge of how to cope with their everyday challenges.

1.3 **AIM OF THE RESEARCH**

1.3.1 General Aim: Literature Study

The general aim of doing this literature study is to make educators, counsellors and administrators aware of the importance of educating the whole person. In taking a look at the various ideas in which some theorists of holistic education have shaped education for the better, the study also aims to challenge and possibly change the mind-sets of present educationists that place emphasis on 'producing' the skilled labourer instead of putting each individual's interests and needs first, thereby making them aware that education is so much more than just learning of facts.

By defining what holism and holistic education is and how one can utilise the concepts of this ideal to assist people, the aim is to encourage, promote and nurture holistic self-development

and self-awareness. In so doing, the hope is not only that individuals will be able to develop the necessary coping strategies and resilience to deal with their everyday challenges effectively, but also become integrated persons.

1.3.2 Specific Aim: Qualitative Research

The specific aim in the use of qualitative research has been to establish whether it is possible to encourage personal growth by means of an environment-specific Personal Growth Programme, and therefore also to prompt holistic education, irrespective of a age, gender, culture or upbringing. Qualitative research will also be used to determine whether this PGP can supplement the current educational curriculum of the College of the Transfiguration to create a more effective 'whole education' of students at the college.

The research further aims to establish whether the use of the abovementioned programme, assisted by personal guidance from a counsellor or someone the individual trusts within the educational environment, can change how a person reacts to others and to their environment, thereby fulfilling the highest function of education: to be an integrated individual who has the resilience to cope with life as a whole.

If the abovementioned can be positively concluded, then the research will prove that this programme can be adapted for any environment, based on its specific needs, and secondly, that in empowering people to develop their self-understanding, self-knowledge or self-awareness with the use of resources supplied, they are able to develop their coping strategies and therefore will grow intellectually, emotionally, socially, aesthetically and empirically within this learning process.

1.4 MOTIVATION FOR THE RESEARCH

Being a counsellor at a theological college where people come from all walks of life with different life circumstances, cultures, and educational qualifications, the researcher has become acutely aware of the lack of coping strategies and resilience that college students have to enable them to deal with everyday difficulties and challenges.

The researcher's initial thoughts were that this might be due to the history of South Africa as a country and the effects of our history on society. With this in mind, the researcher concluded that while people need to heal and deal with the past, we also need to find ways and opportunities for ourselves to move on and become effective people, being more holistic in the way we react to and resolve the challenges in our lives.

As the researcher has worked with college students through their feelings of desperation, together with their lack of knowledge and awareness of current issues and their growing need to resolve their challenges, e.g. anger, loss, mutual differences, loneliness, their sense of belonging and self worth, etc., she has been led to search for possible ways to meet their needs. It became clear through group and individual discussions that these needs had not been met by conventional education systems in South Africa.

Evidence of this can be seen where research was done to determine the reasons for the under-preparedness of students entering tertiary education. Following their research, Wood and Olivier (2004:289-294) say that students had a lack of work ethic, inability to manage time, difficulty in working independently and taking personal responsibility, etc. They conclude by saying: "A tertiary education should therefore focus not only on the development of academic skills in students, but also facilitate the cultivation of a wide range of life skills, in order to promote effective functioning, both in the university environment and later life" (Wood et al. 2004: 294).

So, instead of dwelling on the past, we need to learn from it and move forward, and quoting from the college motto, evolve into, 'formed, informed, and transformed' human beings. Only then can we become better equipped to cope with our daily challenges, which seem to have become our present-day 'illnesses' that are difficult to 'cure'. The strategies that we use to cope with these challenges could therefore determine and shape our lives.

1.5 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

Holism

The term Holism derives from the Greek word “holos”, meaning ‘all’, ‘entire’ or ‘total’. Holism presupposes that not all the properties of a given system can be determined or explained by its component parts alone (Holism at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holism>). The term ‘Holism’ was first coined in 1926, by the South African statesman Jan Smuts. Smuts (1926:255) defined holism as: “the principle that makes for the origin and progress of wholes in the universe”. Holism is also defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2nd ed. 1989:99) as “the tendency in nature to produce wholes from the ordered grouping of unit structures”

Holistic Education

The term holistic education is often used to refer to the more democratic and humanistic types of alternative education. Martin (2002:1) describes this further by stating, “At its most general level, what distinguishes holistic education from other forms of education are its goals, its attention to experiential learning, and the significance that it places on relationships and primary human values within the learning environment”.

Mainstream Education

The *Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English* (2008) defines “mainstream” as ideas, attitudes or activities that are regarded as normal or conventional, the dominant trend in opinion, fashion, or the arts. We can build on this definition by determining its implications for education. ‘Mainstream schools’, or ‘regular schools’, as they have also been described, generally cater for and are available to the general public or masses.

Traditional Education

Traditional methods of education have been described as being controlled by calendars and timetables, where opportunities are limited and content is organised in subjects or courses that have to be completed in a specific time before credits are received (Spady 1994:32-35). According to the South African Department of Education (DoE) (1997a:6), traditional methods encourage rote learning that is textbook or worksheet-bound and teacher-centred.

Outcomes Based education (OBE)

Outcomes-based education (OBE) has been defined by Du Plessis (2005:22) as “a comprehensive approach to organising and operating a curriculum that is focussed on – and defined by – the successful demonstrations of learning sought from each learner”. Outcomes-based system is focussed on “what is essential for all learners to be able to *do* successfully at the end of the learning experiences” (Spady 1994:1).

Alternative Education

Alternative Education can be described as education for all children and adults as well” (Martin 2002:2). For the purpose of this research alternative education can be described as “... not hardened institutions with hardened rules or procedures”, but “...are flexible, caring learning communities where people come before procedures, rules or technology” (Martin 2002:3).

Self-efficacy

According to Bandura (1997:3) self-efficacy can be defined as the belief that the student holds about his or her capability “to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments”. Research suggests that for a student to improve in performance, the student’s cognitive self appraisals must first change (Linnenbrink & Pintrich 2003:136; Schunk 2003: 159).

Personal Growth Programme (PGP)

Personal Growth Programme, is an environment specific alternative education programme, created for the theological students in the residential College of the Transfiguration in Grahamstown. The programme is exclusively based on the needs of the students at the

college. The content of the PGP is closely integrated with the curriculum, and the principles of college formation – to form, inform and transform – and with the lives of the students who attend the college. The PGP was created as an attempt to bridge the gap between mainstream and holistic education, by providing an alternative or parallel programme to enable education towards integration into both college life and society as a whole.

1.6 RESEARCH METHODS AND DESIGN

To investigate and to find possible solutions to the above questions, this research project will take a closer look at a context-based alternative education programme developed by the researcher. This is a Personal Growth Programme, created to help the college students at the College of the Transfiguration in Grahamstown to cope with their everyday challenges.

The researcher developed this programme as she realised that holistic education needs to be directed towards the individual, and also needs to be context specific for a particular environment. The programme was developed after much research into the specific needs, challenges and stresses the students at the college experience.

In keeping with the ideal that holistic education is focused on the needs of the individual rather than educating the masses, the researcher follows a qualitative approach to research with the use of interviews and observation. In this type of research each individual is treated as unique, despite environmental and social similarities in the college context. Although generalisations are not desirable, the researcher has attempted to try and investigate whether the programme could be of assistance to the diverse college community in their quest to become more integrated individuals, able to cope with daily challenges, and thereby provide a more holistic form of education than conventional systems can provide.

The Personal Growth Programme is a confidential programme, shared only between the researcher and the student, or used for research purposes by permission. Consequently the collection of data takes place in two ways:

- A. The same subjects were studied continuously over a period of one year (the period that the programme runs for) – subjects will be compared with themselves at different points in the year by means of *personal interviews* to determine:
1. Whether the programme is of any use to the student;
 2. If the content is truly relevant to these particular students;
 3. If the student has made any progress in their personal growth;
 4. If the student was able, with the help of the programme together with personal guidance from a counsellor, to develop coping strategies to deal with their everyday challenges; and,
 5. Which part of the education, in the written information or the verbal guidance or both, helped most in their process of learning.
- B. The second way in which the researcher will try to assess whether the students are making progress is by *evaluating the tasks* set for them at the end of each section of the programme.

The tasks are in the form of standardised questions for all students. Although they are standardised, the research is expected to elicit different responses, based on the students' personal questions, needs and the assistance they require during their holistic education process. The researcher could then use the results, based on the responses given, to draw general conclusions regarding the participants as to how the students are responding to the programme.

The results will also be used by the researcher to determine a general scale of how effective the Personal Growth programme was in assisting in the students' journeys towards becoming more integrated individuals, even though they may vary in age, culture, upbringing and gender.

In conclusion, the researcher hopes to investigate whether using this type of alternative/parallel education programme, together with the conventional academic one, can bring about education towards integration, based on holistic principles of learning.

1.7 CHAPTER DIVISION

Chapter 1 provides the introduction and background reasons for the investigation. It also includes the hypothesis and aim of the investigation. It contains a description of the method of investigation, together with the value of the investigation and an explanation of concepts.

Chapter 2 defines holism and provides a map of historical and contemporary influences on Holistic Education (2.1). It also includes the origins (2.3.1) and ideals (2.3.2) of holistic education. The chapter goes on to describe how the world regards holistic education and ends with a literature review describing possible solutions to education challenges worldwide.

Chapter 3 takes a critical look at the problems and challenges facing mainstream schools today. It provides us a definition of the term ‘mainstream’ (3.2.1) and describes the two main methods of education used (3.3). The chapter includes an investigation relating to present-day challenges that all education institutions face (3.4). Thereafter it takes a closer look at factors to be considered when deciding what educational system to use (3.5). The chapter concludes with a literature review that attempts to respond to social and familial dysfunction within today’s society (3.6).

Chapter 4 describes possible ways in which the gap between holistic and mainstream education can be bridged. In section 4.2, different alternatives in education are described and compared. A research study is then used to describe possible reasons for under-preparedness in education (4.3).

Chapter 5 provides a complete explanation of the research approach and the use of the Personal Growth Programme (PGP) (5.2.1) used in this research project, which includes its purpose, outline, contents and aim. The chapter further describes the research method used, which includes the qualitative research methodology (5.3.2.1), data collection (5.3.3) and fieldwork (5.3.4).

Chapter 6 presents a summary of the research findings. This study is based on the results of in-depth interviews (6.2.2) and the annual review questionnaires (6.2.3).

Chapter 7 shows the interpretation of the results from the data collected in chapter 6 and offers conclusions and recommendations. The chapter looks at the limitations of the study (7.3.1) and explains the implications of the data collection for practical use (7.4.1). The chapter concludes by making recommendations (7.4).

1.8 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the problem statement of this dissertation was analysed and discussed. Both the specific and the general aim of this research were evaluated and a motivation was given why the research was to take place. A section on the clarification of concepts was included together with the research methods and designs that were used. A brief summary of each chapter of this dissertation concluded chapter one as a preparation for what was still ahead.

CHAPTER TWO

AN OVERVIEW OF HOLISTIC EDUCATION

“I have never let my schooling interfere with my education.”

– *Mark Twain (1835-1910)*

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will present an overview of Holistic Education and what the general concept of holism means. In order to give an understanding of the diverse and somewhat complex nature of this concept, an attempt will be made to map out the origins, and the historical and contemporary influences of holistic education. To point out how holistic education differs from mainstream education, it is necessary to discuss what holistic education claims to be.

Education can never be truly worthwhile if it is completely different from the reality of our daily challenges and the times we live in. Therefore, the focus in this chapter is on how holistic education makes connections to the world we live in. The word “education” has different meanings to different individuals. It could be seen as ‘...the state’s power to shape the minds and attitudes of citizens to provide human capital for economic and political purposes’ (Miller 2009:1). Education could also mean ‘...to nourish the unique and unfathomable possibilities of each [individual] (own emphasis)’ (Miller 2006b:1).

Conflicts between educators of holistic methodologies and those who are advocates of mainstream education are commonplace. There seem to be both positive and negative aspects to both systems of education. Holistic educators question whether today’s mainstream education systems are able to empower students to cope with their daily social challenges. Mainstream educators, meanwhile, question whether holistic education is viable and practical in today’s reality. With this in mind, the chapter will conclude with Miller’s thoughts regarding the renewal of meaning in education, where he says: “Education today needs a new vision, and a new understanding of its fundamental purposes (Miller 1993:8).

2.2 WHAT DOES HOLISM MEAN?

2.2.1 Holism Defined

To define the word Holism in order to better understand how we can use it in the discipline of Education is no easy task. The term Holism derives from the Greek word “holos”, meaning ‘all’, ‘entire’ or ‘total’. The general principle of holism was summarised by Aristotle in his *Metaphysics*, when he stated, “The whole is more than the sum of its parts”. Holism therefore presupposes that not all the properties of a given system can be determined or explained by its component parts alone (Holism at <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holism>).

The term ‘Holism’ was first coined in 1926, by the South African statesman Jan Smuts. Smuts (1926:255) defined holism as “the principle that makes for the origin and progress of wholes in the universe”. He went on to suggest that wholes be understood in their totality as greater than the sum of their parts. Holism is also defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary* (2nd ed. 1989:99) as “the tendency in nature to produce wholes from the ordered grouping of unit structures”.

The idea of holism has ancient roots. Examples of holism can be found throughout human history and in the most diverse socio-cultural contexts. With this in mind, Miller (1991:53-67) suggests that the emerging view of holism is commonly associated with post-Newtonian physics, ecological thinking and various Oriental philosophies. He also remarks that holism has deep roots in mystical and romantic trends in western spirituality.

Today the concept of holism can be found in the following disciplines of science:

- Anthropology
- Ecology
- Economics
- Philosophy
- Sociology
- Teleological psychology
- Theological anthropology

- Theology

Applications of holism have been made in fields as diverse from those mentioned above as architecture and industrial design. Often seen as enterprises, which themselves constitute a whole, holism implies an all-inclusive design perspective. In medicine, holism appears in psychosomatic and alternative medicine, where a holistic approach to healing emphasises the emotional, mental, spiritual and physical aspects of the patient (Nation Master online Encyclopedia: 2003-5).

Education too has not been excluded from this change in mind-set. However holistic education did not take form until the cultural paradigm shift that began in the 1960s. Due to the many social changes, educators began to realise that imparting only academic capabilities through education was not enough to meet the many challenges of their students' lives. Education had predominantly existed to prepare people for the world of work; to give them the skills that would help them up the ladder of material success (Forbes 1996). However many have looked at our current society in which social problems seemed to be getting worse, in which families and communities seemed increasingly dysfunctional, and asked why we aren't learning what we need to know in order to live good and meaningful lives (Holistic Education: Why Holistic Education at <http://www.holistic-education.net/visitors2.htm>). Hence the resultant birth of holistic education.

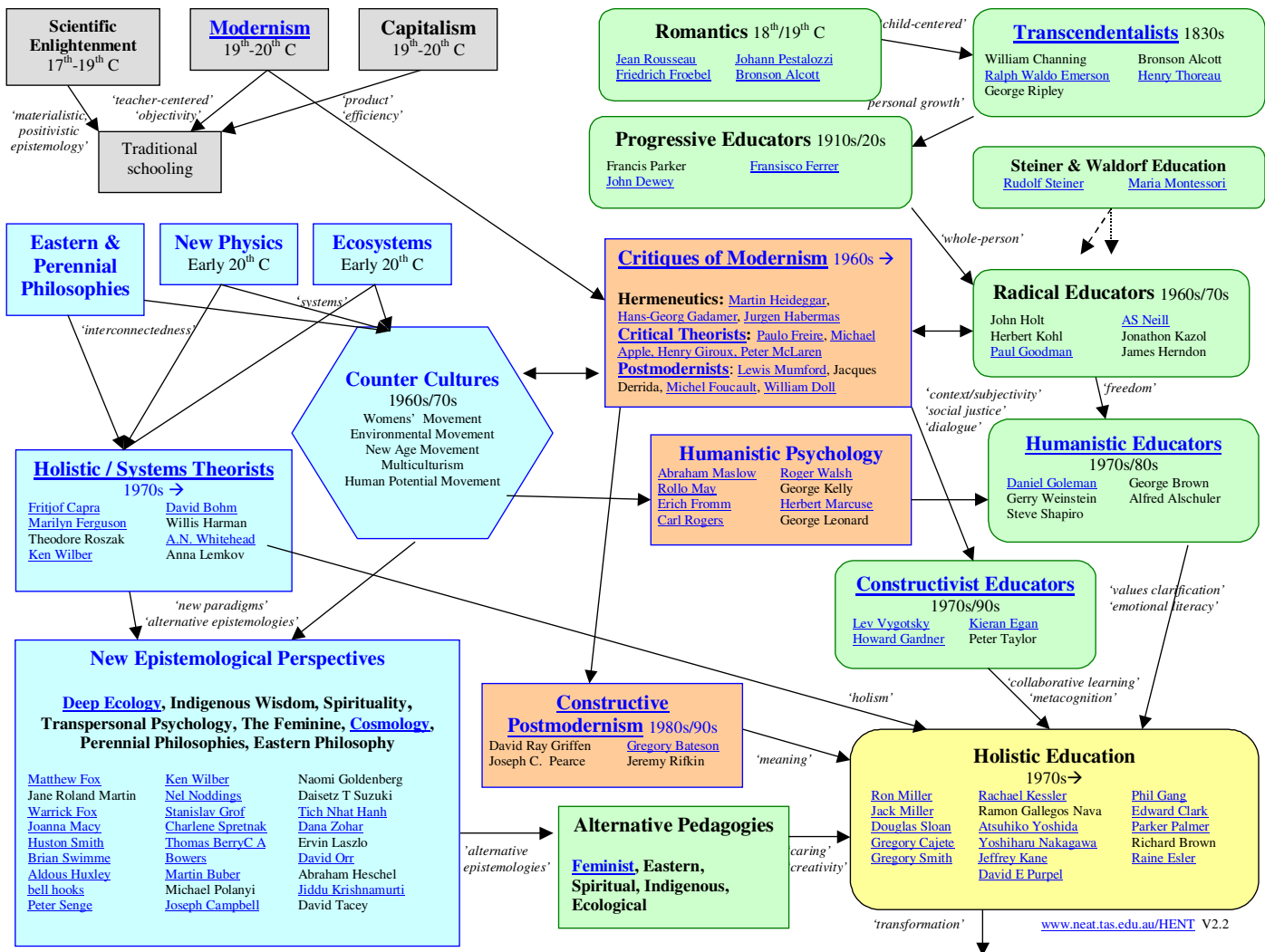
2.3 HOLISTIC EDUCATION

Holistic Education is a philosophy of education based on the premise that each person finds identity, meaning, and purpose in life through connections to the community, to the natural world, and to spiritual values such as compassion and peace (Holistic Education at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holistic_education). Miller, founder of the journal *Holistic Education Review* (now entitled *Encounter: Education for Meaning and Social Justice*), defines the aim of holistic education as calling forth from people an intrinsic reverence for life and a passionate love of learning (Bhatta 2007:2). The term holistic education is often used to refer to the more democratic and humanistic types of alternative education.

Martin (2002:1) describes this further by explaining that what distinguishes holistic education from other forms of education are its goals, its attention to experiential learning, and the significance that it places on relationships and primary human values within the learning environment. It is difficult to map the history of holistic education because many feel that the core ideas of holism are not new but “timeless and found in the sense of wholeness in humanity’s religious impetus” (Forbes 1996:1).

However, because of ongoing scepticism about the concept of holistic education and its ideals, holistic educators have been pressured by the scientific world to summarise and conceptualise their ideas. Due to this fact and the genuine concern of holistic educators for the need to ensure quality education for our future, attempts have been made to map out the historical and contemporary influences on holistic education. One such model, created by Stack (1994) (see Fig. 2.1) and shown here below, is meant to be indicative of general influences on holistic education, although it is not exhaustive.

2.1 MAP OF HISTORICAL AND CONTEMPORARY INFLUENCES ON HOLISTIC EDUCATION (Stack 1994)



2.3.1 The Roots of Holistic Education

The roots of holistic education can be traced back to several major contributors. Originating theorists include Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry Thoreau, Bronson Alcott, Johan Pestalozzi, Friedrich Froebel and Francisco Ferrer. Ideas about holistic education were further advanced by more recent pioneers such as Maria Montessori, John Dewey, Jiddu Krishnamurti, Carl Jung, Carl Rogers and many more. These educators have left

their traces in both the fields of psychology and education. They left behind for us structured ideas about how one could go about empowering people in a more holistic manner.

These ideas include the inception of 'holistic' schools such as the Waldorf schools based on Rudolf Steiner's philosophy that young children should be viewed with great respect and reverence. Waldorf schools focus on the life of feeling (emotions, aesthetics, and social sensitivity), the willpower (the ability to get things done) and the moral nature (being clear about right and wrong) (Steiner 1995). Another example of 'holistic' schools are the ones founded by Montessori in Rome in 1907 (Forbes 2003a:10). Her Montessori schools like many others that profess to be 'holistic' have striven to educate children to their highest human potential.

With the ideas of these pioneers in mind, many feel that the core ideas of holistic education did not truly take form until the cultural paradigm shift that began in the 1960s (Forbes 1996:1). After this, the holism movement in psychology emerged in the 1970s where, during this time, "an emerging body of literature in science, philosophy and cultural history provided an overarching concept to describe this way of understanding education – a perspective known as *holism*" (Miller 1999:1).

Although the holistic movement in psychology emerged in the 1970s, Miller states that it only began to emerge as a coherent philosophy in the mid-1980s (Miller 2009). He goes on to say that it is today becoming recognised in many parts of the world as an inspiring response to the serious challenges of this age of globalisation such as violence, cultural disintegration and ecological decline.

Although holistic education is viewed by some as inspiring, if we look at most mainstream curricula used in education today, it is evident that holistic ideals are not universal and in some instances are even viewed with criticism and scepticism. It is the opinion of the researcher that the ideals of holistic education can be utilised to create an alternative form of education, which would not choose either mainstream or holistic education but rather bridge the gap between them by encompassing both within one curriculum. To ensure that

educators are made aware of the positive or possibly even better influence that the ideals of holistic education can be for our future, it is necessary to show clearly what holistic education claims it can be.

2.3.2 Ideals of Holistic Education

2.3.2.1 What Holistic Education Claims to Be

It is no easy task to define the holistic education movement. This can be ascribed to the fact that it does not possess a single source, a predominant component or a major form of expression (Forbes 1996). At its most general level, holistic education is distinguished from other forms of education in three ways:

- a. Its goals
- b. Its attention to experiential learning
- c. The significance that it places on relationships and primary human values within the learning environment (Martin 2002).

2.3.2.1a Goals

The goals of holistic education are diverse, as it depends on the specific educational environment and on the individual needs of the person or persons that would determine what is required to make it holistic.

However in general terms, one could say that the overriding goal of holistic education can be best described by the term “ultimacy”. Ultimacy used here would mean, the highest state of being a human can aspire to (Forbes 2003a:17). Krishnamurti (1953:24) spoke of this “ultimacy” when he said that the highest function of education is to bring about an integrated individual who is capable of dealing with life as a whole.

To ensure that an individual becomes integrated one aim of education would need to be to develop civilised societies. This in turn depends on the complete development or ‘civilisation’ of the individual. Individual human development depends on education which provides the right conditions for the facilitation of learning which engages the ‘whole’ person. This would

include their instinctive motivation for growth through learning (intrinsic motivation) (Future Schools for Peace at <http://www.holisticeducator.com>).

In order for intrinsic motivation to be stimulated, the education would need to ensure that it is sensitive to the unique needs of each individual. The researcher believes that this second aim of education could become possible by providing students with information that they can use as tools and resources in order to live more integrated lives within their communities. The information would be based on their specific needs and take into consideration the environment in which they find themselves.

2.3.2.1b Attention to Experiential Learning

Holistic education does not simply instruct people about what is right or wrong and what is mistaken. It aims to enable the learner/student to enquire “what does this mean?”. To ensure that the ‘whole’ person is educated would mean that the educator as facilitator would need to assist in the experiential learning taking place. This idea keeps within the idea that experiential learning is learning-by-doing, which is often contrasted with rote or didactic learning (Experiential Learning at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Experiential_learning). This ‘journey towards wholeness’ can only take place if the goals or aims of holistic education are kept clearly in mind.

D’Jungle People Experiential Learning consultants from Malaysia, say that experiential learning is: “about creating an experience where learning can be facilitated”. However John Dewey pointed out that experiential learning can often lead to “mis-educative experiences”. This may occur if generalisations or meanings are misapplied. An example of this might be: in the traditional educational context of a lecture, the content of the course might be “physics”, but the experiential learning might be “I hate physics” (D’Jungle People at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Experiential_learning).

Therefore to ensure that “miss-educative experiences” are eliminated, the educator/facilitator should play a more supportive role in the individuals’ experiential learning process.

2.3.2.1c Relationships within the Learning Environment

If 'whole' education is to occur, the educator would need to do the following:

- Respond to the individual with an open, inquisitive mind and a loving heart.
- Have a sensitive understanding of the world he or she is growing into.

Adding to this, the holistic educator cannot be a technician, administering a series of workbook exercises. They should also not be performing a script learned in a teacher training programme. We need to ensure that the individual is empowered to become an integrated person who is capable of developing their own self-understanding, knowledge and self-awareness. If the educator gives all their thought, all their care and affection to the creation of the right environment for the individual, this could be achieved. The educator would also need to encourage the development of understanding, so that learners are capable of dealing intellectually with the human problems that confront them (Krishnamurti 1953:25).

With all of this in mind, this research seeks to find an answer to the question: "What is the 'right' kind of education for the society of tomorrow?" Educationists all over the world are conscious of the new role of education and the new demands made on educational systems in a world of accelerating economic, environmental and social change and tension (Bhatta 2007:1).

2.3.3 Making Connections to the World

According to educationists the world over, formal and non-formal education must serve society as an instrument for fostering the creation of good citizens (Bhatta 2007:1). The ideals and goals of holistic education seem to be the perfect solution and an answer to the educational needs of the present and future. On the other hand, we can ask: what of current 'traditional'/mainstream schools today? The purpose, aim and drive of mainstream education seems to be to equip individuals with the most excellent technological proficiency so as to function efficiently in the modern world (Bhatta 2007:1). There is no denying that this type of education seems to be sufficient for world needs. However education often concerns itself with a part and not with the whole (Krishnamurti 1953:28-29).

Miller (1999:2) described clearly how holistic education connects people to the world. He said: “it starts with the person – not some abstract image of the human being, but with the unique living, breathing boy or girl, young man or woman (or mature person, for that matter) who is in the teacher’s presence”. For education to be truly connected to the world and its realities, it should be more committed to whole human development. To ensure this, the person being educated needs to be made aware of the challenges and possibilities the world offers at this moment for their specific needs. It must also take into consideration the individual’s talents and how they can be utilised in their unique place or environment.

It seems evident that the mainstream curriculum alone is not able to fulfil this task. Holistic education too, has a stumbling block in that it does not have a ‘standardised’ curriculum as mainstream education does. In today’s technologically advanced society where everyone seems rushed and everything needs to happen instantly, there seems to be an absence of individuality. Education today seems to be creating ‘half-baked potatoes’, who have technological skills to function in a technologically advanced world but are unable to cope with this world’s social challenges. Instead of skills development only, we need to promote the empowerment of an individual who is capable of dealing with life as a whole.

Acknowledging the slow breakdown of our societies and an inability for people to deal with their challenges, Miller (1999:1) voices his concern over what he feels is missing today: “decent communities, and good work to do, loving relationships, stable families, the knowledge necessary to restore what we have damaged and ways to transcend our inherent self-centeredness.”

Miller (1999:1) seems to believe that holistic thought is the best response we can make in an attempt to reclaim the sense of connection to the world that utilitarian manipulation and advanced technology have steadily eroded and nearly wiped out. He goes on to say, that our existence needs to be meaningful or else our lives are unfulfilling, no matter how comfortable we make them through material wealth or political and economic power.

2.3.4 Dr Ron Miller: Renewal of Meaning in Education

Miller (1993:8) theorised that today's education is in need of a new vision, a new understanding of its fundamental purposes. He goes on to say that the conflicts over education today result from the lack of societal consensus supporting a nineteenth century model of common schooling that education systems are trying to hold onto.

The problem with this is clearly recognisable. Society in the twenty-first century has made a giant paradigm shift. We have moved into a technologically advanced society, which is based on quotas and instant gratification with no second thought given to the well-being of the individual. Miller explains that in order to move out of the crisis we are in it is not enough to simply "restructure" the education system already in place, which he regards as the stale remnants of a simpler time (Miller,1993:8). Educators instead, would need to deconstruct the socially/culturally produced meanings of 'education', 'school' and 'teaching'.

By examining the limitations of the present curricula and education systems, we could explore new ways of guiding education into the twenty-first century. This new paradigm in education should include an emphasis on wholeness and integration in the learning process. Education should become a nourishing and democratic community both inside the school and out. The incompatibility of non-holistic education with holistic education has often led advocates of each to view the other with suspicion and as misguided (Forbes 2003a:280).

2.4 CONCLUSION

Miller (1993:11-12) asserts that holistic education is rooted in metaphor (as opposed to technique), enabling it to change and evolve in response to the existential and cultural situation of teacher and learner. In this chapter we have explored how ideals of holism and holistic education dictate to us the importance of concentrating on the creation of an environment in which the individual can develop to the best of their potential.

Science and technology are moving ahead faster than ever before. The 'information age' is here. In many disciplines and occupations, what is known is out of date quicker than the knowledge can be learned. Many people no longer identify with traditional sources of meaning and values such as church, state, career or culture. The section on holistic education identifies

the need for change in present times. It seeks to emphasise that human beings are not limited to sensory perception or rational analysis. Being fully human is also about using intuition, inspiration and wisdom, while meeting needs for self-actualisation and self-transcendence (Education for Meaning at <http://www.hent.org/why/contents.htm>).

In this chapter, we have seen that holistic educators did not deny the need for acquisition of knowledge in the form of a curriculum, as is followed by present-day main-stream schools. In fact, they insisted that students must be equipped with the most excellent technological proficiency so that they may function with clarity and efficiency in the modern world (Bhatta 2007:1). However it should be reiterated that any form of education that concerns itself with a part and not with the whole, inevitably leads to increasing conflict and suffering (Krishnamurti 1953:28-29). The holistic educator Krishnamurti (1953:40) explains that, perhaps in the coming generations, with the right kind of education, we can put an end to chaos and build a happier social order.

In this chapter, relationships between the educator and those being educated are explained. The teacher is seen less as a person of authority who leads and controls, but rather as “a friend, a mentor, a facilitator, or an experienced travelling companion” (Forbes 1996). It also outlines the essence of holistic education to be reflection and questioning, rather than the passive memorisation of facts.

Modern education is failing to solve the world’s problems, and unable to prepare people for the fundamental challenges of living (Forbes 1997). The following observation by Scott Forbes (1997:3) concludes this chapter:

Education is not about preparation for only a part of life (work), but is about preparation for the whole of life and the deepest aspects of living.

CHAPTER THREE

PROBLEMS AND CHALLENGES OF MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

“Poverty, hopelessness, the disruption of families and communities, the ubiquity of media images, all make it difficult to place new things against a past too often made to appear a past of victimization, shadows, and shame.”

– *Maxine Greene (1993)*

3.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter an attempt will be made to define what “mainstream” schools are regarded to be. By highlighting how mainstream education has evolved over the years, an attempt will be made to point out how this differs from the more ‘holistic’ type of education that was discussed in chapter two.

In an attempt to do this, and to determine the effectiveness of mainstream school methods and teacher-student relationships, two mainstream school methods: Traditional Education (content-based) and Outcomes-Based Education (OBE) will be discussed. The reasons for changes from the more content-based education to an outcomes-based education system in mainstream schooling will also be considered in this chapter.

A brief look will be taken at how present-day challenges affect mainstream education; and whether mainstream schooling methods are effective and sufficient enough to deal with a world in constant change. In so doing, the researcher hopes to challenge the effectiveness of the two methods used by the mainstream school system, thereby questioning whether the these programmes alone are enough to be able to cater for a society in constant change, which consists of people who are continually ‘on the move’.

3.2 EDUCATION IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

3.2.1 Defining Mainstream

The *Oxford Pocket Dictionary of Current English* (2008) defines “mainstream” as ideas, attitudes or activities that are regarded as normal or conventional, the dominant trend in opinion, fashion, or the arts. We can build on this definition by determining its implications for education. ‘Mainstream schools’, or ‘regular schools’ as they have also been described, have generally catered for and are available to the general public or masses.

Throughout the history of education world-wide, the methods and content of education used in mainstream schools have largely been determined by the educators and/or the ruling government or church of the time. In most instances, people have been educated to serve the purposes of the authorities in power instead of the encouragement of whole human development. Evidence and research into learning and curricula in mainstream schools, seems to show that it caters for a ‘one size fits all’ mentality, where all learners are treated the same, irrespective of their learning abilities.

In South Africa from 1948 to 1989, education systems were determined by the Nationalist government of the time. This period in South African history was characterised by ‘segregated development’ based on race, and was known as ‘apartheid’ (Davenport 1991:327-328). Hartshorne (1992:9) confirms this, describing the system of education as authoritarian, which he felt encouraged rote learning and created incongruity between academic knowledge and its practical application.

3.2.1.1 Mainstream Education: A South African Context

Prior to 1948, formal education in South Africa was already racially separated. White education was controlled by the Union Department of Education while black education was organised by a separate department, the Department of Native Affairs (Behr 1984:176). This department oversaw the education of black people in both government (mainstream) schools and church-funded (mission) schools (Christie 1985:50-51).

Jeevantham (1999:49) states that during the apartheid era, the curriculum content was used to endorse white supremacy by excluding black people and their cultures and practices. He goes on to say that the curriculum in mainstream schools was Eurocentric in nature, thereby serving institutional racism, because a person not having a European background was taught the curriculum and was expected to attain European standards of cultural practice.

Behr (1984:28) explains how prior to 1948, school curricula were focused on university entrance, not taking into account the students who wanted to enter the fields of commerce or trade. Thereafter in an attempt to cater for students in mainstream schools who wanted to pursue a trade the Union government made the following changes:

- Agriculture and farm management were added to farm and rural schools (Behr 1988:23);
- Less academic subjects which were more practical in nature, e.g. technical drawing, commerce, housecraft, woodwork, etc., became optional subjects in some schools (Behr 1984:29).

However, these changes only occurred in white mainstream schools, whereas it was argued that Bantu education failed to cater for suitable initial education (political and technical) making it undemocratic, which resulted in vast disparities between the black, coloured, Indian, and white education systems (Hofmeyer *et al.* 1992:19).

There was a great need for change after the fall of apartheid. South Africa needed young people with democratic attitudes to become full citizens of the new democracy after 1994. Two of the main methods of education in mainstream schools have been: Traditional Education (content-based) and Outcomes-Based Education. We will discover that although these two types of education profess to be contrasting in methods and content, both seem to drive towards a similar goal: to mould human beings into future citizens or workers who are there to be used as machines to the advantage of world politics, economics and industry.

3.3 TWO MAIN METHODS USED IN MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS

3.3.1 Traditional Education (Content-Based)

Freire (1987:10) stated that: “the lecture-based passive curriculum is not simply poor pedagogical practice. It is the teaching model most compatible with promoting the dominant authority in society and with disempowering students.” Traditional methods of education have been described as being controlled by calendars and timetables, where opportunities are limited and content is organised in subjects or courses that have to be completed in a specific time before credits are received (Spady 1994:32-35). According to the Department of Education (DoE) (1997:6), traditional methods encourage rote learning that is textbook or worksheet-bound and teacher-centred.

Progressive thinkers in education often paint a very unflattering picture of traditional education, saying that students were required to memorise endless facts and formulas from a dreary academic curriculum remote from their own youthful interests. Often in traditional education, teachers have defined good pedagogy as drill and practice; their job was to hear recitations, not lead discussions. Classroom life was austere. Teachers established unilaterally the rules and regulations, and they punished misconduct harshly. Administrators deferred to school boards often enmeshed in factionalism and political patronage (Hampel at <http://www.faqs.org/childhood/Pa-Re/Progressive-Education.html>).

In the traditional teaching environment, the teacher is the controller of the learning environment. Power and responsibility is held by the teacher and they play the role of instructor (in the form of lectures) and decision maker (in regards to curriculum content and specific outcomes) (Novak 1998: 24-25). According to Novak (1998: 24-25), teachers of traditional education regard students as having ‘knowledge holes’ that need to be filled with information and that it is the teacher that causes learning to occur.

Piaget argued that “children do not learn by sitting passively in their seats, listening to the teacher” (Pulaski 1980:206). In traditional learning environments, content need not be learned in context (Johnson *et al.* 1991). This idea of learning promotes the importance of content and delivery thereof, which is chiefly accomplished through drill and practice (rote learning).

In South African mainstream schools, as in other schools world-wide, traditional content-based education was the primary form of instruction prior to the fall of the apartheid era. Commenting on the traditional approach to education in South Africa, Olivier (1998:29) describes how traditional rote-learning provided the student with knowledge or skills or both, but they were “not coupled to a specific context”. This means that learning often took place in a ‘vacuum’ and concerned itself only with the transmitting of content-based knowledge to the students.

This content-based rote learning used in South Africa prior to 1989, focused on university entrance (Behr 1984:28), and although providing an extremely high academic standard and preparing students well in both pure academic and more career orientated subjects, these opportunities and standards were confined to white schools (Malherbe 1977:158ff). Malherbe (1977:158ff) ascribes the high standards which prevailed in white mainstream schools to two reasons:

1. Only well qualified teachers were employed together with an effective system of school inspection.
2. White parents were involved in their children’s education.

In the traditional curriculum in South Africa, as in other parts of the world, the only method of judging the effectiveness of educational methods is by looking at school grades, examination and achievement tests (Adler 1970). According to Piaget, a better system would evaluate the student’s worth as a function of work done throughout the year without examinations (Adler 1970), instead of basing everything on the outcome of one examination.

Another feature of traditional education was based on passive cognitive content-based learning, where students were not able to explore and discover for themselves (Fischer 1970) but rather ‘soak up’ the knowledge given to them by teachers and reproduce this ‘knowledge’ in the form of examination results. Piaget favoured student-centred rather than teacher-centred education, because once the child has this information he/she should be required to act upon it to ensure they internalise it (Beveridge 1997). Piaget was also of the belief that traditional educational methods, i.e. rote learning, impose restraints upon the child and he

therefore advocated a new method that encourages spontaneous activity based on personal need and interest (McNally 1977).

South Africa faced three major challenges regarding education after 1994:

1. The creation of an equitable system of education and training, serving all South Africans.
2. A need to improve the quality of education and training so that human resources can achieve and sustain significant levels of economic growth for international competitiveness.
3. A need for a more flexible education and training system, accessible to the majority of its citizens.

(Du Toit 1997:1)

It was assumed that OBE could equalise the South African education system (South African Qualifications Authority 1997:10), by creating opportunities for all South Africans to become life-long learners. Secondly it was also assumed that OBE would make education and training relevant to the needs of individual students and to the country as a whole. It was also believed that OBE would make education and learning attainable by establishing a flexible education system offering different routes where students could accumulate credits in order to gain qualifications (South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) 1997:10) instead of having to sit examinations as in traditional education. A discussion of what Outcomes-Based Education is and why it is needed now follows.

3.3.2 Outcomes-Based Education (OBE)

In recent times, due to technological and economic changes, governments throughout the world have been reforming school systems to enhance educational standards.

In an attempt to raise the knowledge and skills of future citizens in an atmosphere of strong international competition for economic success, an emphasis has been placed on outcomes. According to Hargreaves (1999:45), this 'new' outcomes-based education seems to focus on two aspects:

- a. In the primary phase there is a focus on the ‘basics’ to ensure that students achieve literacy and numeracy quickly in order to provide essential access to the rest of the school curriculum.
- b. At secondary level and beyond, the focus seems to be better preparation of students for the world of work.

Outcomes-based education (OBE) has been defined by Du Plessis (2005:22) as “a comprehensive approach to organising and operating a curriculum that is focussed on – and defined by – the successful demonstrations of learning sought from each learner”. Spady (1994:1) explains how the outcomes-based system is focussed on “what is essential for all learners to be able to *do* successfully at the end of the learning experiences”. Although focussed on the outcomes of a learning situation, OBE does not propose to neglect the content part of learning but rather emphasises the importance thereof within a specific context (Du Plessis 1995: 22).

Du Plessis (2005:18) also describes OBE as a flexible, empowerment-orientated approach to learning. The DoE (1997:21) defines it as aiming at equipping learners with the knowledge, competence and orientations needed for success after leaving school. They explain its guiding vision as that of a competent future citizen. They go on to say that success at school level is of limited benefit unless learners are equipped to transfer academic success to life in a complex, challenging, high-technology future (Du Plessis 1995:18).

The following table outlines the differences between traditional (rote learning) and outcomes-based education systems:

**3.1 TABLE DEFINING DIFFERENCES:
TRADITIONAL VERSUS OBE (DoE 1997:6)**

TRADITIONAL	OBE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Learners are passive. ▫ The approach is exam-driven. ▫ Rote-learning is encouraged. ▫ The syllabus is content-based and divided into subjects. ▫ Learning is textbook/worksheet-bound and teacher-centred. ▫ The teacher sees the syllabus as rigid and non-negotiable. ▫ Teachers are responsible for learning and motivation which depends on the personality of the teacher. ▫ Emphasis is on what the teacher hopes to achieve. ▫ Content is placed into rigid time-frames. ▫ The curriculum design process is not open to public comment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▫ Learners are active. ▫ Learners are assessed on an ongoing basis. ▫ Critical thinking, reasoning, reflection and action are encouraged. ▫ Content is integrated and learning is relevant and connected to real-life situations. ▫ Learning is learner-centred, the teacher facilitates and constantly applies group work and team work to consolidate the new approach. ▫ Learning programmes are seen as guides that allow teachers to be innovative and creative in designing their programmes. ▫ Learners take responsibility for their own learning and are motivated by feedback and affirmation of their worth. ▫ Emphasis is on what the learner will be able to know and do. ▫ Flexible time-frames allow learners to work at their own pace. ▫ Comment and input from the wider community is encouraged.

After consulting the table above (Fig 3.1), we will now discuss reasons for possible changes in systems of education from the more traditional forms of education to outcomes-based education.

3.3.3 Reasons for Changes from Traditional Education (Content-Based) to Outcomes-Based Education (OBE)

The structure of the world at work has changed rapidly from traditional industrial society to a more knowledge-based society. This in turn has changed patterns of work and has also generated different types of work (Hargreaves 1999:45).

Dewey (1951:1) observed, that “the history of educational theory is marked by opposition between the idea that education is development from within and that it is formation from without”. This idea often tends to cause theorists to break terminology into exclusive opposites: instruction versus facilitation, didactic versus inferential, passive versus active and *traditional versus progressive*.

Dewey, as one of the most influential theorists of progressivism and change in education, envisioned progressive pedagogy as a means to, not an avoidance of, intellectual exertion. The curiosity of children and the flexibility of teachers should enhance, not diminish, the life of the mind (Dewey 1951). Dewey was therefore endorsing a strategy which would convey serious subject-matter through an experiential learning process.

Olivier (1998:20-21) says that the move from mainly content-based education to OBE was thought of at a time when the quality movement in business and manufacturing was introduced. The shift from traditional (content-based) education to OBE was thought to have a specific aim. This was to prepare learners for life in society and for performing tasks based on the new demands of the job market.

There have been many arguments in favour of OBE. One argument is that OBE is able to measure what students are capable of doing, something which the traditional education system often fails to do. An example of this is how assessment methods in traditional education systems often grade students on their ability to choose correct answers, thus not allowing them to demonstrate their understanding of what they have learnt, but instead expecting them to reproduce verbatim their content knowledge.

OBE, on the other hand, requires students to understand the content and be able to apply it. By doing this they are “extending the meaning of competence far beyond that of narrow skills and the ability to execute structured tasks in a particular subject area and classroom” (Spady 1995:82-84).

With the times changing, there has also been an increase in pressure on our mainstream schools to improve educational standards. There seems to be a world-wide decline in academic performance. Educationists the world over have been rallying to find and implement a school system that is able to turn this trend around. The OBE educational system has been regarded by educators as revolutionary, as it proposes a break with traditional ideas about how to teach. Language, literature, history, customs, traditions and morals have often been based on and dominated by ‘western civilisation’, with its purpose being to produce academically competent students.

However, the OBE system was created to change this. According to Spady, three goals guide it:

1. All students can learn to succeed, but not on the same day or in the same way.
2. Each success by a student breeds more success.
3. Schools control the conditions of success.

With these three goals in mind it was felt that if we create the right environment, any student can be prepared for any academic or vocational career (Spady 1994).

Governmental and social changes post-1989 in South Africa, resulting in the fall of the apartheid era, together with the pending education needs in the country (see sections 3.2.1.1 and 3.3.3) were not the only motivations for change from the traditional to OBE methods of education in mainstream schools. Over the last few decades, the world has seen widespread economic, social, cultural and workplace changes. To assist education as a response to change, the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century compiled a report for UNESCO, called: *Learning: The Treasure Within*, for education for the 21st century (1996).

In this report the Commission proposed to promote healthy, whole citizens by emphasising the importance that education should be more learner-centred so as to make it more meaningful to all learners, thus helping them cope with present-day challenges. People world-wide were at this time realising that change was imminent and plans had to be made to facilitate coping strategies to live with impending change.

3.4 LIVING WITH CHANGE

The International Commission on Education (1996:13) commented how our century has been one of both social and economic progress, and how this in turn evokes both anguish and hope. They go on to say that it is therefore “...essential that all people with a sense of responsibility turn their attention to both the aims and the means of education” (Delors, *et al.* 1996:13).

However, as we turn our attention to the aims and needs of education for our present-time, where our systems of education are attempting to equip individuals to compete in the world economy, the researcher is concerned about the motivations behind educational systems and reforms.

Orr (1993:25) raises this concern by stating his belief that the present-day education reforms are concerned more with meeting the needs of governmental economic production than promoting personal growth and wholeness among individuals. The age-old goal of education in which the learner embarks on a quest to find truth and understanding and personal wholeness seems no longer to be the driving force behind education, but is rather regarded by some as a dim memory of a bygone era of idealistic education.

Education, in the opinion of the researcher, should be more about bringing about personal development and building relationships amongst individuals, groups and nations and less about the production of a product (the student), who is able to meet the skills needs of the market. In this way the people of the world will be more equipped, in the words of UNESCO, “...to respect the rights of women and men, to show mutual understanding, and to

use advances in knowledge to foster human development rather than to create further distinctions between people” (UNESCO 1996:14).

South Africa, like the rest of the world, has in the last two decades been undergoing drastic changes in government, education, social structures, value systems, and technology. Although the new advances have been positive and necessary for the future of South Africa, changes have brought with them an increase in crime, unemployment, poverty and corruption in our society. This type of consumerist society often leaves people unable to cope with the new challenges, stresses and demands that they are faced with, such as depression, anger, loneliness, etc. This, together with the national skills-based education system which often neglects the ‘whole’ personal growth of the individual, leaves society helpless in the face of increased diversity.

3.4.1 Globalisation

Globalisation has been defined as the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many kilometres away and vice versa (Gibbens 1990:64). On the one hand, the world has become a global village with an interdependent web of political and economic relationships. and on the other hand, differences in culture, race, religion, and language have become accentuated as people and nations struggle to find personal and cultural identities.

According to Cogburn (1998:3), there has been a world-wide increase in economic globalisation and restructuring in the world’s political and economic systems. He argues that “...the requirements for knowledge and information within that system, educational needs (in terms of structure, function, curriculum and approach) at all levels, especially at the tertiary level, have changed”.

Carnoy (2000:44) writes in his paper on *Globalisation and Educational Reform* that globalisation has impacted on education in three crucial ways:

- Financially, most governments are under pressure to reduce growth of public spending on education and find other sources of funding for the expansion of educational systems.
- In labour market terms, governments are under pressure to attract foreign capital therefore they need a ready supply of highly skilled labour. With this in mind, they therefore expand higher education and increase the number of secondary school graduates ready to attend post-secondary institutions. The need for more highly educated low-cost labour tends to expand woman's educational opportunities.

In educational terms, the quality of national educational systems are being compared internationally. This therefore leads to increased emphasis on maths and science curricula, standards, testing and meeting standards by changing the way education is delivered (Nelly *et al.* 2000:44).

Cogburn (1998:4) explains that the globalisation of the economy and the resultant demands placed on the workforce needs a very different type of education, which requires that students are able to "...access, assess, adopt, and apply knowledge, to think independently, to exercise appropriate judgment and to collaborate with others to make senses of new situations." This has placed increasing demands on institutions of education and their educators. Education's objective is no longer 'just' to convey knowledge to students, but is now required to teach them how to learn, problem solve and synthesise the old with the new.

For this change in educational objectives to become practical, instead of just staying an ideal of what should occur, would require a drastic change in the infrastructure of mainstream schools. There would also have to be a change in the mind-set of the rulers of the nations, towards the importance of education for the future of their countries. However educators continue to be among the lowest paid professionals in the workplace and are increasingly faced with both environmental and global pressures (Parks 1983). Together with this factor, in mainstream schools today there still seem to be "...inadequate books and supplies, large classes, disruptive students, public criticism, limited assistance and increased duties..." (Parks 1983).

Lumsden (2001), comments that throughout the world, teachers are being stretched to the limit. She goes on to remark how there have been increasing expectations placed on them: "...their role encompasses not only teaching specific content and mentoring students in the love of learning, but functioning as frontline social workers...". This has become an increasing reality for teachers world-wide as they daily have to deal with the countless number of social problems/challenges that students bring with them into the classroom.

All of the above factors make it increasingly difficult to cater for the individual. With little time or resources to help students cope with the rapid change that globalisation is instrumental in causing, the researcher asks the question: "What is the significance of life and what happened to the importance of catering for the individual?" Krishnamurti (1953:11) was of the opinion that our civilisation has divided life into so many different departments that education has been reduced to only learning a particular technique or profession. He says: "Instead of awakening the integrated intelligence of the individual, education is encouraging him [or her] to conform to a pattern and so is hindering his [or her] comprehension of himself [or herself] as a total process" (my emphasis) (Krishnamurti 1953:11).

Due to world-wide, large-scale globalisation, science and technology are advancing faster than ever before. In this age of globalisation, industries such as biotechnology, new materials science, human genetics, advanced computing, artificial intelligence and human/computer interfaces place demands on the education sector to ensure that the workforce remains highly trained (Cogburn 1998:4).

3.4.2 Science and Technology

With the phenomenal growth in science and technology, every aspect of our lives seems to be affected. Society has been transformed and become increasingly diverse, globalised and media saturated.

Kellner, believes that this technological revolution will have a greater impact on society than the transition from an oral to a print culture (Kellner 2000). Shaw (2008) notes that development in science and technology and resulting globalisation has provided "... unlimited

possibilities for exciting new discoveries and developments such as new forms of energy, medical advances, restoration of environmentally ravaged areas, communities and exploration into space and into the depths of the oceans...”

It cannot be denied that science and technology has had a huge impact on education in terms of both quality and quantity. Today’s students have become digital learners, literally taking in the world via the filter of computing devices: the cellular phones, handheld gaming devices, PDA’s and laptops they take everywhere, plus the computers, TVs, and game consoles at home. Despite the fact that today’s students understand how to access and utilise technology, Wesch (2008), in his presentation at the American Library of Congress, pointed out that many of them remain semi media-illiterate, because they use technology primarily for entertainment purposes.

Education is being shaped daily by what we could call the ‘digital revolution’. The age of computers has become what one expert called “... the most transforming technological event since the capture of fire...” (Barlow *et al.* 1995:36). Computers and the internet have expanded how information can be given to students today, and how teachers facilitate learning. Some have even stated that the internet can be a way in which the self-efficacy and the self esteem of students can be facilitated (Martin *et al.* 1997), while others have argued that it fragments the self and promotes cynical people who are both insincere and calculating (Sherman 2000).

As a researcher, my concern is that in the scramble to ensure that students are equipped to handle modern science and technology, there is a great danger of losing the essence of the individual; as Orr (1993:25) put it, “to produce people whose purpose and outlook are narrowly economic, not to educate citizens...” Authentic education addresses the ‘whole child’, the ‘whole person’, and does not limit our professional development and curriculum design to workplace readiness. Although individual attempts have always been made in mainstream education to improve the individual, curricula mostly cater for the technologically, industrialised, market-orientated individual who is required to produce skills for today’s market-place.

In South Africa as elsewhere, it was felt that the OBE system of education should help students develop dispositions or attitudes associated with critical thinking (Pithers & Soden 2000:237). However Potterton (2008:15) argues that together with changes in curriculum the teachers and students were faced with the following challenges:

1. There were a multitude of new policies and regulations that teachers had to come to grips with.
2. They were faced with extremely large classes.
3. There was still a strong hold of traditional practices on teachers.
4. There was a lack of proper training for teachers in respect of the new curriculum.
5. There was a lack of handbooks, or none at all available to support them.

Due to the above conditions that prevailed at the onset of the OBE curriculum in South Africa, the researcher is of the opinion that certain factors needed to be considered beforehand to enable successful facilitation and implementation of such a programme. These factors will be discussed in the next section.

3.5 FACTORS TO CONSIDER BEFORE DECIDING WHICH EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM TO USE

3.5.1 Inclusion

With any advance in the educational domain, the first and most important consideration in the mind of the researcher is: Is it inclusive and viable for all?

3.5.1.1 Reaching All Students

Despite reports by researchers who show the positive effects of technology and new scientific discoveries on student learning, many educators are concerned by the fact that educational technology often potentially excludes those who do not have an access to it.

3.5.1.2 Students at Risk

We often find that students who come from minority schools or those with low socio-economic standing have challenges when it comes to accessing new educational technologies readily available to more affluent students. In this regard, research has found that both

minority schools and those of low socio-economic status face the most acute challenges in helping educators and students to achieve ICT literacy (Becker 2000b; Becker & Ravitz 1997).

Further research has been done to determine what percentage of educators use teaching technology when teaching (Lenhart. *et al.* 2001). It was found that 61% of educators with computers in higher-income schools use computer technology and the internet in the classroom, as opposed to 50% in lower-income schools.

The research also indicates that the nature of the instruction differed between schools of high and low socio-economic status (Becker 2000b). Schools of low socio-economic status tended to use teaching technology for traditional memory-based and remedial activities, whilst those in higher socio-economic schools used it to focus on communication and expression (Becker 2000b).

3.5.1.3 Students with Disabilities

Many great technological advances have been made to assist students with disabilities. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) have created flexible teaching methods and new curriculum materials to assist diverse learners and to improve access to the general educational curriculum (Rose *et al.* 2002).

Another advance for students with disabilities has been the use of electronic texts for reading materials instead of printed reading materials. Examples such as modified text styles and fonts to help visual disabilities; together with reading aloud by computer-based text-to-speech translators have made radical differences in the lives of those with disabilities.

Despite the wonderful advances in both science and technology, students with disabilities in mainstream schools experience limited access to assist them in the general curriculum and are forced to cope with learning from textbooks (Biancarosa *et al.* 2004; Kamil 2003). Advances in science and technology alone can not ensure that a person is holistically developed. Our systems of education and advances in science and technology, although striving to help us educationally and intellectually, seem to be making us "... subservient, mechanical and deeply

thoughtless” (Krishnamurti 1953:15). Although advancing us intellectually, we are left inwardly incomplete, stultified and uncreative (Krishnamurti 1953:15). “... Education is no longer providing energy, awareness, power and direction to society” (LePage 1989).

It would seem that education today is concentrating too much on the technology and less on the whole development of individuals and their need to be able to cope with personal challenges within society. These educational systems alone don't seem adequate to help students develop holistically, often due to the fact that education is perceived as an industry rather than an art (LePage 1989). LePage (1989:268) believes that our educational systems have substituted pathology for wellness, in the belief that we are “doing education”.

Although students have technology and more opportunities to develop themselves, they are often unaware or uninterested in their own origins (LePage 1989: 268). LePage (1989) remarks that little or nothing is offered in education to develop students' self-confidence, or their ability to be responsible or help them in their character development, which often deters us from developing meaning in our lives and in the world.

The blame for the inability of people to cope with daily challenges does not lie exclusively with the education system of today. Durkheim (1897/1951) argued that education, “...is only the image and reflection of society. It imitates and reproduces the latter... it does not create it”. Rapid changes in science and technology and increased globalisation have not only been advantageous to society, they have also resulted in social and familial dysfunction. Some educators believe that the use of a more holistic type of education can help ‘cure’ the social ills of society today.

Educators in general seem therefore to have shown little interest in imparting learning which would develop the individual holistically by developing their self-knowledge and self-esteem. Thus we find people facing increased difficulties and challenges in their everyday lives, which they are no longer able to cope with. Although technology is being used to build up our students for the future, one needs to question whether all people have the same opportunities to access this new science and technology. Society has changed drastically, and

all too often people face both social and familial dysfunction which puts them at a disadvantage in not being able to utilise these new opportunities. In the next section, we will explore what type of education system could be a possible solution in assisting people with their present-day challenges, and whether just one type of system is enough to facilitate the holistic development of an individual.

3.6 TRADITIONAL OR OBE: A RESPONSE TO SOCIAL AND FAMILIAL DYSFUNCTION

Education and the manner in which it functions has always been determined by the society in which it finds itself. At no time in history has education ever been detached from social conditions. Many people no longer identify with traditional sources of meaning and values in church, state, career or culture. In the absence of these values, the global media easily manipulate opinions about what is popular and valuable to the world.

The lack of deep values and understanding in mainstream education today, often leaves our society with an unquenchable thirst for meaning and wholeness. Often misguided or unconscious attempts by society to attain a sense of fulfilment result in dysfunctional activities and relationships. Human beings are not limited to sensory perception or rational analysis. To develop holistically is to develop the whole person with the use of their intuition, inspiration and wisdom, while also being able to address their needs for self-actualisation and self-transcendence (Grof 1979; Whitehead 1967; Wilber 1980).

Most mainstream changes in education assume that our society is "... fundamentally sound and this is often why our systems of education are a failure" (Singer *et al.* July 2003). We live in a society today that continually seeks advantage and higher profits. Corruption is rife in a culture which glorifies violence in sports, movies and video games. Our communities are often disjointed and people have become more individualistic, where no one feels obligated to pay taxes for the broader social good of society. We have become a society which promotes instant gratification and often shuns those who do not fit in (Bowles *et al.* 1976).

Just as in society, our schools reward some and punish others, teaching both groups that what they receive is a direct result of their own efforts (Kohn 1999). Holistic educators have often voiced widespread concern about the breakdown of families and communities. There seem to be increased incidences of neglect and abuse of all kinds happening around us. Conflict and isolation has become an everyday occurrence. All of this does not occur without psychological consequences deeply affecting our society, which mainstream education cannot and does not address or sometimes does not even acknowledge.

Although parents try to instruct their children about society, themselves and their relationships, this is often overshadowed by popular culture as promoted by media and marketing (Forbes 28 June 1996). Media often portrays to society how to act, resolve conflicts and even what relationships should be like, for example, portraying to us who our heroes and icons should be. However, this is often at odds with the culture, values and understanding of parents or care-givers, which in turn results in rebellion and great turmoil (Forbes 28 June 1996).

Media often targets and puts pressure on the self-image of children, at a time when their self-image is being formed and is most vulnerable. This often leads to loss of the security which according to research they need for healthy development and learning to occur. However, instead of viewing education as the mirror of a dysfunctional society, the researcher believes that within this educational system, dysfunctional and inadequate as it may be, there are still opportunities to 'right the wrongs'. This can be done by providing an alternative, supplementary programme to the present curricula, instead of trying to create some 'holistic' curriculum which could never suffice.

Dewey, tried to revolutionise world educational systems by finding a solution to the lack of ethics, values and integrity in mainstream educational instruction programmes and curricula. His aim was to enable students to learn content, social and academic skills and an appreciation for democratic living. In his classroom, the educators were the experts, who were responsible for organising experiences for this to occur, (Singer *et al.* July 2003). There have been criticisms, however, of Dewey's 'holistic' type of education, which has been practiced in elite

private schools. Some, such as Freire (1995), for example, call on educators to challenge the unequal power arrangement in classroom and society, such as occurs in the Dewey classroom, as he feels that it results in schools becoming racially, ethnically and economically segregated.

Freire (1970; 1995) shared Dewey's desire to allow for the creativity within each individual and to be able to question within the classroom environment. However, unlike Dewey's ideas which he saw as mostly elitist and therefore often unable to embrace the spectrum of human difference, thereby having an impact on society, Freire encouraged diversity by allowing students to explicitly critique social injustice and actively organise themselves to challenge oppression.

Holistic education has maintained that as a response to social and familial dysfunction, students need to actively and deliberately learn, discuss and be examined in the classroom about relationships and values (Singer *et al.* July 2003).

Green (1993a; 1993b; 1993c) believes that educators should listen to the voices of the students and that by doing this they could be more able to answer their individual needs. She championed the act of 'listening', which she expounded could be the 'solution' to many drawbacks in education today.

Acknowledging the reality that ideas, societies and people are dynamic and always changing (Green 1993a; 1993b; 1993c), there is a need to encourage personal growth and openness among people, so that they are able to discover self-knowledge and understanding in the ever changing and extreme relativistic world in which we live. However, two questions still remain:

1. Traditional or Outcomes-Based Education?
2. How do we educate our young people to help them cope with the challenges they experience in their lives?

Our educational systems today are often mirror images of our societies. What we perpetuate in economics and politics within a society is often taught in our classrooms. This chapter has served to investigate the differences between tradition (rote-learning) and OBE in order for us

to obtain a better understanding of the two main systems of education. It also served to investigate some of the realities and challenges that modern humanity faces and which could possibly have a bearing on education, and hence lead society to determine what system of education they would use. To ensure that our students of the future are holistically educated, this chapter presented additional factors (section 3.5) to be considered before a decision is made as to what type of education we should choose.

3.7 CONCLUSION

Mainstream education often instils a particular intellectual and social discipline. The ideological or economic interests that are included in our school systems will determine the future course of the social order (Miller 1991:138) and therefore makes society its primary beneficiary.

The question should be asked: what about the individual learners and their needs and challenges? Pestalozzi (1809) envisioned a different purpose for education. He said: “It is far from our intention to make of you men [and women] such as we are. It is equally far from our intention to make of you such men [or women] as are the majority of [people] in our time. Under our guidance you should become men [and women] such as your natures – the divine and the sacred in your nature – require you to be” [my emphasis] (Miller 1991:138).

Whether mainstream or holistic education, one fact remains, that society is always changing and knowledge is not neutral. Where one system supports the status quo another supports a potential new direction for society (Singer *et al.* July 2003). People learn primarily from experience. For people to be able to cope with their daily challenges, they need to be intuitive, critical thinkers, who are open and ‘strong’ enough to swim against the ‘popular stream’ if need be. However even with this knowledge in mind, there are ongoing debates and research into how we can translate educational theory into practice, specifically for our new society in the 21st century.

CHAPTER FOUR

BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN HOLISTIC AND MAINSTREAM EDUCATION

“Education is not limited to the classroom. The ultimate goal of education is to give you greater insight into yourself.”

– *Malcolm X*

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter explores the idea that a new culture in the 21st century needs a new type of education. An attempt will be made to do this by emphasising that an alternative programme is needed together with the existing holistic and/or mainstream education in order to prepare students to cope with their everyday challenges.

A short discussion will consider educational alternatives that exist today ‘between the cracks’ of mainstream and holistic education. Amongst these alternatives, existing life orientation programmes that are used within educational systems world-wide will be evaluated. The purpose of this will be to establish whether these programmes are the answer to the shortcomings within South Africa’s present educational curricula. To demonstrate that an alternative programme can be used together with the present curriculum to empower individuals towards holistic development, the research will explore an in-depth self-efficacy approach that is currently being used at a South African university with much success.

4.2 AN ALTERNATIVE EDUCATION

4.2.1 A New Culture Needs a New Education

The words of Miller (1993:7) echo very loudly: “Our schools do not speak to the confused, fearful condition of the young generation who must inherit this troubled culture...” For any approach to education three most basic questions must be asked:

1. What is the goal of education?
2. What needs to be learned?
3. What facilitates the needed learning? (Martin 2002:16)

The transition to a post-modern culture has brought about significant changes in all areas of society. In chapters two and three of this dissertation, the principles, methods, similarities and differences of both holistic and mainstream school education systems were clearly outlined and discussed in depth. Both the positive and the negative aspects of both systems of education were also pointed out.

With all of the attempts that have been made within both the education systems discussed, there still seems to be a great lack of holistic development in our schools today. It cannot be said often enough that education is not about preparation for only a part of life (like work) but is about preparation for the whole of life and the deepest aspects of living. On this account, Krishnamurti (1953:84) would say, “A school which is successful in the worldly sense is more often than not a failure as an educational centre”.

More and more we find that educators are questioning a worldview of materialism and reductionism. People seem to be focusing their attention on more organic, holistic, person-centred and locally rooted worldviews (Miller 2006:1). Schools too, are inevitably being challenged by alternative ways of teaching and learning (Miller 2006:1).

Whatever system of education one chooses in order to achieve the goals of education, it seems the reality today, in education world-wide, is that educators and philosophers are still debating and researching to find a system that would ensure that the individual comes out of the educational system equipped with the skills necessary to live a balanced life. With this in mind the research will attempt to show that no education system alone, even a very well-balanced and holistic one, can be sufficient to serve the individual ‘holistically’.

Many committed educators see the need to fill the void that has been left by increasingly declining traditional sources of childhood socialisation (Forbes 2003b:1). Realising that schools are often the last hope for many young people to learn many things that were once taught to them by families, communities or religions, educators are trying to help people cope with their everyday challenges (Forbes 2003b:1). The challenge is that schools are mostly not

designed to teach basic challenges, e.g. emotional development, conflict resolution, character development and social responsibility (Forbes 2003b:1).

This often means that educators are expected to go far beyond their skills as educators or what their task of education should be in any educational environment. At present, it seems to be a confusing time for education. It is not always realised that a person is not merely a future citizen or employee in training, but rather a complex individual who is continually being influenced and affected by environmental influences (Miller 2006:1).

4.2.2 Alternatives that Exist Within Education

Often as a result of the fact that both mainstream and holistic education alternatives have not been adequate, people have sought different ‘alternatives’ to bridge the gap between the two systems. Educational alternatives that exist today ‘between the cracks’, and which attempt to integrate living and learning, community and the individual (Martin 2002:2), are diverse and often confusing to those making the choices.

The confusion exists mainly due to the fact that the term ‘alternative’ is ambiguous and often understood in different ways by different people (Martin 2002:2). ‘Alternative’ is often understood as referring to schools for ‘at risk’ youth only, “... rather than being for the education for all children and adults as well” (Martin 2002:2). If education is investigated from this paradigm, it would seem logical to conclude that education should include the emotional, ecological, spiritual, physical, social and intellectual aspects of human development (Martin 2003:4). Keeping in consideration previous discussions about holistic and mainstream methods of education, it is not difficult to realise that an ‘alternative’ programme is needed to supplement these curricula to ensure that the developmental needs of an individual are catered for.

An alternative programme should not subscribe to the “one model fits all” mentality (Martin 2002:2) that we often find in both mainstream and holistic schooling systems. Conventional schooling, although catering for certain educational needs of the individual, often leaves many individuals ‘imbalanced’ when it comes to their holistic development.

To create an alternative programme which is helpful and relevant to each individual, and somehow connected to their normal school curriculum is no easy task. It would seem that such an alternative programme should supplement and compliment a curriculum to be able to encourage the individual's holistic development. Some education 'revolutionists' have attempted to create 'alternative' schools, some of which are discussed briefly here below:

4.2.2.1 Alternative Schools and Home-Schooling

Examples such as Waldorf, Montessori and Quaker schools can be added to the person-centred, progressive and 'holistic' alternatives that are available. These school systems, being alternative, tend towards less rigidity in their curriculums and create themselves from the dynamics which emanates from local communities, values and beliefs.

Other 'alternatives' call themselves democratic or free schools. The Summerhill 'free school' in England is one such example. Many 'free' schools such as this make their primary purpose to create a safe environment where children can learn freely, without force or coercion. They tend to rely on the individual's curiosity to guide and motivate their own learning (Neill 1995).

A further 'alternative' type of education is Folk Education. With its origins in Scandinavia in the 1800s, its main purpose or concern is with the political empowerment of adults. It has been described as attempting to get to the roots of education for social change. Examples of this type of school are the Danish Folk High Schools, which first opened in 1844 (Martin 2002:7).

Besides these 'alternative' schools, many parents and care-givers have lost trust in any type of schooling system that exists and have turned to 'home-schooling'. Recent American research statistics from a report entitled "Issues Related to Estimating the Home-Schooled Population in the United States with National Household Survey Data" show that, from 1994 to 1996, between 340 000 and 636 000 children aged 6 to 17 were being home-schooled (Martin 2002:8). Although the goals and aims of 'home-schooling' differ widely, according to the particular needs of those being 'home-schooled', many are affiliated with school systems such as Waldorf and Montessori schools.

Another school 'system' worth mentioning is the Open Schools. Based on student participation rather than compulsion, these schools give individuals the opportunity to develop their intrinsic motivation towards development rather than go through the punishment and reward systems that are so often used in our classrooms today. Intending to validate and honour the students' sincere desire to learn, such schools such as the St. Paul Open School have pioneered student-centred, community-based learning in the mainstream school area. This was done by means of the help of supportive, facilitative adults within both the school and the broader community (Skenes 2000:53).

As we can see from the above brief discussion, "... any type of alternative school may use one or more curricular foci, may use an assortment of methodologies, and may have more or less holistic elements within their formal and informal interactions" (Martin 2002:17). However we find more often than not that these types of schools are exclusive in nature and are often not accessible to all, mainly due to logistic, economic or environmental barriers.

This research project is concerned that all individuals, irrespective of culture, background, social or economic status, also be given the opportunity of quality education and alternative programmes that could help them cope with their daily challenges. Recent research seems to show that this is not happening, mainly due to economic and environmental barriers that individuals experience within the realities of their everyday lives (Wood 2004:290).

4.2.2.2 Life Orientation Programmes

Some leading educators in the field of holistic education such as Forbes have spoken about "socially responsible education" (Forbes at www.putnampit.com/shorewoodvillage/Education/responsible.htm). In his discussion, Forbes comments that many committed educators see the need to 'step into the breach' left by declining traditional sources of socialisation, which would 'normally' teach the skills of life to people. The lack of ability of students to cope with the daily challenges that seem to be ever increasing in our ever-changing, globalised world, have led many education systems world-wide to introduce so-called 'life orientation' programmes.

4.2.2.2.1 Objectives of a Life Orientation Programme

Extensive educational research has been done in South Africa as well as the United States, United Kingdom and Europe that has highlighted the need for life orientation programmes to help people be adequately prepared for the complex and dynamic life of the 21st century (Prinsloo 2007:156).

In a policy document from the South African Department of Education in October 1997, the rationale for the learning area 'Life Orientation' is explained as follows:

- Is fundamental in empowering learners to live meaningful lives in a society that demands rapid transformation.
- Is an integral part of education, training and development.
- Is central to holistic unfolding of the learners, caring for their intellectual, physical, social, spiritual and emotional growth.
- It locates its vision of individual growth within the quest for a free, democratic and stable society, for quality of life in the community and for a productive economy.

(Swart 2001)

To do justice to any type of Life Orientation programme, Ferguson (<http://web.wits.ac.za/NR/rdonlyres/B868698E-FCC4-4EDD-A4B4-E7B0CFA40B4B/7451/LifeOrientationWhatsitallabout.pdf>) comments that educators would need to have a sound knowledge and understanding of the programme. She also says that the success or failure of the programme lies with the heads of schools, who need to:

- Clarify what teaching staff are responsible for implementing the programme;
- Ensure that it has its rightful place on the time-table; and
- Ensure that parents/care-givers and communities are involved.

Departments of Education have realised that alternative programmes are desperately needed and have made concerted efforts and attempts to produce programmes such as Life Orientation (Prinsloo 2007:155). However, to date such programmes have shown no evidence that they have actually helped create more holistically balanced individuals. Although Life Orientation programmes are supposed to guide and prepare learners or

individuals for life and for its responsibilities and possibilities (Prinsloo 2007:158), research has shown that due to both social and environmental barriers these programmes have to date been largely ineffectual and unsuccessful.

A research investigation was conducted to establish the successes or failures of Life Orientation programmes in South African schools. The investigation followed a qualitative procedure. Analysis, interpretation and description of individual, and group behaviour, attitudes, perceptions and convictions were carried out (McMillan *et al.* 2001:395). Results were based on experiences and comments from teachers and principals and can be summarised as follows:

1. There was a lack of value systems among students, where they did not respect themselves or others.
2. There was a lack of involvement from parents or care-givers, who regarded themselves as disempowered to assist their children. They were also found to be uninterested and unwilling to exert themselves on their children's behalf.
3. The community imparted a bad influence and presented models of how to disobey laws. Serving as daily examples for the students was behaviour that displayed lack of responsibility, alcoholism, drug abuse, extreme violence and sexual licentiousness.
4. The principals believed that there was a lack of proper role models among the teaching staff. They felt that educators often set poor examples, and found them to be lazy and not interested in the progress of the learners.
5. They felt there were difficulties with the policies of the Department of Education. For example, the policy of 'only one failure a phase', where they were instructed by provincial departments to pass learners who failed repeatedly despite not being able to comply with standards set.
6. There were issues of cultural diversity which often resulted in educators not being able to create a relationship of trust in the classroom.
7. Training of Life Orientation teachers also posed a problem as teachers had little or no opportunities in this regard. This together with their lack of motivation and confidence contributed to the programmes' failures.

(Prinsloo 2007:155-170)

Many researchers have justified the ‘failure’ of these programmes using ‘excuses’ such as:

- Difficulties in professional backgrounds and educational levels of teachers in rural, township and urban areas (Rogan 2000:118);
- Socio-economic and cultural differences of individuals have posed challenges for curriculum developers and schools implementing these programmes (North 2002:24);
- The moral decline of post-modern society (Van Wyk 2002:305);
- Lack of appropriate training of educators together with difficulties regarding the character and moral standards of those teaching these programmes (Rambiyana *et al.* 2002:10);
- Lack of parents’/care givers’ support sabotages reforms in these programmes (Rambiyana 2002:10).

Although Life Orientation programmes have been found to be well developed and well structured, research shows that the barriers to such programmes, as they presently are, are too great for these programmes to succeed. To find a way to combat these barriers, it is essential that the following two questions be asked:

1. Do we move away from traditional academic-based programmes and utilise alternative or parallel programmes to assist in bringing about an integrated individual who is more capable of dealing with life as a whole? (Krishnamurti 1953:24)
2. Would Alternative or Parallel Programmes bridge the gaps in our education systems, thereby assisting our students, whether children or adults, in their journey towards becoming well-rounded, whole people?

This brief outline of ‘alternative’ options within the education realm was intended to give the reader a general idea of what is available today. However, for the purposes of this dissertation, the words ‘alternative’ or ‘alternative education programmes’ should indicate education that is designed for all children and adults in order to assist them to integrate their school and/or study curriculum with their social environment life and daily challenges. This type of ‘alternative programme’ would help the individual to understand and deal with their daily

challenges in order for them to start their journey to becoming as whole an individual as they are able to at their particular stage of emotional, intellectual and social development.

In this light, it is important for this research to show that: "... alternatives are not hardened institutions with hardened rules or procedures", but "...are flexible, caring learning communities where people come before procedures, rules or technology" (Martin 2002:3). Or, as Palmer (1983:21) put it: "the images of self and world that are found at the heart of our knowledge will also be found in the values by which we live our lives".

4.3 A SELF-EFFICACY APPROACH TO HOLISTIC STUDENT DEVELOPMENT: A SOUTH AFRICAN STUDY

4.3.1 Under-Preparedness for Higher Education

Challenges seem to be experienced by both school-going and tertiary students alike which often results in under-preparedness on the part of the students. University education should be about more than just obtaining a paper qualification. Education has to be relevant to the social, political and economic environments and should therefore, focus on the holistic development of the student (Harris 2001:21, Johnson, Monk *et al.* 2000:180).

4.3.1.1 Possible Reasons

Some educationalists are of the opinion that there is a problem with under-preparedness of students in higher educational institutions due to:

- Lack of work ethic
- Inability to manage time
- Difficulty in working independently and taking personal responsibility for actions
- Inability to organise and structure assignments or conduct basic research
- Underdeveloped critical thinking skills
- Lack of interest in reading further than is necessary to pass examinations
- A low level of literacy in general

(Wood 2003; Woolard 2003 in Wood *et al.* 2004:289-294).

Recent research done by Brüssow (2007:125-159), indicates that under-preparedness occurs in the following three domains:

- academic (89.7%),
- cultural (93.1%), and
- emotional (82.8%) under-preparedness.

Academic under-preparedness

- Is a combination of a lack in English proficiency, mathematical ability, and effective study skills (Robinson 1996:17);
- Students find themselves in an electronic age that they are not prepared for and where the reading and writing of texts is becoming less important;
- Study skills as part of the academic under-prepared domain include the ability to acquire, record, remember, and use information;
- Raab and Adam (2005:93) remark that under-prepared and first generation students often lack effective study skills.

Cultural under-preparedness

- Students who enter university from a cultural environment that differs from that of the typical higher education institution are distinguished as culturally under-prepared (Robinson 1996:2).
- Cloete and Moja (2005:708) state that it was found that black students especially find higher educational institutions alienating.
- According to Machet in Miller *et al.* (1998:104), a distinct correlation also exists between language and culture in the sense that an important drawback for under-prepared students in South Africa is that their cultural outlook does not prepare them for the Western outlook generally prevailing in the academic environment.

Emotional under-preparedness

- The third domain relates to the emotional side of under-preparedness, which involves the students portraying, among others, a lack of self-efficacy and self-regulation.

- Studies showed that students' inability to cope academically in their first year, transpired into an emotional under-preparedness in later years of study.
- Higher education forces students to take responsibility for their own successes and actions.

4.3.1.2 What Does the Research Say?

- All the respondents in a questionnaire survey indicated that self-regulation was important for academic success among academically under-prepared students (Brüssow 2007:133-134).
- This emphasises the possible inadequacy of student-centered approaches for addressing the educational needs of academically under-prepared students because of the heavy reliance on teacher support.

4.3.1.3 What Are the Implications?

McCabe (2000 in Brüssow 2007:145) made the following statement in support of this belief: "...teaching less-prepared students is hard and often frustrating work, for they need more personal attention and support". Student-centered learning provides less structure and guidance and demands high levels of self-regulation. On the one hand, the school system causes the problem, while on the other hand, the higher education system is unable to support these under-prepared students (Miller 1998:104).

The research question therefore remains: how can we bridge the gaps in our curricula to develop a more holistic programme? The Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU) in South Africa has created an Advancement Programme to help students 'bridge the gaps' created by their lack of ability to cope with their daily challenges and the challenges of their new academic environment (Wood 2004:1).

4.3.2 How Does the 'Advancement Programme' Help Students?

It has been documented that school-leavers need to possess certain core competencies to help them cope with the challenges that they experience in their lives after school (Greyling 1995:197; Lindhard *et al.* 1990:6; Vermaak 1995:1).

However, as we have seen in this chapter, it seems that schools are not adequately equipping students with the skills to do this (Wood 2004:5). For this reason, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in South Africa has introduced an “Advancement Programme” which is offered in the foundation programme of the University. This programme is designed to increase the self-efficacy of students to help them approach their tasks with confidence, a positive attitude and with the belief that they can succeed (Wood, *et al.* 2004:289).

4.3.2.1 What is Self-Efficacy?

Bandura (1997:3) defines self-efficacy as the belief that the student holds about his or her capability “to organize and execute the courses of action required to produce given attainments”. Research suggests that for a student to improve in performance, the student’s cognitive self appraisals must first change (Linnenbrink 2003: 136; Schunk 2003: 159).

Bandura (1997) believed that self-beliefs are influenced by the interaction of three factors:

- Behaviour of the individual
- The environment
- Personal factors

This research project too seeks to prove that self-efficacy is one of the keys to successful education. If an individual doesn’t know, like or believe in themselves then the ‘true’ purpose of education can not be realised. According to the Personal Growth Programme (see section 6.2) the ‘true’ purpose can be defined as: *enabling individuals to reach their full potential as human beings, individually and as members of society.*

When we look at the ‘big picture’ – society – we see that education is not separate from it, but rather an integral part of it. One institution that recognises the importance of self-efficacy is the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University, which uses an Advancement Programme to assist their students. As an ‘alternative’ programme that runs alongside and within the curriculum of the university:

- it spans one academic year;
- it is closely integrated with content subjects;

- it concentrates on increasing students' belief in their abilities to reach goals;
- students meet with the same facilitator twice a week in groups of 15;
- facilitators also acts as mentors for individual students.

According to the research of Wood and Olivier (2004:290) the module at the NMMU consists of four main aspects:

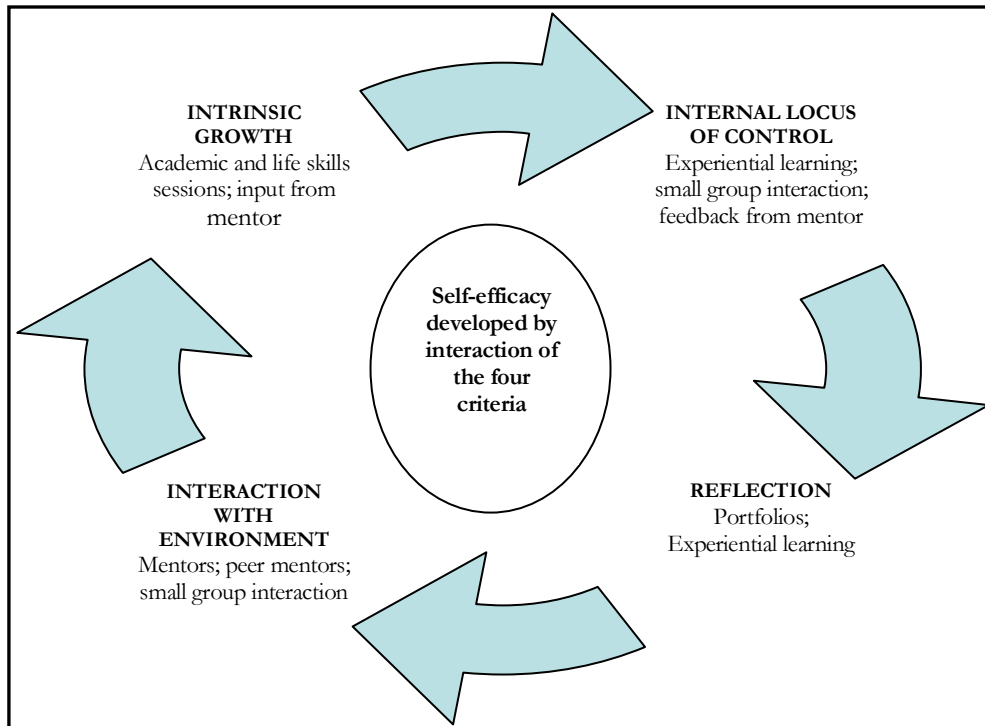
- the teaching of academic and life skills in a small-group context;
- mentoring of students;
- use of portfolios and experiential learning methods to encourage reflection and introspection;
- for assessment, open questions are posed in the form of a written questionnaire.

4.3.2.2 Has the Programme been Effective?

According to Wood and Knipp (2003). students who are enrolled in a foundation programme tend to have low academic and social self-esteem. Recent research conducted by Wood (2004:290) analysing the concept of the development of self-efficacy, confirmed Bandura's theory that the environment has a part to play in an individual's self-efficacy development. The diagram below indicates clearly the four essential criteria that are needed and are included in the NMMU's foundation programme to assist their students' development potential:

4.1 Diagram of four criteria essential for the development of self-efficacy

This diagram outlines how each of the four criteria essential for the development of self-efficacy are included in the academic and life skills module offered in the foundation programme at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU).



(Wood *et al.* 2004)

After the qualitative research was completed the findings from the responses of the students were summarised as follows:

Self Management:

- Students stated that the module equipped them to use better time management and to use their organisational skills to balance their workloads more effectively. (This indicated that their intrinsic motivation was stimulated by an internal locus of control).
- They indicated a greater sense of their own ability and felt challenged to solve their problems with available resources, instead of ignoring or running away from them.

Academic Skills:

- Students on the programme said they were more in control of their academic performance due to the guidance they received about study strategies. According to Tuckman and Sexton (1990:40), academic self-efficacy leads to improved motivation and performance.
- They also indicated that due to better academic results they experience less stress.

Attitudes:

- The students stated that the module had helped them to adopt attitudes that led to greater success at university;
- They indicated that a positive attitude helped to improve their interaction and relationships with others;
- They said that the module had also helped them to learn how to consider issues from different perspectives and adopt a more open-minded attitude to life in general.

Confidence in own ability:

- The students were of the opinion that their self-confidence had improved;
- They perceived themselves to be more confident and better able to tackle tasks and potential challenges.

4.4 CONCLUSION

The following quote from Montessori (1949:2) captures the essence of this chapter: “If education is always to be conceived along the same antiquated lines of a mere transmission of knowledge, there is little to be hoped from it in the bettering of man’s [or woman’s] future. For what is the use of transmitting knowledge, if the individual’s total development lags behind?” [my emphasis]. If we believe that the purpose of education has more to do with the development of the individual than the transmission of knowledge, then the structure of our present system of schooling, where there is simply a packaged academic curriculum, is inappropriate and insufficient.

This chapter has enquired into the types of ‘alternatives’ that exist within our education systems today. The chapter explored these ‘alternatives’ and attempted to discover whether any of them bridge the gap between holistic and mainstream education, so as to help individuals to cope with their daily challenges and assist them to develop more holistically as a ‘whole’ individual. A brief investigation was done of current Life Orientation programmes used in school systems. This was to establish whether they fulfill their proposed ideals of helping individuals with the personal challenges that they experience in schools today.

School systems are not the only institutions where there is a lack of holistic development and coping skills in individuals. Studies have found that there are increasing numbers of students in our higher educational institutions who lack the skills to cope with their social and academic demands. The chapter therefore investigated a self-efficacy approach to holistic student development. This South African example explored the possible reasons for under-preparedness of students at South African universities, and its implications. The chapter concluded by investigating whether this ‘alternative’ programme had been successful in what it set out to do.

The next chapter will introduce a new type of ‘alternative’ programme called the Personal Growth Programme. It is the position of the researcher that this programme should be run together with existing mainstream programmes. Through qualitative analysis, the research will explore whether this programme was effective in helping students at the College of the Transfiguration cope more effectively with their daily challenges and in turn help them integrate more fully into society as a whole.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESEARCH APPROACH

“We shall not cease from exploration and the end of all exploring will be to arrive where we started and know the place for the first time”

– *T.S. Eliot (1888-1965)*

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will explore qualitative research in the form of an environmentally specific Personal Growth Programme. This will be done in the hope to establish whether it is possible to encourage personal growth and thereby prompt the holistic education of an individual, irrespective of age, gender, culture or upbringing.

Thereafter methodology, data collection and field work of the qualitative research will be discussed to help determine if the PGP can supplement the current educational curriculum of the College of the Transfiguration to create a more effective ‘whole education’ for student at the college.

5.2 RESEARCH DESIGN DESCRIBED

5.2.1 Personal Growth Programme (PGP)

5.2.1.1 Purpose

Krishnamurti (1953:17) said, “...education, in the true sense, is the understanding of oneself, for it is within each one of us that the whole of existence is gathered”. Book learning can be done by anyone who can read, but we often find that such education helps us escape from ourselves, resulting in an imbalance in our education. This can mean that we neglect ourselves to a point where we are unable to cope with daily challenges.

When this occurs, self-empowerment is essential, in order to build up resilience and an ability to cope with daily challenges. This in turn will assist in an individuals’ holistic development, as they get to know themselves better. The Personal Growth Programme designed and

implemented at the College of the Transfiguration in Grahamstown, was created for this purpose.

The environment-specific programme was developed in order to supplement the current academic programme at the College and to create a more effective 'whole education' for the students. The purpose of this programme was further to bring about personal growth and an holistic education, irrespective of age, gender or culture. The preliminary investigation, to discover what was needed at the College to assist with formation of the students, indicated their lack of both coping strategies and resilience.

There also seemed to be a lack of self-knowledge and self-care, which seems to have contributed towards the students not being able to deal with everyday difficulties and challenges. According to Forbes (2003), today's teachers often feel the need to step into the breach left by declining traditional childhood socialisation resulting in a form of socially responsible education taking place.

As an alternative programme, the Personal Growth Programme was designed to help fill this 'breach' that Forbes speaks about, in an attempt to supply empowerment tools to answer the 'needs' of the students at the College.

5.2.1.2 Outline and Contents of the Programme

According to Wood (2003) and Woolard (2003), the problem of under-preparedness of students lies in their "...lack of work ethic; inability to manage time; difficulty in working independently and taking personal responsibility for actions; inability to organise and structure assignments or conduct basic research; underdeveloped critical thinking skills; lack of interest in reading further than is necessary to pass examination; and a low level of literacy in general".

The aim of this research project was to discover whether this was also prevalent among students at the College of the Transfiguration; and therefore what type of programme or assistance was needed to help them to become 'whole' individuals, on the road to coping with their daily challenges.

A preliminary year of investigation and observation was carried out on students at the College of the Transfiguration. Enquiries were conducted by means of individual interviews and discussion sessions with both the students and the lecturers at the college. The research question at this stage was: what did the students struggle with in their first, second and third years of study at the college? At the end of the year's research, a Personal Growth Programme was created for all students at the college.

5.2.1.2.1 Outline

Designed to fit the College's eight-month study curriculum, the programme consists of eight modules. Each module ends with a task which students need to complete as a form of self-evaluation.

Unlike most life orientation programmes offered as a module incorporated into an institution's foundation programme, the Personal Growth Programme was designed rather to be a self-help tool, used by the students working independently. The rationale behind this was based on the principles of the holistic education of Montessori (2005). She believed that self-education of an individual was the best method of education. So the PGP was designed in the hope of stimulating intrinsic self-motivation within the individual to want to improve and empower themselves, instead of extrinsic rewards that are often used today to motivate students. In this way, students were able to work at their own pace, as individuals who are different in every way.

The PGP was created with the full realisation that the use of a standardised programme is always a challenge, since not all individuals face the same challenges, especially in a multicultural and multilingual student community such as the community at the College. However, efforts were made to ensure that each individual was able to find what they needed in the programme. This was done by means of an extra clause that was added in 2008, the second year of implementation, which allowed each individual to include topics of their own if none of the eight modules, constructed on the basis of feedback from both students and lecturers, were sufficient to cater for their specific challenges.

In the second year of implementation, as discussed above, separate PGPs were created for first, second and third-year students. Each PGP was based on the specific needs identified by each year's students. They were required to complete one module a month, from February to September each year. They could choose which module they wanted to do based on their specific challenges that month. This is an attempt to allow as much free choice for the individual as possible. Just as Montessori calls for freedom within boundaries (Stoll Lillard 2005:271), so too the PGP is designed to provide students with the opportunity to discover more about themselves and become the most well integrated person that they can (Stoll Lillard 2005:271).

The Personal Growth Programme became an official programme approved by the College, and constituted one of the requirements expected of students as part of their formation programme and therefore part of their education at the College. Based on Montessori's principle of "freedom within boundaries", the PGP also contains the following limits or rules:

1. All students must participate in the programme;
2. All students are required to complete one module per month;
3. If a student decides to include a module of their own design, they are required to do it in consultation with the college counsellor (who in this instance is also the creator of the PGP and researcher of this dissertation);
4. After working through, reflecting on and completing a module, a student is required to complete the self-understanding/assessment task at the end of each module;
5. Each student is required to make a minimum of two appointments with the Counsellor to discuss and review their personal growth and challenges during the year. They have the choice to do this individually or in a small group of no more than four people.
6. The tasks after each module are not for marks or exam assessment but rather for concrete reflection in the form of writing, for the benefit of the students. However, evidence of attempts to work through each task must be indicated and discussed with the counsellor.
7. During the year (at interviews with the counsellor) or at the end of the year in the form of an evaluation questionnaire, the student is required to evaluate the programme to

ensure it stays current and actual for it to be of use as a tool in the holistic development of students at the College.

By giving the students these clear boundaries for guidance, it was attempted to show by means of research that the students had enough freedom to act on their own initiative, based on their particular needs at the time. It was also hoped that this premise would give the students the opportunity to react and respond to the PGP, according to where they find themselves in their individual and specific stage of personal development. This brings into play Piaget's theory of genetic epistemology, which allows the individual to use their own unique way of understanding the world (Kastenbaum 1993:14). In this theory, ways of knowing are not limited to or determined by chronological age, but are rather a product of socialisation (Kohlberg *et al.* 1983).

TABLE 5.1 Contents of the PGP

MODULES	FIRST YEAR	SECOND YEAR	THIRD YEAR
1	Why am I here? 1. My goals and aspirations	Where are my goals and values now? 1. Can I use a 6-step process to help me?	Moral Values- Whose are they? 1. Do I share in the Moral Renewal of my nation? 2. What is the way forward?
2	Do I belong? 1. Who am I? 2. Where do I come from?	Is stress still getting me down? 1. Stress management 2. Good stress vs bad stress	How does my ATTITUDE impact on my daily life? 1. What is your attitude? 2. Tips to help. 3. Creating a positive attitude in 8 easy steps.
3	What do I believe in? 1. Spiritual and personal	What does the word <i>respect</i> mean to me?	Sexual Harassment 1. What is it?

	awareness.	1. The ABCs of a great life	2. Have I turned a “blind eye” when being involved?
4	Do I take care of myself? 1. Handling stress 2. Depression 3. Loneliness 4. Anger	What is xenophobia? 1. What is my own reality?	Striving for Peace with ourselves and our community 1. Gandhi’s vision of peace. 2. What does Archbishop Tutu say?
5	Do I allow myself time out? 1. Rest and recreation	How do I motivate myself and others? 1. Improving self motivation. 2. What strategies can I use to help others?	Ending crime, violence, war and poverty 1. What is happening around me? 2. How can I be instrumental?
6	Is time management an important part of my life? 1. Time schedules 2. Priorities 3. Looking at goals	Time management 1. Do I still have time and priority management challenges?	How to deal with my Anger 1. Too fast, too furious. 2. What type of anger do I have? 3. What can I do?
7	Back to the Future! 1. Taking a reflective journey to discover my personal growth. 2. Reflective diary or journal. (The Personal Hygiene module was excluded from the 1st-year programme in	What is Spiritual and Personal awareness? 1. Does African Spirituality shape Ubuntu? 2. Are African values contextual only or can they also be universal?	Ubuntu: What affects me affects the whole community. 1. What does it all mean? 2. Am I putting it into action or just giving it “lip service”?

	<p>2009 due to the year end evaluation results done by the students:</p> <p>My Personal Hygiene</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How does my personal hygiene affect others? 2. What can I do to remain healthy? 		
8	<p>Back to the Future!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking a Reflective Journey to discover my personal growth. 2. Reflective diary or journal. 	<p>Back to the Future!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking a Reflective Journey to discover my personal growth. 2. Reflective diary or journal. 	<p>Back to the Future!</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Taking a Reflective Journey to discover my personal growth. 2. Reflective diary or journal.

The contents of the Personal Growth Programme, as indicated above, are environment specific and created for the theological students in the residential College of the Transfiguration in Grahamstown. The programme is exclusively based on the needs of the students at the college. This information was passed on by the counsellor (researcher) in writing and in confidential individual and group sessions with the students. The content of the PGP is closely integrated with the curriculum, and the principles of formation – to form, inform and transform – and with the lives of the students who attend the college.

5.2.1.2.2 Aim

Most alternative programmes or schools within education do not subscribe to the ‘one model fits all’ mentality prevalent in traditional private and public schools. Each alternative creates and maintains its own methods and approaches, based solely upon the needs of the individuals (www.pathsoflearning.net).

With this in mind, the overarching aim of the PGP could be summarised as an attempt to bridge the gap between mainstream and holistic education, by providing an alternative or parallel programme to enable education towards integration. Greene (1993) believed that by 'listening' to students, educators will be able to discover what students are thinking, their challenges and what is important to them. By 'listening' as a means of understanding students, the researcher aims to provide students, in the form of the PGP, with the support they need to integrate into the college community.

Greene argues that the 'act of listening' creates possibilities for human empowerment, counters marginalisation and takes into account cultural diversity (Singer *et al.* 2003). So too does the PGP intend to equip students to be able to negotiate the complex demands of the multi-cultural environment at the College of the Transfiguration.

A further aim of the PGP is to help students deepen their own self awareness and in so doing develop into integrated individuals capable of interacting and adapting to any environment. The words of Greene (1993) express this idea, as she sees the goal of learning as discovering new questions about ourselves and the world, leading towards the evaluation of events from different perspectives and also to value of other people instead of just focusing on oneself (Singer *et al.* 2003).

The aims of the PGP attempt to tie in with the purpose of the programme. Krishnamurti (1953:34) eloquently described this purpose when he explained how the purpose of education is to cultivate the right relationship within the individual and also between the individual and society. He argued that this is why it is so important for the individual to understand their own psychological processes, as "intelligence lies in understanding oneself and going above and beyond oneself" (Krishnamurti 1953:34).

5.3 RESEARCH METHOD EXPLAINED

5.3.1 UNDERSTANDING THE CONTEXT

5.3.1.1 The College Context

The College of the Transfiguration is an Anglican Residential Theological College in Grahamstown in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa. The college caters for students in the region of fifty to sixty members maximum. The students come from extremely diverse backgrounds and cultures and hail from all regions of southern Africa.

At the college there are both male and female students. Not all students aim to become religious ministers even though the college is a type of seminary for the preparation of future ministers. The students' ages range from age twenty to age seventy years, and some are single while others are married or divorced. Some of the married students stay in married quarters with their families, whilst others are separated from their families for the duration of their studies due to economic or strategic restraints and visit them during college recesses. Not all students study for the full three years required to complete a diploma, but are sent to complete studies that they had started elsewhere or are sent by their respective dioceses for a year or semester of formation before being ordained.

5.3.1.2 Why a Personal Growth Programme?

Krishnamurti (1953:24) said that: "...a mind that is merely been trained in factual knowledge is incapable of meeting life with its variety; its subtlety; its depths and great heights." The researcher, the counsellor at the college, became aware of the lack of coping strategies and resilience amongst the college students. Due to this, they also seemed to be unable to deal with everyday difficulties and challenges.

The management at the college had approached the researcher in 2006 to create a programme that would assist the students at the college with their formation process, to empower them in the areas of self-knowledge and understanding in the hope of assisting them to resolve personal challenges and thereby enabling them to assist others within the sphere of their ministry. The researcher then endeavoured by the use of this PGP to establish whether it is

possible to encourage personal growth amongst the students and in turn prompt 'holistic' development of the individual.

5.3.2 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

5.3.2.1 METHODOLOGY

5.3.2.1.1 Role of the Researcher

Qualitative research concerns: "...exploring issues, understanding phenomena and answering questions" (Ereaut 2007). During the process of qualitative research, the researcher will ask the question- why? – in comparison to the researcher using quantitative research, who will rather ask questions such as how many? how widespread? or how old?, etc. (Fink 2000:3).

The roles of the researcher in this qualitative research project can be broken down as follows:

1. As observer:

- To gather an in-depth understanding of the student's behaviour based on what the challenges are that they are facing.
- Listening to and questioning the students as to their specific requirements.
- To carry out individual and group interviews.

2. As facilitator:

- To find possible solutions to questions and challenges faced by the students.
- To create a 'tool in the form of a Personal Growth Programme (PGP) to help facilitate holistic development and increased resilience amongst the students.

3. As mentor:

- To guide the students in their personal growth during confidential individual and group sessions.
- To allow for freedom within boundaries when dealing with each individual, respecting their need for difference and or individual requirements when it comes to individual challenges.

4. As evaluator:

- The researcher will assess the merits of the PGP and its effectiveness, by:
 - Evaluating the tasks at the end of each section of the programme.

- Conducting a standardised evaluation of the PGP in the form of an Annual Questionnaire completed at the end of each year by all students, which will reflect on the merits and usefulness of each module in the programme.

The role of the researcher must therefore take on an extremely holistic approach. Taking all of the above elements into consideration, the researcher's task or role is not an easy one. She must 'become part' of the small community of students, though still remaining objective in her research, by carefully observing and participating in their lives (as participant observer) in the setting of the residential college. At the same time she would need to anticipate the emergence of new understandings. These roles show the level of participation of the researcher, from being totally separated (spectator) to being totally involved and belonging to the group as a participant observer (Patton 1990:206).

5.3.2.1.2 Ethical Considerations

Because the qualitative research is focused on the needs of the individual students at the College of the Transfiguration (COTT), and their personal challenges, fears and stresses, the work done requires a careful consideration of the ethical responsibilities of the researcher. Strydom (1998:24) defined ethics as the moral principles determining the rules and expectation of correct conduct in a specific setting. In this research context, these rules apply to the rights of the participants and the responsibilities of the researcher.

The researcher in this case as counsellor, is bound by an oath of confidentiality. The PGP is a confidential programme shared only between the researcher and the student or students involved. Individual opinions and or experiences have been used for research purposes with permission from the parties involved. To ensure that the students feel 'safe' throughout the process, a policy of confidentiality and freedom was followed. Each student, although being required by the college policy to follow the PGP, had the freedom to discuss confidential challenges with the researcher or could elect not to divulge private information.

As part of the confidentiality policy, the researcher tried to create a confidential atmosphere by having discussions or interviews in a 'safe place' and by informing the participants beforehand

that they were always free to refuse to answer any questions which could cause them possible discomfort. It should be noted that no participant exercised this option.

All interviews and reports written from them by the researcher were therefore treated with the utmost confidentiality and anonymity. Confidentiality was kept where each student used their own PGP, which they did not hand in to the researcher at any stage of the process unless they so wished or requested. The students therefore had the right to keep personal anything therein which they deemed private. The students shared only those aspects of the PGP and tasks that they wanted to.

Strict anonymity was kept in all of the researcher's written documents from the interviews. No contents of such documents or information from the interviews were shared with any other person, except when requested by the participant and in conjunction with the counselling services of the researcher. Any material quoted for the purposes of this research project, was granted prior permission by the participant(s) whose information was used.

The researcher explained to each student the purpose of the PGP and stated the rules of its confidentiality. This was done both verbally and in written form – on page one of the PGP. The students were also informed that research was being performed using the PGP to assist in fulfilling the requirements for the Masters of Education degree offered by the University of South Africa. The students all accepted this information and the researcher felt that the information given to the students satisfied the criteria of 'informed consent' recommended by Strydom (1998:27).

5.3.2.1.2.1 Ethical measures taken when doing the questionnaire

The researcher of this study obtained informed consent from the management of the college to process the questionnaires as part of the research study and as part of her ongoing work as a counsellor and facilitator of the PGP at the college.

Furthermore, all questionnaires were filled in on an anonymous basis, thereby protecting and maintaining the confidentiality of the individual students. In this way the students could feel

free to be 'truthful' in their feedback during the programme. To show ongoing commitment to the needs of the students and respect for their opinions, the researcher undertook to share the results of their feedback with them in small focus groups. In the groups they were given the opportunity to discuss the findings with the researcher and their peers for further advancement of the PGP at the beginning of 2009.

5.3.3 DATA COLLECTION

5.3.3.1 Sampling and Selection

Tuckman (1999:259) said that the population for a research study is: "...the group about which the researcher wants to gain information and draw conclusions". From this 'population' the researcher then selects a sample or group which would give the necessary information needed to complete the research.

Due to the reality that the 'population' at the college is a relatively small group, the researcher was forced to select the 'entire' population of forty seven students as the sample. Patton (1990) says that there are no rules for choosing the size of a sample in a qualitative study. Therefore the size of the sample chosen by the researcher in this study project is connected to the purpose of the research – to investigate whether the PGP is relevant to all students. The researcher used the purposive sampling technique due to the fact that she is employed at the multi-cultural College of the Transfiguration as a counsellor. It was part of her responsibilities at COTT to produce a PGP to empower and assist students with their challenges.

5.3.3.2 Sample setting for the PGP

To objectively and truly evaluate whether the PGP was an effective tool to assist the students, the first consideration was to have a sample of students who represented a mixture of cultural backgrounds, understandings and experience in life. However, due to the extreme diversity of the students, no sample group could be selected, thereby resulting in selection of the entire student group.

Once this was established, it was deemed by the researcher that the College of the Transfiguration as a residential college was the perfect setting for this study to take place. To

enhance the programme's multi-cultural flavour, the students stem from many different and diverse cultural settings and differ in age from twenty to seventy years old.

The researcher conducted the preliminary investigations during the year 2006. This was done in the form of general informal observation of the residential student population and confidential counselling sessions. During these sessions, the students had indicated to the researcher that while living at the college they experienced personal, social and or academic challenges. Preliminary investigations also took the form of informal interviews with the students as they verbally shared their day-to-day challenges. The fourth way enquiry was done was in formal interviews when the researcher questioned them as to what they felt they needed to assist them with their personal challenges.

More and more the researcher became aware of the students' lack of self-knowledge and self-understanding, which in her opinion could have been at the root of their challenges. After compiling a list of challenges obtained by the students in their various years of study, the researcher then met with the lecturing staff in early 2007 to gain their insights and discuss the list of themes the students had provided as challenges they experienced.

Based on their feedback, eight themes were selected which were different for each respective year at the college. This difference in themes could be ascribed to the fact that the challenges experienced by the first-year students were not the same as those experienced by the second-years or the third-years, etc. The eight themes or modules in the PGP coincided with the eight 'active' months of student activity at the College of the Transfiguration (COTT). Therefore the programme ran from February to September of each year.

5.3.4 FIELD WORK

5.3.4.1 Length of Fieldwork

Patton (1990:214) believed that fieldwork should continue until the research questions are answered and the purpose of the study is completed. The fieldwork for this project started in January 2006. Forbes (2003) believed that experiential knowledge was the source to make

holistic education possible. So too the researcher believes that due to the nature and purpose of the project that the fieldwork should be an ongoing process.

Although the preliminary fieldwork was completed by January 2007, the researcher has evaluated the project each year, both in 2008 and in 2009, to ensure that the themes covered in the PGP remain actual for each new group of students that arrive for studies at the college each year. With each batch of new students, the researcher believes that there remains a potential for new and yet uncovered challenges to surface. The purpose of the programme is to remain flexible enough to change if it is needed. In this way it could become a beneficial ‘tool’ for the students, where the researcher would keep with the principles of holistic education by asking three most basic questions:

1. What is the goal of education?
2. What needs to be learned?
3. What facilitates the needed learning?

(Martin 2002:16)

The researcher believes that all three of the above questions should bring about the same result: To assist the individual to be the most that a human can be (Martin 2002). As previously noted, Forbes (2003) coined this phrase using one word “Ultimacy”.

5.3.4.2 Fieldwork Methods

Because qualitative research is exploratory and inductive in nature, it often calls for fieldwork methods to be flexible. Patton (1990:193) explained this simply when saying: “...purity of method is less important than dedication to relevant and useful information”.

With this in mind, it goes without saying that the researcher doing qualitative research would need to keep an open mind, remaining flexible when doing fieldwork. The fieldwork methods used by the researcher were rooted in two very fundamental qualitative approaches:

- Phenomenology
- Grounded Theory

These two approaches helped to form the ideology underpinning the research and assisted her to choose the fieldwork methods used in the research. Phenomenology focuses on the subjective experience of people and their individual and unique interpretation of the world (Trochim 2006). This approach provides ‘freedom with boundaries’ (Montessori 2005) for the students in the research project, as the researcher uses in-depth interviews to try and understand what challenges are experienced by them.

The Grounded Theory originally developed by Glaser and Strauss in the 1960s (Trochim 2006), assisted the researcher to develop a theory about phenomena of interest. The phenomena of interest in this research project being the Personal Growth Programme, and whether it can be an effective tool to assist students with their daily challenges to help them become more integrated individuals (Krishnamurti 1953). The grounded theory is not just an abstract theory but rather one that needs to be “grounded or rooted in observation” (Trochim 2006). Direct observation was selected as a second method to help fieldwork.

5.3.4.2.1 In-Depth Interviews

The in-depth interviews done during this research project included both individual interviews i.e. one-on-one, as well as group interviews, i.e. small focus groups chosen by the students themselves. Tuckman (1999:237) commented that rather than only observing behaviour, the researcher should use questionnaires and interviews to collect data.

Best and Kahn (1993) tell us that interviews vary from informal to very formal. The purpose of the interviews is to probe the ideas of the interviewees about a particular phenomenon of interest (the PGP and their individual challenges) (Trochim 2006). In this research project, the interviews were conducted in both an informal and formal way. By using informal interviewing the researcher was able to ask open-ended questions and thereby empower the students with the “freedom” to speak about whatever they felt challenged them. In this way the researcher was able to remain flexible and open to whatever responses were given.

On the other hand, formal questions were also set by the researcher and carried out in a standardised manner. These formal questions were used with students who were not as open

during their interviews and assisted the researcher to obtain data of interest for the research from the students in a directed way. Data obtained during the interviews can be recorded in a variety of ways:

- Stenography
- Audio recording
- Video recording
- Written notes

(Trochim 2006)

However, to assist this research project all data was recorded during the interviews in the form of written notes. The researcher ensured that all written notes were kept confidential and anonymous. This was firstly done by keeping all notes in a locked cabinet in the researcher's office. Secondly, the researcher ensured that the questionnaires at the end of the year, contained no student names but were rather identified simply by which year of study the student was currently busy with at the college.

Although interviews are an effective method to use when doing qualitative research, they should be approached with extreme caution. Van Wyk (1996:131) says that to allow participants to answer on their own terms, only open-ended questions should be used. Best and Kahn (1993:199) qualify this, however, warning that some participants may give responses to questions according to what they think the researcher wants to hear, rather than answering truthfully according to what they have experienced. This could cause the researcher to be misled or misguided, resulting in inaccuracy within the research project. Due to this possibility of being misguided by the students, the researcher used the interviews in conjunction with the method of direct observation.

5.3.4.2.2 Direct Observation

Direct observation can include anything from field research where the researcher lives in another context or culture for a period of time, to capturing some aspect of a phenomenon using a camera (Trochim 2006). The data during direct observation can be captured in many of the same ways as is done in interviews.

Patton (2002:262-264) remarks that direct observation of a setting within qualitative research has six advantages:

1. The researcher is better able to understand and capture the context within which the participants interact, which is essential to a holistic perspective.
2. Firsthand experience enables the researcher to be open and discovery orientated and therefore not having to rely on prior conceptualisations of the setting.
3. It may give the researcher the opportunity to be an objective observer of situations or things that usually escape the awareness of participants within the setting or something that nobody else has paid attention to.
4. Direct observation gives the researcher the opportunity to learn things that the participants would be unwilling to talk about in an interview situation, e.g. sensitive issues.
5. By observing the setting themselves, the researcher will not have to rely entirely on secondary reports through interviews.
6. During their first-hand experience as an observer, the researcher has the opportunity to do both reflection and introspection, thereby drawing on personal knowledge. In so doing, the researcher's impressions and feelings become part of the data used to help them understand the setting.

For the purpose of this research project, the data collected during direct observation was in written form. The researcher, who is a counselor at the college, is a live-in resident and is involved in and is an active participant of all the day-to-day happenings. The researcher therefore had the perfect opportunity to be an impartial observer in this research, especially as she was not involved in any type of 'evaluation' of the students at the college. The purpose of this was that she could be impartial or neutral, and in this way be the confidante of the students.

5.4 CONCLUSION

Qualitative methodology was selected in order to investigate two things:

- Firstly, the researcher undertook to discover what the everyday challenges of the students could be and possible reasons for their challenges.

- Secondly, the researcher used the methodology to determine whether the Personal Growth Programme as an alternative 'holistically principled' programme could assist and empower the students to cope with their challenges.

It is also the aim of this research project that in the process of dealing with their challenges the students would in turn grow in their self-knowledge and self-understanding. Patton (2002:265) remarked that the extent to which the researcher participates can and may change over time. In this case, the researcher began as an onlooker and gradually became a participant as fieldwork progressed. It is hoped that the findings of this study can assist and empower educators and administrators world-wide to help students increase their resilience, thereby enabling them to cope with their life challenges, irrespective of their culture, background, religion or experiences in life.

CHAPTER SIX

RESEARCH FINDINGS

“The most important function of education at any level is to develop the personality of the individual and the significance of his life to himself and to others”

– *Grayson Kirk*

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Educational alternatives or alternatives that exist in education today are confusing and often too vast and or diverse for educators and even researchers to follow.

Century upon century educators and researchers alike have tried to find ways to better education and have often been left wanting. There seems to be a never-ending, passionate pursuit towards a better understanding of what is needed to provide an individual with the ‘formula’ for the best possible education. As educators and reformers of education, we too can echo the words of Krishnamurti (1912) when he said, “I have myself experienced both the right way of teaching and the wrong way, and therefore I want to help others towards the right way”.

This chapter outlines the results of ongoing research from January 2006 to date, which was conducted using the qualitative approach. The chapter will take an in-depth look at the methods of analysis which were used to interpret the impact of the PGP for the students. It will also include the methods used by the researcher to evaluate the PGP.

Of importance is the Personal Growth Programme (PGP) and its use as an intervention or alternative programme that has been designed for the College of the Transfiguration. It attempts to lay a foundation for the students to encourage their ‘total’ or ‘holistic’ development.

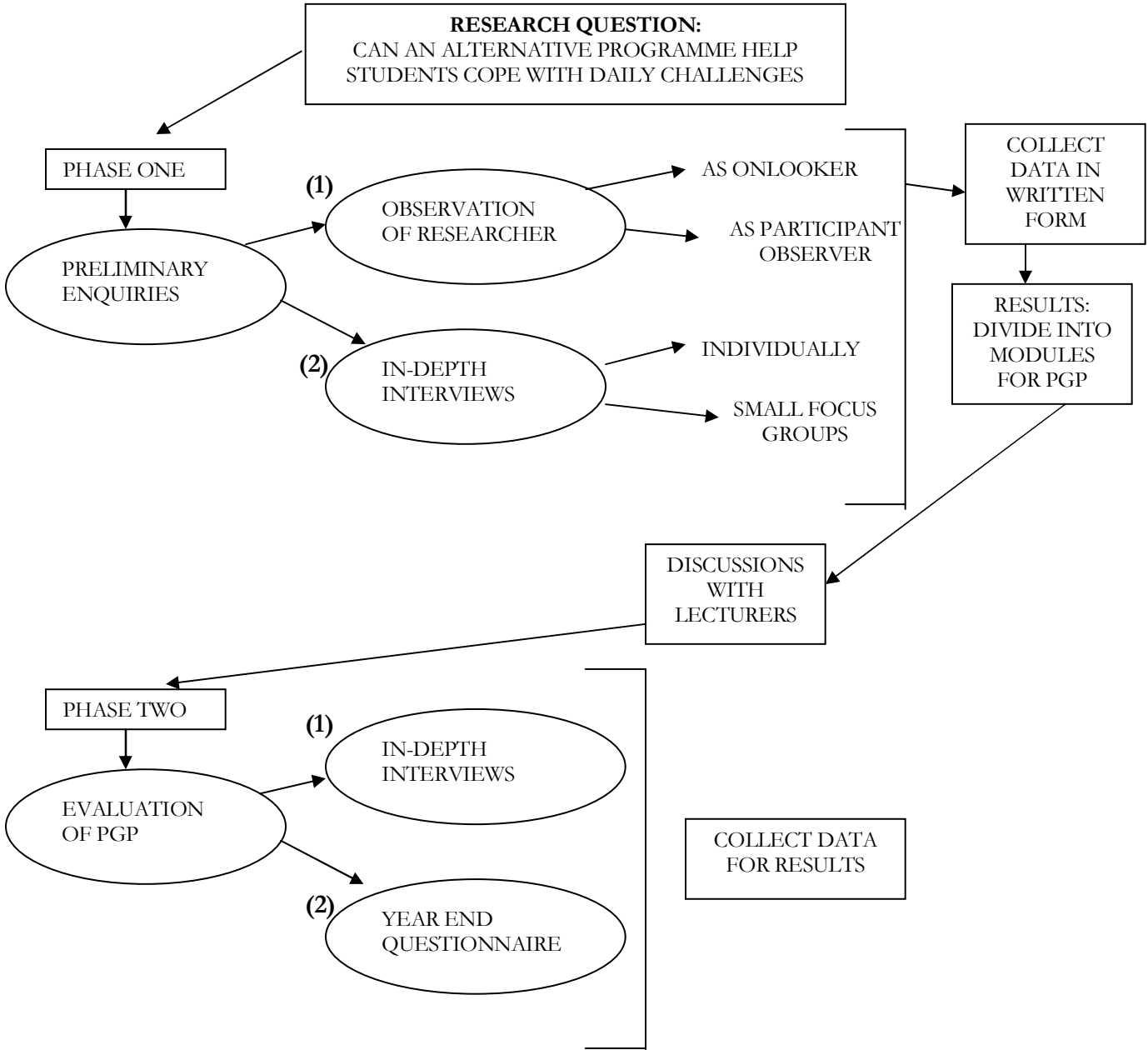
6.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME

All qualitative research requires that data analysis be an ongoing process. The data is then collected and sorted into themes by the researcher to facilitate its coherency and practical usefulness (Gay 1996). For the purposes of this research project, the first task was to collect data for preliminary enquiries from the researcher's observations of students. The results thereof became the themes or modules that were used in the PGP for the students.

Thereafter, as part of the process of ongoing data analysis, data was collected from the PGP itself, from in-depth interviews with the students and tasks for students after each module. A third way data was collected was through a year-end evaluation questionnaire entitled: Personal Growth Programme Annual Review. This was completed by all the students and the end of 2008.

The following diagram shows clearly how the data collection and evaluation was done:

FIG. 6.1 TWO PHASE PROCESS OF DATA COLLECTION AND EVALUATION



6.2.1 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In order to wade through the vast amounts of data collected and define the results for this research project, a final analysis of the PGP in phase two began with in-depth interviews with the students.

In holding the interviews, every opportunity possible was used to promote lifelong learning and holistic development of the students. In the spirit of the 'Montessori rule' of 'freedom within boundaries' and promotion of 'intrinsic motivation' (Montessori 2005), as opposed to the 'forced' learning that often occurs in both mainstream and holistic schools, the students were given the responsibility of booking an interview with the counsellor. The students could also choose whether they wanted to be interviewed individually or in a small focus group. The reason for this was that it was felt that this would increase the probability of the student's 'truthfulness' when giving feedback.

During the individual and group interviews, the 'interview guide approach' was applied, as discussed by Best and Kahn (1993:200-201) and Tuckman (1999:405). In accordance with this approach, an outline of questions was established before the interview; however, these were flexible, allowing open-ended answers in the discussion with the students. This type of approach was advantageous in the sense that it allowed for openness and conversation and could be adjusted to the situation. The three guiding questions created for the PGP interviews were:

1. How have you found the PGP thus far?
2. Has the programme helped you cope or deal with your daily life challenges?
3. What module or part of the PGP stood out for you personally?

Using the above questions as a guide, the four-step process of interviewing described by Tuchman (1999: 401-402) was followed:

Description: The interview is used to gather information in a narrative form. This step often encourages participants to tell about their lives, whereby orientating the researcher into the 'life world' of the person.

Discovery: Questions asked in this step help in the understanding of the participant's perspective. This helps the researcher to understand how the person perceives situations and other people.

Classification: This step helps to classify the boundaries used in the discussions.

Comparison: The researcher compares the classification made by the different participants and attempts to find links so as to enable the development of themes. By doing this the researcher can then streamline and direct future questions asked.

All of the results of the in-depth interviews were synthesised and culminated in the modules of the PGP listed in chapter five. The interviews served as a suitable platform to extract information from the participants and added depth to the final process of analysis of the research project, which has been conducted over a period of almost four years, starting in January 2006 and still ongoing. Here are some of the responses:

6.2.1.1 Responses from Students

Using the three guiding questions mentioned in 6.2.2 the following are a few of the diverse comments from the students during the interviews. The comments are printed with their permission and are not given names to protect their privacy:

The first guide question was: "**How have you found the PGP thus far?**"

- "I have found it very interesting. It has reminded me of things I have taken for granted – things I should take note of. I need to be faithful to myself and reflect more on how I am feeling."
- "It was useful. It helped me to reflect on my own journey. I also looked at how I could use the programme in my own context. I would like to use the programme to create a youth programme for my own diocese."
- "It spoke to me about a deep theology and philosophy and how to build a philosophy of life."
- "It helped me conceptualise my thoughts on my goals and values in life."
- "I liked the PGP so much that I gave it to my wife to read. I felt that we needed to grow together if we were to share as partners in my ministry."
- "The English was easy to understand which helped me to get into the PGP easier."

- “The PGP helped me with stress and gave me time to forget studies and concentrate on myself for a change.”
- “It helped me stand up for myself and gave me courage, because I got to know more about who I am.”
- “It nourished my spiritual side. It was very helpful to me.”
- “The tasks at the end of each module helped me reflect on everything I read.”
- “The programme is good because it starts with oneself. The programme is a treasure because it is not just for now but also for later life and ministry.”
- “I found it to be good, simple, understandable English (as English is not my first language and I sometimes find it difficult). It also helped me with my day-to-day reflections, which helped me keep in touch with myself.”
- “I found the programme well structured, helping me concretely deal with my daily challenges.”
- “My first week at the college I wanted to go home. But the programme helped me to take ownership of the college and helped clarify feelings of belonging.”
- “Although the programme is created specifically for the college, I feel it can be utilised outside the college.”
- I found the programme challenging and very good to do. It made me question what I am about. It gave me lots of things to consider and know about that I had never thought about before. I had never given these things much thought.”

The second guide question was: “**Has the programme helped you cope or deal with your daily life challenges?**”

- “It has made me ask: How do I take care of myself? What are my goals and aspirations? Where do I come from and do I take enough rest and relaxation?”
- “It helped me with my time management, stress and how to structure family time.”
- “It made things personal for me which in a society today is very fragmented and broken.”
- “It helped me with belonging here at the College. I found the module on belonging challenging and helpful.”

- “I was able to discover how to relieve my stress and found a person of trust to speak to in confidence.”
- “The programme helped me make choices and decisions and stand up for myself. It helped me belong.”
- “I was able to use it as a guideline and could even use the programme as help when dealing with my children.”
- “It helped me take care of myself. It also helped me make decisions about career versus calling.”
- “I discovered that by working through the section on how to handle stress, I realised that most importantly it was my attitude that counts and that this had a great impact on my daily life.”
- “The programme made me stop and ask questions about my life. It also helped me deal with my relationships with other people and whether I am truly accepting of others.”
- “It helped me cope with belonging because I realised that I have values in common with others, making me part of the community.”
- “It helped me not to be inhibited, but rather look further than I have done before.”
- “The programme helped me open up to others and build study groups instead of doing it myself. In this way I was able to get ideas from others. I also went out to movies and created personal space, thereby reducing my stress.”
- “It helped me not just accept everything but rather to question things, giving me a broader view of things.”

The third guide question was: “**What module or part of the PGP stood out for you personally?**”

- “It helped me to integrate into the community.”
- “In one of the modules I had to create a song, and this helped to bring out my talent to write. In so doing I discovered that if I give myself time I can create wonderful things.”
- “The part on sense of belonging helped me enhance my relationships and helped me with my journey.”

- “The module on Personal Philosophy stood out for me most. I used to be short tempered and now I feel I am able to cope with clashes and adjust myself to situations and even deal with my temper.”
- “The module on time management I found very good, because it is a major challenge in my life.”
- “The module about setting goals helped me realise how difficult it is to set goals and keep with them and the importance of this.”
- “The section on depression helped me to identify the symptoms and signs so I was able to help others.”
- “I found the themes in the PGP good and relevant to the college and myself. It made me look at how to deal with stress, health, self management and what I could achieve in the future.”
- “The part about time out and allowing myself space was very applicable and important to me and the part on how to deal with stress too.”
- “The section on goals and values helped me set up and plan for life.”
- “I needed help with clarifying my goals and values and the programme together with the personal counselling session helped me clarify this.”
- “The part on the philosophy of life stood out for me, because it made me rework my philosophy, goals, and principles, which are for me important to go through.”
- “The module ‘who am I?’, helped me start to discover the person I am.”
- “The module on how to deal with anger helped me put violence in my life in context and start dealing with it.”

Together with the responses from students given in 6.2.2.1, the Personal Growth Review Questionnaire was used to evaluate the PGP, giving clear results regarding the effectiveness of the programme in the lives of the students at the College of the Transfiguration. This questionnaire was used to evaluate the programme in November 2008.

6.2.2 PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME ANNUAL REVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

Questionnaires are a valuable means of obtaining information on a particular aspect of a study. For the purpose of this research, the annual review questionnaire seemed the best feasible way to obtain objective and conclusive feedback from the students.

One reason for this was that the PGP was created for all the students at the college and it was felt that they were too diverse in culture, background, upbringing and age to pick a specific sample group which could be representative of the entire college group, e.g. first; second and third-year groups. Secondly, to attempt to give feedback on all of the interviews done with the students, who differed individually and in their year of study, would be somewhat unquantifiable.

Therefore to obtain specific information to determine the usefulness and effectiveness of the PGP the evaluation questionnaire was streamlined into its present form (See Appendixes 1, 2 and 3). Initially, in 2006 and 2007, the 'year end evaluation took the form of a 'student assessment' found at the back of each PGP (This programme can be obtained from the researcher). This assessment was originally designed to ascertain how the students found the PGP in general terms and what they thought could be added.

However, as the research progressed, the researcher began to discover that the feedback from these 'assessments' was not holistic enough to allow evaluation of the programme for research purposes. Patterns of behaviour became evident amongst the students, and the questionnaires took on an exploratory nature to determine whether the research question could be answered.

The PGP annual review was constructed for the year 2008, to evaluate how the students felt and how they experienced the programme, and consisted of:

FIRST YEARS – 23 questions

SECOND YEARS – 24 questions

THIRD YEARS – 20 questions

6.2.2.1 RESULTS OF THE ANNUAL REVIEW

The questions of the annual review were devised and based on the individual first, second and third-year student programmes. The three programmes differ accordingly:

6.2.2.1.1 Year 1 Results

The following results indicate first year student's responses to the questionnaire (see Appendix 1). Only questions that are relevant to the research hypothesis have been selected. The selection was based on the following question: Is the PGP indeed a programme that can be utilised as an alternative programme, used in conjunction with the college curriculum to assist with the holistic education of students?

TABLE 6.1 **QUESTION ONE**

Did you find the Personal Growth Programme (PGP)

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Interesting	4	16.7
Relevant to YOUR personal growth/development	13	54.2
Boring	6	25
Irrelevant to me as an individual	1	4.2

According to Table 6.1, the vast majority of the respondents (17 students, 70.9%) were positive about the PGP. Whereas the minority of the first year students felt negative about the PGP (7 students, 29.2%) stating that it was either boring (6 students, 25%) or irrelevant to them (1 student, 4.2%).

TABLE 6.2 **QUESTION TWO**

Did you find that the PGP helped you integrate into the College community?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	14	58.3
No	10	41.7

According to Table 6.2 the majority of the students (14, 58.3%) answered yes to whether the PGP had helped them integrate into the College community at the College of the Transfiguration. Of those that answered no (10 students, 41.7%), these students did not elaborate on their answer.

TABLE 6.3 **QUESTION THREE**

How did you find module 1: “ why am I here?”

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	5	20.8
Good	4	16.7
OK	9	37.5
Poor	2	8.3
Irrelevant to me	4	16.7

According to Table 6.3 the majority (18 students, 75%) were positive about the module why am I here? Whilst the minority of first years students, (6 students, 25%) answered negatively about this module.

TABLE 6.4 **QUESTION FOUR**

Your ‘who am I?’ module – did this help you to reflect on who you are?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	16	66.7
No	8	33.3

According to Table 6.4 the vast majority of the students (16, 66.7%) felt that this module helped them reflect on who they were as an individual whilst the minority (8 students, 33.3%) felt that it didn’t help them do this.

TABLE 6.5 **QUESTION FIVE**

Was the ‘what do I believe in?’ module

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	2	8.3
Good	7	29.2
OK	11	45.8
Poor	1	4.2
Irrelevant to me	3	12.5

According to Table 6.5 the vast majority of the first year students (20, 83.3%) were positive about this module whilst a small minority (4 students, 16.7%) did not seem to feel that this module was relevant to them.

TABLE 6.6 **QUESTION SIX**

Did it help you to focus on your spiritual awareness?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	13	54.2
No	11	45.8

According to Table 6.6 the majority of the students (13, 54.2%) felt that this module helped them focus on their spiritual awareness, whilst the minority (11 students, 45.8%) felt that it didn’t help them do this.

TABLE 6.7 **QUESTION SEVEN**

Did you find module 4

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	3	12.5
Good	6	25
OK	10	41.7
Poor	2	8.3
Irrelevant to me	3	12.5

According to Table 6.7 the vast majority of the students (19, 79.2%) responded positively to this module on self care. Whilst a small minority (5 students, 20.8%), didn't seem to find this as a priority in their lives.

TABLE 6.8 QUESTION EIGHT

Were you made more aware of the importance of taking care of yourself before you can take care of others?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	16	66.7
No	8	33.3

According to Table 6.8 the majority of the students (16, 66.7%) felt this module made them more aware of how important it is to take care of themselves, whilst the minority (8 students, 33.3%) answered no to the question.

TABLE 6.9 QUESTION NINE

Did module 4 make you aware of your anger?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	13	54.2
No	11	45.8

Table 6.9 indicates that the majority of the first year students (13, 54.2%) found this module helped them become more aware of their own anger, whereas the close minority (11 students, 45.8%) felt it didn't.

TABLE 6.10 QUESTION TEN

Did you find module 5

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	4	16.6
Good	7	29.2
OK	9	37.5

Poor	1	4.2
Irrelevant to me	3	12.5

According to Table 6.10 the vast majority of the students (20, 83.3%) were positive about the above module: Do I allow myself time out? A very small minority (4 students, 16.7%) felt that it was either poor or irrelevant to them.

TABLE 6.11 **QUESTION TWELVE**

Did Module 6 help you reflect on your need for personal time out?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	21	87.5
No	3	12.5

According to Table 6.11 an overwhelming majority of first year students (21, 87%) felt that this module helped them reflect on their need for personal time out, whilst a small minority (3 students, 12.5) felt that it didn't.

TABLE 6.12 **QUESTION THIRTEEN**

Did you find module 7 important for your life at COTT?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	18	75
No	6	25

(This Personal Hygiene module was excluded from the 1st-year programme in 2009 due this year end evaluation results done by the students as stated above in 6.1). According to Table 6.12 the vast majority of the students (18, 75%) indicated positively about the module on personal hygiene, whilst the minority (6 students, 25%) answered that they didn't find it to be important to their life at the college.

TABLE 6.13 **QUESTION FOURTEEN**

Do you feel module 7 in the PGP was

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	3	12.5
Good	8	33.3
OK	12	50
Poor	0	0
Irrelevant to me	1	4.2

Due to the dissatisfaction of the module on personal hygiene a further question was asked and according to Table 6.13 an overwhelming majority of students (23, 95.8%) were positive about this module whilst a very small minority (1 student, 4.2%) felt that this module was irrelevant to them. When looking at the results above it seemed that there were contradictions in opinions received from the students.

TABLE 6.14 **QUESTION FIFTEEN**

Did module 8 help you to reflect on you journey at COTT and as an individual?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	16	66.7
No	8	33.3

According to Table 6.14 the majority of the first year students (16, 66.7%) were positive about having a reflective diary or journal to help them reflect on their journey at the college, whilst a minority (8 students, 33.3%) felt that it did not do this for them.

TABLE 6.15 **QUESTION SIXTEEN**

How would you rate creating a journal/diary for yourself?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	3	12.5
Good	10	41.7

OK	7	29.2
Poor	3	12.5
Irrelevant to me	0	0
Other	1	4.2

According to Table 6.15 the overwhelming majority (23 students, 95.8%) saw the importance of creating a journal/diary for themselves. While no student had indicated that it was irrelevant to them 1 student (4.2%) indicated other on the questionnaire. Due to lack of elaboration on this answer it can be assumed that the student was undecided as to whether they felt creating a journal/diary was important to them.

TABLE 6.16 **QUESTION SEVENTEEN**

Did you find any module:

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Helped me understand areas I previously didn't understand	10	41.6
Helped me develop as an individual	7	29.2
Helped me deal with College life	7	29.2
Totally irrelevant to my personal growth and future calling	0	0

According to Table 6.16 all students (24,100%) without exception felt that the PGP and its modules assisted them to develop both as an individual and with community life.

TABLE 6.17 **QUESTION EIGHTEEN**

Did you feel that 3 A5 pages a month were too much for you to cope with?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	6	25
No	18	75

According to Table 6.17, 6 students (25%) felt that three A5 pages a month was too much for them to work through, whereas 18 students (75%) felt that this was not the case.

TABLE 6.18 **QUESTION TWENTY TWO**

Would you prefer feedback to be in:

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
a large group	2	8.3
a small group – sign up with friends	3	12.5
on my own	13	54.2
group & individual sessions	6	25

Amongst the 24 first year students, Table 6.18 shows that 13 (54%) felt that they would prefer feedback as an individual, whilst 5 students (20.8%) responded that they would like feedback in either a small or large group. 6 students (25%) were undecided and answered either group or individual sessions would suite them.

TABLE 6.19 **QUESTION TWENTY THREE**

What would you change for this programme for next year?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Nothing	16	66.7

Although it was indicated in Table 6.19 that 16 students (66.7%) would change nothing from the PGP for the following year’s programme, not all of the students that left this blank 8 students made comments on how they would change it as was shown here below:

Please write your changes

here.....

Here are some of the comments that the students gave regarding possible changes:

- “The programme is needed but the work here at the College is too much. If we could do it in six months so that during the holidays we can read the modules...”
- “It could include retreats in it, and outings and invite speakers on personal growth”.

- “The programme should cut out the section about hygiene because we have no problem with that”.

6.2.3.1.2 Year 2 Results

The following results indicate second-year students’ responses to the questionnaire (see Appendix 2). Only questions that are relevant to the research hypothesis have been selected. The selection was based on the following question: Is the PGP indeed a programme that can be utilised as an alternative programme used in conjunction with the college curriculum to assist with the holistic education of students?

TABLE 6.20 **QUESTION ONE**

Did you find the Personal Growth Programme (PGP)

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Interesting	2	14.3
Relevant to YOUR personal growth/development	7	50
Boring	2	14.3
Irrelevant to me as an individual	3	21.4

According to Table 6.20 the majority of second year students (9, 64.3%) found the PGP interesting and relevant to their personal growth, whereas the minority, 5 students (35.7%) gave a more negative response to the question.

TABLE 6.21 **QUESTION TWO**

Did you find that it helped you integrate into the College community?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	7	50
No	7	50

According to Table 6.21 half of the students (7, 50%) felt that the PGP helped them integrate into the college community, whereas the other half (7 students, 50%) of the second years students responded that the PGP did not.

TABLE 6.22 **QUESTION THREE**

Did you find the module 1 – where are my goals and values now?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	4	28.6
Good	7	50
OK	2	14.3
Poor	0	0
Irrelevant to me	1	7.1

Table 6.22 showed that the vast majority of the students (13, 92.9%) found the module on goals and values of benefit to their personal growth. Only 1 student (7.1%) found this module irrelevant to them.

TABLE 6.23 **QUESTION FOUR**

Did the 6 steps help you?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	7	50
No	7	50

Table 6.23 shows that 7 students (50%) felt that the 6 steps to help stress helped them whilst 7 students (50%) felt that it did not.

TABLE 6.24 **QUESTION FIVE**

Was the stress module

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	1	7.1

Good	4	28.6
OK	3	21.4
Poor	0	0
Irrelevant to me	6	42.9

According to Table 6.24, 8 students (57.1%) were positive that the stress module was good for them, whereas 6 students (42.9%) felt that this module was irrelevant to them.

TABLE 6.25 QUESTION SIX

Has this helped you reflect, recognise and deal with the stress you are feeling?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	7	50
No	7	50

The results of question six in table 6.25 indicate that 7 students (50%) felt that this module helped them recognise and deal with their stress and 7 students (50%) indicated that it didn't.

TABLE 6.26 QUESTION SEVEN

Did you find module 3

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	3	21.4
Good	3	21.4
OK	3	21.4
Poor	2	14.3
Irrelevant to me	3	21.4

Table 6.26 shows, that 9 students (64.3%) were positive about the section in the PGP on respect and the minority (5 students, 35%) responded negatively to this module.

TABLE 6.27 **QUESTION EIGHT**

Do you respect the time of others? Are you on time for lectures, appointments, meetings? Do you call if you are going to be late or cannot make the meeting? If no to any of these, do you need to reflect more on this through your PGP?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	11	78.6
No	3	21.4

Table 6.27 indicates that the majority of the students (11, 78.6%) indicated that they have time management abilities, whilst the minority 3 students (21.4%) indicated the opposite.

TABLE 6.28 **QUESTION NINE**

Did you find module 4

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	3	21.4
Good	4	28.6
OK	6	42.9
Poor	0	0
Irrelevant to me	1	7.1

An overwhelming majority of the second year students (13, 92.9%) indicated in Table 6.28 that they found the above module: What is xenophobia helpful to them. Only 1 student (7.1%) answered that this module was irrelevant to them.

TABLE 6.29 **QUESTION TEN**

Was/is the topic of Xenophobia appropriate for the PGP as part of your formation to become a priest/lay person within the Anglican Church?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	12	85.7
No	2	14.3

According to Table 6.29 the topic of xenophobia is actual and relevant (12 students, 85.7%) for the formation programme of the students at the College of the Transfiguration. The minority of the students (2, 14.3%) felt that it was not needed for their formation as a priest/lay person within the Anglican Church.

TABLE 6.30 **QUESTION ELEVEN**

Did you find module 5

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	4	28.6
Good	3	21.4
OK	4	28.6
Poor	1	7.1
Irrelevant to me	2	14.3

According to Table 6.30 the majority of the students (11, 78.6%) found the topic of module 5: How do I motivate myself and others, positive for their personal growth. A small minority (3 students, 21.4%) responded negatively.

TABLE 6.31 **QUESTION TWELVE**

Were you aware of priorities and challenges after looking at this section?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	8	57.1
No	4	28.6
Irrelevant to me	2	14.3

Table 6.31 indicated that the majority of the students (8, 57.1%) became more aware of their priorities and challenges after looking at the above section in Table 6.30. Some students (4, 28.6%) responded that this section did not make them aware and 2 students (14.3%) found it irrelevant to their personal growth.

TABLE 6.32 **QUESTION THIRTEEN**

Did Module 6 help you reflect on your need for better time management?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	13	92.9
No	1	7.1

Table 6.32 showed that the overwhelming majority of the students (13, 92.9%) were in favour of this module and helped them to strive towards better time management, whilst 1 student (7.1%) responded that it didn't.

TABLE 6.33 **QUESTION FIFTEEN**

Did you find module 7 on Spiritual Awareness

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	3	21.4
Good	4	28.6
OK	3	21.4
Poor	1	7.1
Irrelevant to me	3	21.4

According to Table 6.33 the majority of students (10, 71.4%) responded positively to the module on Spiritual and Personal awareness. A small minority (4 students, 28.6%) responded negatively.

TABLE 6.34 **QUESTION SIXTEEN**

Did module 8 help you to reflect on you journey at COTT and as an individual?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	9	64.3
No	5	35.7

The majority of the students (9, 64.3%) indicated in Table 6.34 that the module on a reflective diary/journal helped them reflect on their journey at COTI. The minority (5 students, 35.7%) responded that it didn't.

TABLE 6.35 **QUESTION SEVENTEEN**

How would you rate creating a journal/diary for you?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent- helped me reflect on my life	3	21.4
Good- made me think	5	35.7
OK	2	14.3
Poor- took up time I could have used on other studies	1	7.1
Irrelevant to me	1	7.1
Other	2	14.3

According to Table 6.35 the majority of the students (10, 71.4%) indicated that creating a diary/journal was important for their personal growth. However 1 student (7.1%) responded that the writing of the diary took up time they could have used on their studies, indicating that academic priorities were more important to them than any thing else. 1 student (7.1%) responded that they found doing this irrelevant to them and 2 students (14.3%) could not make a decision regarding this and marked other.

TABLE 6.36 **QUESTION EIGHTEEN**

Did you find any module:

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Helped me understand areas I previously didn't understand	2	14.3
Helped me develop as an individual	5	35.7
Helped me deal with College life	4	28.6
Totally irrelevant to my personal growth and	3	21.4

future calling		
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Table 6.36 indicates that the vast majority of the students (11, 78.6%) felt that the modules of the PGP had helped them in their overall personal growth, whereas 3 students (21.4%) responded that some of the modules were irrelevant to their personal growth and future vocation to serve God.

TABLE 6.37 **QUESTION NINETEEN**

Did you feel that 3 A5 pages a month were too much for you to cope with?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	5	35.7
No	9	64.3

Although Table 6.37 showed, that the majority of the students felt that 3 A4 pages were not too much for them to cope with, a minority (5 students, 35.7 %) indicated that it was too much for them to manage, which calls into question their priorities- academic versus personal growth.

TABLE 6.38 **QUESTION TWENTY THREE**

Would you prefer feedback to be in a:

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
a large group	3	21.4
a small group – sign up with friends	3	21.4
on my own	3	21.4
group & individual sessions	5	35.7

According to Table 6.38 the majority of the second year students (6, 42.9%) indicated that they would prefer feedback by either large or small groups. A minority of the students (3, 21.4%) would choose to get feedback on their own, whilst 5 students (35.7%) were undecided and marked that they didn't mind either group or individual sessions.

TABLE 6.39 **QUESTION TWENTY FOUR**

What would you change for this programme for next year?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Nothing	6	42.9

Table 6.39 shows that only 6 students (42.9%) marked that they would not like to change anything on the PGP. The other students (8, 57.1%) did not indicate anything on their questionnaires and only 1 student (7.1%) responded to the question below as to possible changes that they would like to see in the PGP in the future:

Please write your changes here

.....

Here is one of the comments that the students gave regarding possible changes:

- Perhaps add a module called: “My cultural journey”.

6.2.3.1.3 Year 3 Results

The following results indicate third year student’s responses to the questionnaire (see Appendix 3). Only questions that are relevant to the research hypothesis have been selected. The selection was based on the following question: Is the PGP indeed a programme that can be utilised as an alternative programme used in conjunction with the college curriculum to assist with the holistic education of students?

TABLE 6.40 **QUESTION ONE**

Did you find the Personal Growth Programme (PGP)

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Interesting	7	77.8
Relevant to YOUR personal growth/development	2	22.2
Boring	0	0
Irrelevant to me as an individual	0	0

Table 6.40 shows a drastic change in student opinions regarding personal growth compared with second year students where only 64.3% of students were positive. All 9 third year students were positive about the PGP in their lives (100%).

TABLE 6.41 **QUESTION TWO**

Did you find that it helped you integrate into the College community?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	9	100
No	0	0

All 9 students (100%) felt that the PGP helped them integrate into the college community as shown here in Table 6.41

TABLE 6.42 **QUESTION THREE**

Did you find the Moral Values module

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	6	66.7
Good	3	33.3
OK	0	0
Poor	0	0
Irrelevant to me	0	0

According to Table 6.42 all of the students (9, 100%) felt that the module on moral values helped them in their personal growth.

TABLE 6.43 **QUESTION FOUR**

Your 'Attitude' module - did this help you to reflect on who you are?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	9	100
No	0	0

We find in Table 6.43 that all of the students (9, 100%) indicated that the attitude module helped them reflect on their own attitude in life. This is perhaps an indication that third year students are deeply reflective regarding their actions and attitudes in their personal growth and how their own attitude can effect their life and the lives of others.

TABLE 6.44 **QUESTION FIVE**

Were the tips

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	7	77.8
Good	2	22.2
OK	0	0
Poor	0	0
Irrelevant to me	0	0

Table 6.44 shows that all of the students (9, 100%) responded that the 8 easy steps (tips) to creating a positive attitude in module two of the PGP had been helpful for their personal growth.

TABLE 6.45 **QUESTION SIX**

Did the 'sexual' harassment module help you understand better what sexual harassment is?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	8	88.9
No	1	11.1

According to Table 6.45, 8 students (88.8%) indicated that the module on sexual harassment helped them understand more about the subject, whilst 1 student (11.1%) indicated it hadn't helped them.

TABLE 6.46 **QUESTION SEVEN**

Did you find module 4

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
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Excellent	6	66.7
Good	2	22.2
OK	1	11.1
Poor	0	0
Irrelevant to me	0	0

Table 6.46 indicates that all of the students (9, 100%) were positive about the module: Striving for peace with ourselves and our community. This seems to indicate that students in their third year take seriously the need for their integration into the community for their future work as a priest.

TABLE 6.47 **QUESTION EIGHT**

Were you made more aware of what was around you when you looked at module 5?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	8	88.9
No	1	11.1

Table 6.47 indicates that the majority of the students (8, 88.9%) indicated that module 5: Ending crime, violence, war and poverty made them more aware of what was around them, whilst a small minority (1 student, 11.1%) indicated that this module didn't help them do this.

TABLE 6.48 **QUESTION NINE**

Did module 6 make you aware of your anger?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	9	100
No	0	0

Table 6.48 shows that all of the third year students (9, 100%) indicated that module 6 of their PGP: How to deal with my anger, made them more aware of their own feelings about the subject.

TABLE 6.49 **QUESTION TEN**

Did you find module 6

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	7	77.8
Good	2	22.2
OK	0	0
Poor	0	0
Irrelevant to me	0	0

Table 6.49 goes on to indicate that 7 of the students (77.8%) felt this module on anger was excellent, whilst 2 students (22.2%) indicated that it was a good module to help them with their personal growth.

TABLE 6.50 **QUESTION ELEVEN**

Is Ubuntu relevant to the PGP?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	9	100
No	0	0

Table 6.50 shows that all of the students (9, 100%) indicated that the module on Ubuntu was needed in their PGP and therefore also is essential to their personal growth and becoming a more integrated, whole individual.

TABLE 6.51 **QUESTION TWELVE**

Did you find the module on Ubuntu

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent	5	55.6
Good	3	33.3
OK	1	11.1
Poor	0	0

Irrelevant to me	0	0
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Table 6.51 shows that 5 students (55.6%) felt that the module on Ubuntu was excellent, 3 students (33.3%) indicated it was good and 1 student (11.1) showed that it was Ok, whereby giving a 100% positive response to this module for their personal growth.

TABLE 6.52 **QUESTION THIRTEEN**

Did module 8 help you to reflect on you journey at COTT and as an individual?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	9	100
No	0	0

Table 6.52 shows that all of the 9 third year students (100%) indicated that the reflective diary/journal that they were required to write helped them reflect on their journey at the College of the Transfiguration (COTT) and as an individual.

TABLE 6.53 **QUESTION FOURTEEN**

How would you rate creating a journal/diary for you

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Excellent- helped me reflect on my life	5	55.6
Good- made me think	3	33.3
OK	1	11.1
Poor took up time I could have used on other studies	0	0
Irrelevant to me	0	0
Other	0	0

In response to how they rated creating the journal/diary for themselves all 9 students (100%) showed a positive response as seen here in Table 6.53.

TABLE 6.54 **QUESTION FIFTEEN**

Did you find any module:

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Helped me understand areas I previously didn't understand	5	55.6
Helped me develop as an individual	6	66.7
Helped me deal with College life	4	44.4
Totally irrelevant to my personal growth and future calling	0	0

Table 6.54 shows, that none of the students felt that any module in the PGP was irrelevant to their personal growth. As is indicated on the table above, the 9 students marked more than one answer above showing that the PGP had more than one function for them in a very positive and perhaps transformative way. 5 students (55.6%) indicated the modules had helped them understand areas they previously didn't understand, whereas there were a further 6 students (66.7%) that marked that it had helped them develop as an individual. Thereafter we can see in the table above that 4 students (44.4%) indicated that the PGP had helped them deal with college life.

TABLE 6.55 **QUESTION SIXTEEN**

Did you feel that 3 A5 pages a month were too much for you to cope with?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Yes	0	0
No	9	100

According to Table 6.55 an overwhelming majority of the students (9, 100%) indicated that 3 A5 pages of the PGP that they were required to work through each month was not more than they could cope with. This could perhaps indicate the need and positive attitude towards personal growth of the students leaving the college in this year (being third year students and leaving the college at the completion of their studies for life in the community).

TABLE 6.56 **QUESTION NINETEEN**

Would you prefer feedback to be in:

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
a large group	0	0
a small group – sign up with friends	0	0
on my own	8	88.9
group & individual sessions	1	11.1

Table 6.56 indicates that 8 students (88.9%) were of the opinion that feedback individually would be better for their personal growth, as they had remarked that this for them was a very personal thing they needed to work through and didn't want to share in with a group. Whilst 1 student (11.1%) indicated that they didn't mind whether feedback occurred in a group or in individual sessions.

TABLE 6.57 **QUESTION TWENTY**

What would you change for this programme for next year?

Statement	Number of students	Percentage %
Nothing	7	77.8

Table 6.57 shows that 7 students (77.8%) in their third and final year at the college answered that they didn't want anything changed in the PGP whilst the other 2 remaining students (22.2%) gave the following responses:

Please write your changes here.....

Here are some of the comments that the students gave regarding possible changes:

- “The programme should contain group activities that will help with spiritual growth”.
- “...the programme should be part of orientation week. All of us arrive at the college with our own view, concerns, aspirations and spirituality. Maybe this should be included”.

6.2.3.2 Student's Comments

At the end of the questionnaire, the students were asked if they so chose to make comments on the PGP. Here are a few of the diverse comments from the students printed with their permission but without giving names, to protect their privacy:

YEAR 1

- “I think the group sessions were helpful. But mostly as students we attend for the sake of attending”.
- “Personal growth is an essential programme as it reminds, teaches and revives what is in us”.
- “I think this programme has been helpful because it is trying to equip students with improved interpersonal skills which aimed at helping students to negotiate the complex demands of the multi-cultural environment at COTT”.
- “The PGP is good, but takes up our time when we have assignments to complete”.

YEAR 2

- “I think it is better if we would be left alone with our studies”.
- “The PGP is a good tool to stir reflection on certain issues”.
- “Personal Growth Programme should be conducted by means of interviews not writing because there is no time here in college for PGP”.
- “I hope next year you will again have interesting modules for us. Please maintain the A5 booklet”.

YEAR 3

- “Personal growth programme for me is very important. It helped me a lot to deal with myself first. It changed my weaknesses into strengths and built my strengths more firm. I do not know how I would have coped for 3 years in this kind of a community, but because of PGP I enjoyed this life and felt blessed for God giving me this opportunity of knowing myself in order to know other people”.
- “I hope that the programme will stay and develop more to such a level that it would bring about a balance between spiritual growth and importance and academic growth and importance, because at this point in time the College tends to be to focused on

academics to such an extent that whole formation gets left one side. Meditation does not work, formation group also fails. Let's try this programme as the main focus of trying to balance whole formation and academics”.

- “The information here is very good and I wish lecturers can also do this in formation groups so that pupils can understand it better”.
- “It was helpful to me and made me to reflect on myself and my struggles at the college.”
- “This programme should be part of orientation week”.

6.3 COMPARISON OF SIMILAR QUESTIONS

The majority of the questions used in the Annual Review Questionnaire (appendixes 1, 2 and 3) are dissimilar in nature due to the fact that they pertain to the PGP modules, which were different according to the student modules for each year group they were used for.

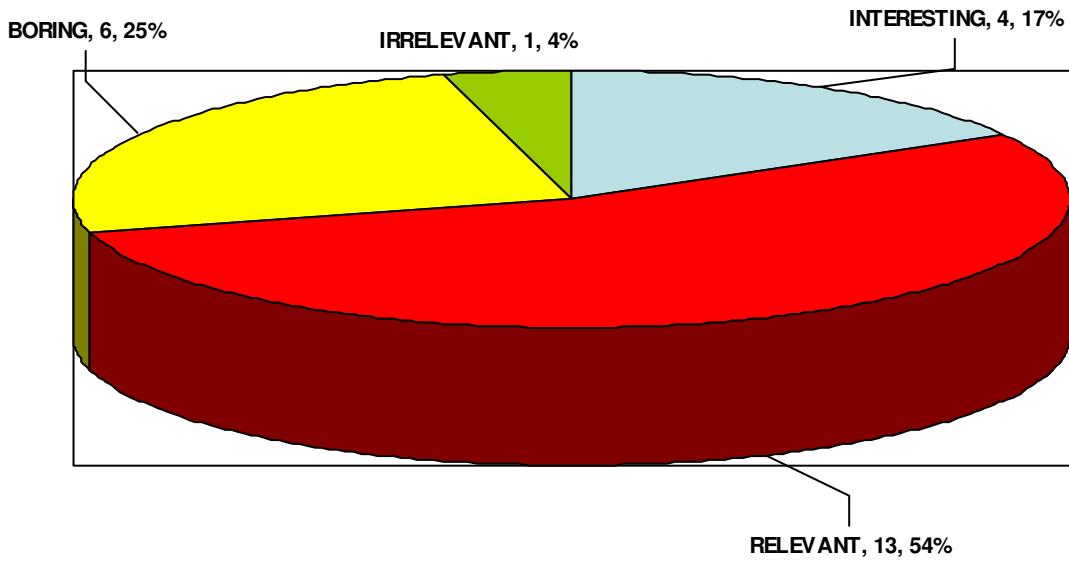
Therefore, in an attempt to compare first, second and third-year groups regarding their general responses to the programme (PGP), pie and bar charts of comparison were used to determine what percentage of the students were positive and what percentage were negative about the programme. For this purpose, two questions which were common to all three year group's annual reviews were used:

6.3.1 QUESTION ONE

Did you find the Personal Growth Programme:

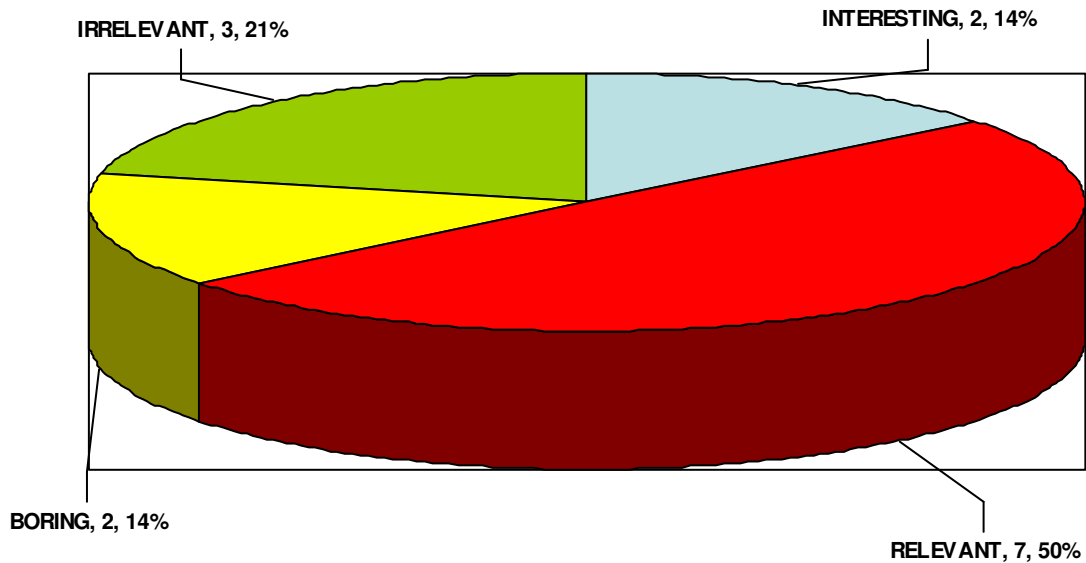
- Interesting
- Relevant to YOUR personal growth/development
- Boring
- Irrelevant to me as an individual

FIG. 6.2 YEAR 1 RESPONSES – 24 STUDENTS



According to Fig 6.2 the vast majority of the respondents (17 students, 70.9%) were positive about the PGP. Whereas the minority of the first year students felt negative about the PGP (7 students, 29.2%) stating that it was either boring (6 students, 25%) or irrelevant to them (1 student, 4.2%).

FIG. 6.3 YEAR 2 RESPONSES – 14 STUDENTS



According to Fig 6.3 the majority of second year students (9, 64.3%) found the PGP interesting and relevant to their personal growth, whereas the minority, 5 students (35.7%) gave a more negative response to the question.

FIG. 6.4 YEAR 3 RESPONSES – 9 STUDENTS

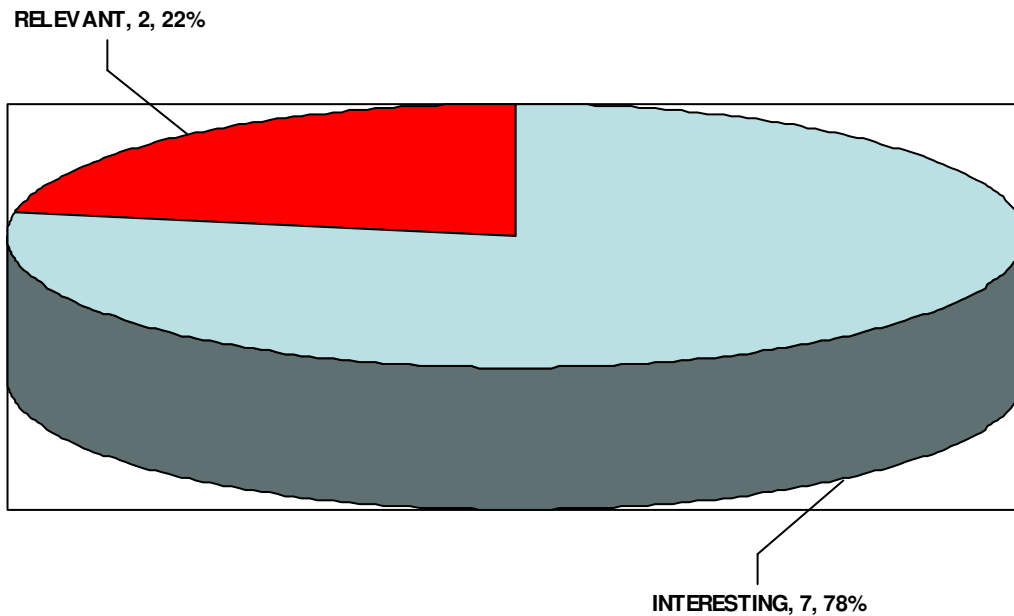
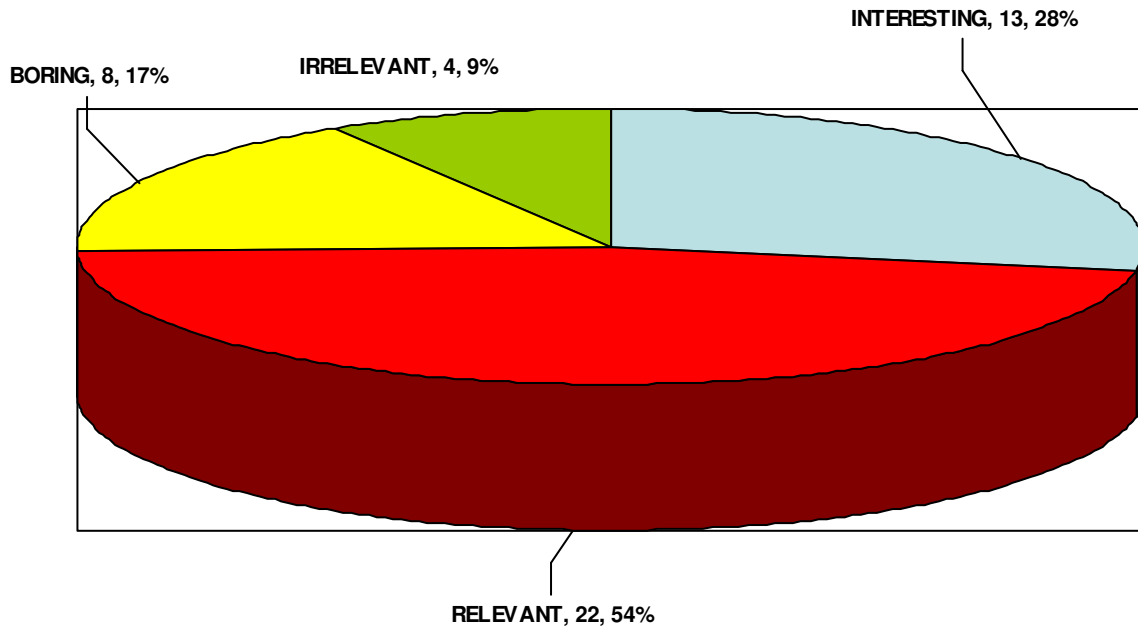


Fig 6.4 indicates that all 9 third year students were positive about the PGP in their lives (100%). It shows above how 7 students (78%) found it interesting, whilst 2 students (22%) found the programme to be relevant to their personal growth.

The following PIE CHART shows the percentage of responses based on the total number of students that filled in Question One of the annual review questionnaire at the end of 2008:

FIG. 6.5 RESPONSES BY ALL 47 STUDENTS



According to Fig 6.5, 74.5% (35 students) of the total students were positive about the PGP, where 13 (28%) said it was interesting and 22 students (54%) remarked that it had been relevant to their personal growth. The Figure also indicates that a minority of the total students felt negative about the PGP. Here 8 students (17%) felt it was boring, and 4 students (9%) said that it was irrelevant to their personal growth.

To further assist the researcher to determine whether the students from all three years reflected in a positive or negative way in respect to whether the programme was of practical use to them, question two of the annual review questionnaire was analysed:

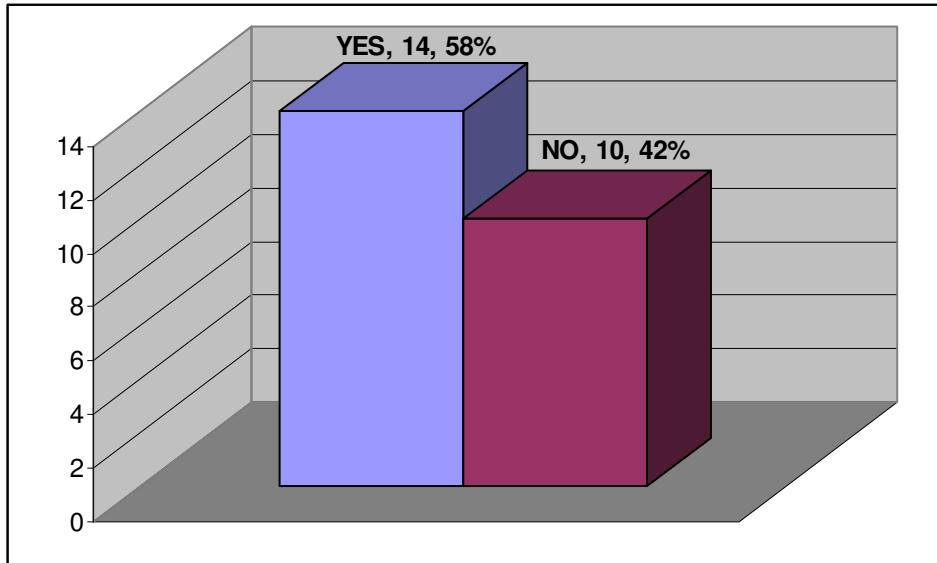
6.3.2 QUESTION TWO

Did you find that it helped you integrate into the College community?

- Yes
- No

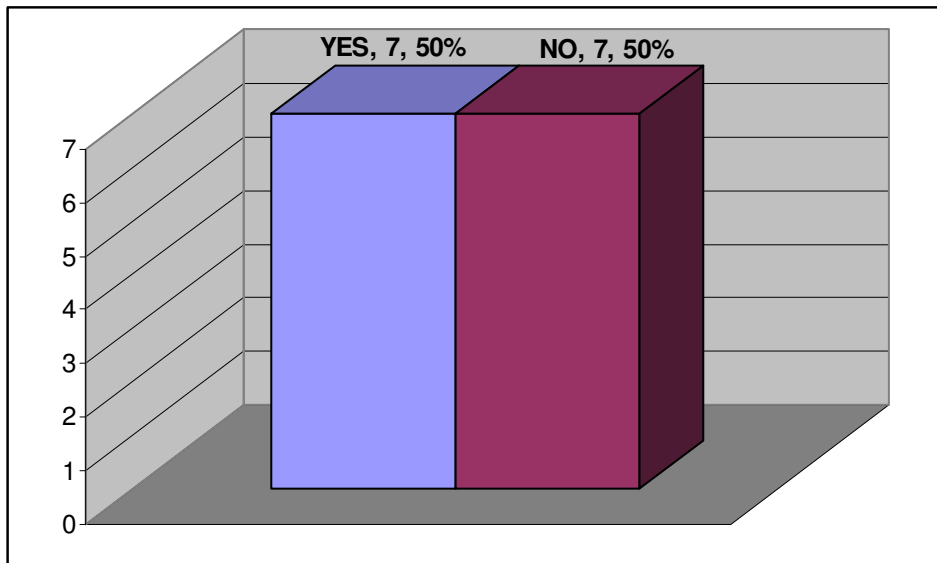
The results of the comparison can be seen in the following BAR CHART comparisons:

FIG. 6.6 YEAR 1 RESPONSES – 24 STUDENTS



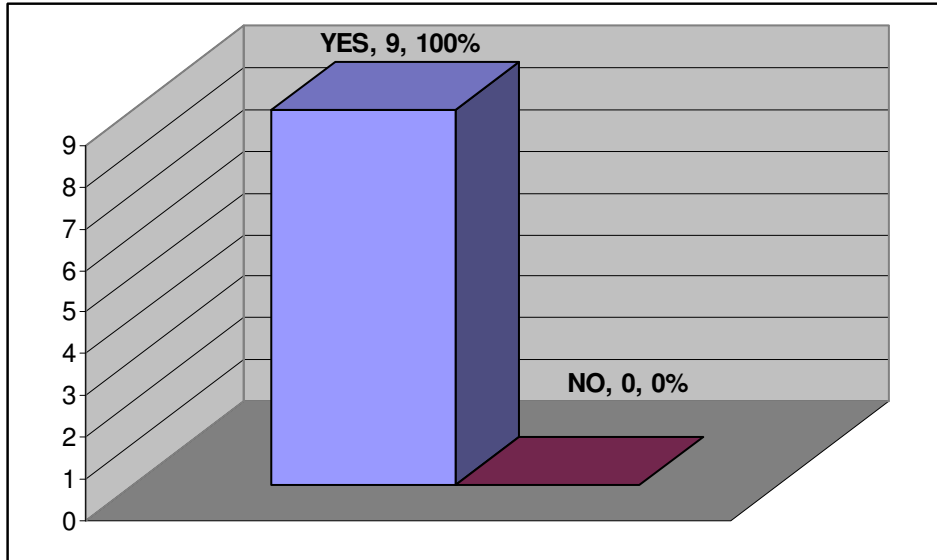
According to Fig 6.6, 14 first year students (58%) felt that the programme had helped them integrate in a practical way into the college community, whilst a minority of 10 students (42%) had indicated it had not done this for them.

FIG. 6.7 YEAR 2 RESPONSES – 14 STUDENTS



According to Fig 6.7 half of the second year students (50%) had felt that the PGP had helped them integrate into the college community, whilst the other half (50%) had indicated that this had not been the case for them.

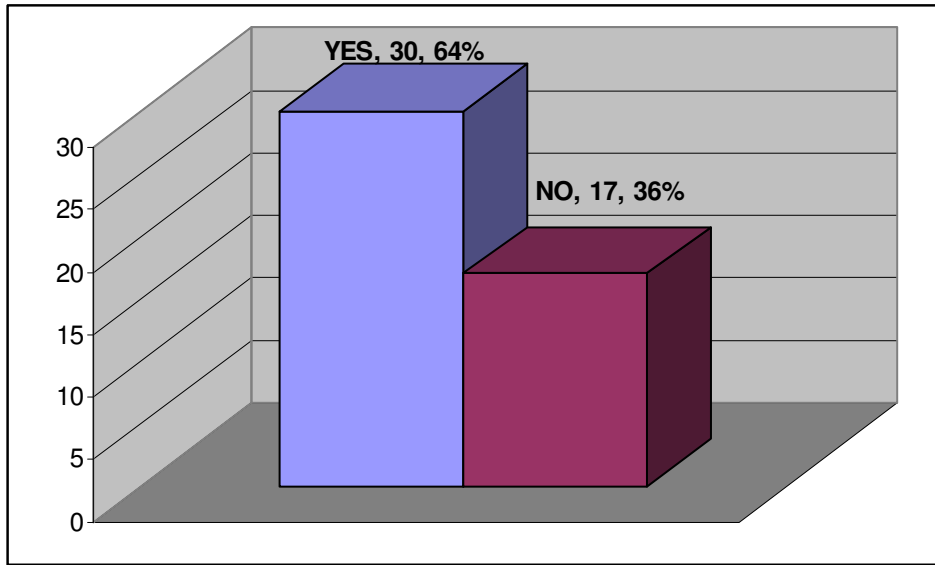
FIG. 6.8 YEAR 3 RESPONSES – 9 STUDENTS



Very different to the second year results in Fig 6.7, Fig. 6.8 indicates that all the third year students (9, 100%) had indicated that the PGP had helped them integrate into the college community in a practical way.

The following BAR CHART shows the rate of responses based on the total number of students (47) who completed the annual review questionnaire at the end of 2008:

FIG. 6.9 YEAR 1, 2 AND 3 STUDENTS – 47 STUDENTS



According to Fig. 6.9 the vast majority (30, 64%) of the total 47 students felt that the PGP had helped them integrate into the college community. The minority of the students (17, 36%) felt that the PGP hadn't helped them integrate into the college community in a practical way.

Taking all of the above into consideration, the following section will present a summary of the research. It is the hope that this summary will review questions that have arisen during the process of this research project.

6.4 SUMMARY OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

There were **twenty-four** first-year students who completed the first year questionnaire. Of those that completed the questionnaire, all except four students (17%) were positive about the programme. The only module of the programme that the students seemed unhappy with was the module on personal hygiene (was in the 2008 programme but removed from the 2009 programme – discussed in Chapter 5 in Table 5.1).

Students who didn't want the module, commented that they didn't want to speak about personal hygiene. They also felt that they did not have a problem or challenge in this regard. Despite the fact that this module was removed by the researcher in the 2009 programme, it

must be noted that this module was included in the programme due to the discussions with the faculty of the college who regarded this theme a challenge for the students.

There were **fourteen** students who completed the second year questionnaire. Of these students, nine (64%) were positive and satisfied with the programme and commented that it had significant positive influence in their lives, whereas five (35%) were negative about the PGP and found the topics irrelevant to them. They went on to comment that they just wanted to be left alone to do their academic work. Eight (57%) students from this second year group commented that about three A5 pages given them in the PGP to do in one month were too much.

There were **nine students** who completed the third year questionnaire. All (100%) students without exception found relevance and importance of the PGP in their lives and in their ministry. They commented that the programme had helped them cope with being at the college for three years.

In the comparison between the student's responses in Fig 6.5 it became apparent from the research that the majority of the students at the College of the Transfiguration feel that the Personal Growth Programme (PGP) is both interesting and relevant (75% - see PIE CHARTS in section 6.3). On the pie chart of Fig. 6.5, 13 students (28%) said it was interesting and 22 students (54%) remarked that it had been relevant to their personal growth. The Figure also indicates that a minority of the total students felt negative about the PGP. Here 8 students (17%) felt it was boring, and 4 students (9%) said that it was irrelevant to their personal growth.

It has also become evident from the research that the majority (64%) of the students indicated that the PGP had helped them integrate into the College community (see BAR CHARTS in section 6.3). According to the bar chart, Fig. 6.9 the vast majority (30, 64%) of the total 47 students felt that the PGP had helped them integrate into the college community. Only a small minority of the students (17, 36%) felt that the PGP hadn't helped them integrate into the college community in a practical way.

It is also interesting to note that, from the responses given by the students during the interviews (section 6.2.1.1), there was overwhelming support for both the great need for the PGP as an alternative programme and how it has helped the students be both reflective and intentional with regard to mapping out their life's journey. This can clearly be shown by responses such as: "It has reminded me of things I have taken for granted – things I should take note of" (see 6.2.1.1) and "It helped me reflect on my journey. I also looked at how I could use the programme in my own context" (see section 6.2.1.1).

In the process of this study, a number of questions have arisen, which although separate, have been closely connected to each other and also relate directly to the main research question of this study: **Can the PGP be used as an alternative programme to assist present curricula to promote a more holistic education, by helping individuals cope with their daily challenges?**

The research findings from the interviews and the Annual Review Questionnaires indicated a positive response. As one student commented, "It helped me a lot to deal with myself first" (section 6.2.1.1), and another said: "Personal growth is an essential programme as it reminds, teaches and revives what is in us" (section 6.2.1.1).

Therefore the research findings are able to conclude that the PGP was successful programme and is one which can be highly recommended as an alternative programme working parallel or together with curricula already in place at any type of educational institution or place of education, irrespective of its diversity. As one student aptly commented: "I think this programme has been helpful, because it is trying to equip students with improved interpersonal skills which are aimed at helping students to negotiate the complex demands of the multi-cultural environment at COTT" (section 6.2.1.1).

6.5 CONCLUSION

This study used the phenomenological methodology to assess whether the PGP was indeed an alternative programme which can be used to enable students at the College of the Transfiguration to cope with their everyday challenges.

After identifying the content of the PGP based on the feedback from both the students and the lecturing staff in the pre-evaluation phase, the second phase of the research began with the process of judging whether the PGP was credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable.

Taking into consideration the annual review questionnaire, the student's feedback indicated that the intervention was effective and that the PGP did indeed make a difference in the lives of the students, who reported that they were more able to cope with their daily challenges with the help of both the PGP and the facilitative guidance or counselling by the researcher.

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

“Do not put your faith in what statistics say
until you have carefully considered what they do not say.”

– *William W. Watt*

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The problem that was investigated in this study was whether it is possible to respond to the needs of our modern society and help people to develop a resilience to cope with life as a whole and in the process become integrated human beings. In doing the literature study the research attempted to make educators, counsellors and administrators aware of the importance of educating the whole individual. Based on the literature review and on the research results, attempts will be made in this chapter to establish whether recommendations can be made to on how the PGP or similar programmes can be used to improve the whole development of individuals within the current education systems.

This research attempted to provide students at the College of the Transfiguration with the tools to cope with their daily lives in the form of a Personal Growth Programme. The programme contained modules which were designed to develop individuals more holistically, providing them with coping strategies and knowledge of how to cope with their everyday challenges.

This chapter will also show that for this study to be reliable and valid, it is of the utmost importance that the researcher remains impartial. Strydom (1998:30) remarked how in this phase the researcher must take into account personal biases and not make value judgments. However, Patton (1990) adds to this by stating that qualitative analysis of data also requires the researcher’s own impressions and feelings, through reflection and introspection.

Often during interviews with students, the researcher's impressions and feelings about the PGP were strengthened by statements made by them. One student commented that the PGP reminded him of things that he had taken for granted and that due to the programme he had learned to be faithful to himself. Another student remarked how the PGP helped him reflect on his own journey, which he had not given himself the time to do in the past. And a third person said that the PGP: "...makes things personal in a society that is very fragmented and broken".

Although these and many other comments strengthened the researcher's belief in the PGP and the great need for it in society today, she also reminded herself that all scientific research, both quantitative and qualitative has its limitations. The programme's limitations and credibility will also be discussed in this chapter to establish whether the PGP is a once-off phenomenon or a programme which can be utilised in diverse environments.

A programme is only as useful as far as it is practical. Therefore this chapter will also discuss the practical implications of the PGP, which will include its transferability, dependability and confirmability. The chapter will conclude by giving recommendations for future research done in this field of study.

7.2 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE LITERATURE STUDY

The study investigated and found that no mainstream or 'holistic' education programme is alone enough to be able to empower individuals to cope with their daily life challenges (see chapter two). The study has also shown that due to global challenges such as globalisation, new science and technology and widespread changes in society leading to familial dysfunction, education departments have been left searching for answers on how to deal with inadequacies within their systems (see chapter three).

The research project also questioned whether there was a way to bridge the gap between holistic and mainstream education (see chapter four). The research investigated a similar research study that was done at NMMU (see 4.3) to determine what would be needed to assist students with their daily challenges and help them integrate into university life. It was evident

by the literature study that although many attempts have been made to assist individuals to obtain or attain a more 'whole' education to produce an integrated individual who can cope with their daily challenges, it was clear that a solution to this quest was yet to be discovered.

7.3 CONCLUSIONS FROM THE EMPIRICAL INVESTIGATION

7.3.1 Limitations of the study

Strydom (1998:33) quotes Babbie, saying: "Science generally progresses through honesty and is retarded by ego-based deception". This section will consider both the general and the cultural limitations which apply to a research study such as the PGP.

7.3.2 General Limitations

Although qualitative research strives towards being objective, this is sometimes extremely difficult. Gay (1996:222) points out that "observer bias cannot be eliminated; however, it can be minimised". In this study the researcher was acutely aware that her presence in an interview situation and as a participant observer could create a different result as the students sometimes answer questions according to what they think the researcher would like them to say, instead of what they really feel. This could be due to the fact that the researcher is a permanent member of staff at the college and the students therefore would not want to 'rock the boat'. From the researcher's experience it has often been voiced by the students at the college that they feel that being negative could jeopardise their future in becoming ministers.

Patton (2002:29) also explains that there are severe limitations to open-ended data collected from questionnaires, such as the data collected from the PGP. He goes on to say that participants' writing skills have a part to play in this situation. The limitation is that due to standardised questions posed, there is no possibility for probing or extending the responses made by the participants. Yet despite this, the depth and detailed feelings displayed by the students in their responses on the questionnaires shown in 6.2.2.1, is evidence that qualitative methods have strengths as well.

Limitations are not restricted to the questionnaires, but are also present in the preliminary observations done by the researcher. Although a vast amount of data and information was

collected in the preliminary observations, Patton (2002:21) points out that there is sometimes a limitation to how much we can learn from what people say. To minimise this limitation, the researcher undertook direct participation as a participant observer. In so doing, she attempted to gain first-hand experience of the particular complexities involved in how students experience their everyday challenges and whether they are able to use their own resilience to cope with them or not. Despite the fact that the researcher made all efforts to carefully administer, control and standardise data collection, she was aware that there could always be a probability or possibility that there would be limitations as to how far one can push a student's involvement, before they feel unwilling to share.

An added limitation was that the study was carried out in an extremely diverse multi-cultural environment. Although all participants indicated that they were totally comfortable with the researcher and were ensured of confidentiality by her, there is always a limit as to how deeply or personally a participant will share their feelings before cultural boundaries intervene.

7.3.3 Cultural Limitations

The experience of the researcher during the study was that some students indicated from their feedback that they much preferred group interviews rather than being interviewed individually.

Another discovery, after doing formal individual interviews, was that the researcher found that students were much more open and shared much more in an informal setting, whilst walking somewhere or doing something, e.g. having coffee together.

Berland (1997:9) said that: "Culture and place demand our attention not because our concepts of them are definitive or authoritative, but because they are fragile and fraught with dispute". Cross-cultural enquiries often make the already complex interviews and discussions in a study difficult. Limitations such as language barriers increase the possibility for misunderstandings to occur (Patton 2002:391). Patton (2002) goes on to say that often in our globalised world with people being 'westernised' it is even more difficult at times to detect misunderstanding largely due to false assumptions about shared meanings.

In South African society today we have witnessed the ‘blurring’ of culture both due to globalisation and the significant changes that have occurred in the country in the last fourteen years. Although there is some consensus about the limits and potentials of culture, this can never be static, as change is ongoing, with new struggles, conversations and alliances taking place (Patton 2002). Physical changes in cultural society are not the only limitation to a cross-cultural study such as this one. Cultural boundaries are also being traversed due to changes in how individuals interpret their ‘feelings’ and how they cope or deal with challenges experienced by them. Although attempts were made by the researcher to create a Personal Growth Programme which was contextually based on the college and the students in it, there will always be limitations and questions as to how one programme can totally meet the needs of such a diverse cultural environment as is the reality at the College of the Transfiguration.

These thoughts can be supported by Samovar (1981:18) who remarked that three problems exist when attempting to do multicultural studies:

1. Culture lacks definite shape – is therefore inconsistent;
2. Culture cannot be manipulated or controlled;
3. Personal culture affects the perspective of the researcher.

With this said, the only way to minimise limitations is the way in which the researcher conducts the research and methods of communication. To this end the researcher ensured that the PGP was created in simple, understandable English. The understanding of the language and meanings was also frequently verified by means of enquiries done by the researcher and feedback from the students to the researcher.

In an attempt to minimise interpretation, the researcher undertook to listen more and ask questions of verification so as not to skew the results of the data collection. This was done to ensure credibility of the study.

7.3.4 Credibility

As opposed to traditional criteria for judging qualitative research, Guba and Lincoln (1985) proposed four alternative ways:

TABLE 7.1 – JUDGING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

TRADITIONAL CRITERIA FOR JUDGING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH	ALTERNATIVE CRITERIA FOR JUDGING QUALITATIVE RESEARCH
Internal validity	Credibility
External validity	Transferability
Reliability	Dependability
Objectivity	Confirmability

The core of this research project has always been participant-centred: to determine the needs of the students at COTT in order to help them cope with their daily challenges. It is only fitting therefore that instead of determining the internal validity of the project, we instead determine its credibility. To determine whether the research is credible or believable, Guba *et al.* (1985) emphasise the importance of determining this from the perspective of the participants. Using this perspective, the purpose of the research is therefore to describe or understand the phenomena of interest from the view of the participants themselves instead of exclusively from the researcher’s perspective.

In this study, credibility was obtained through the confidential interviews and ‘counselling’ sessions conducted by the researcher. These interviews, which took place both individually and in groups, were carefully transcribed onto a computer by the researcher. Credibility was also obtained through the careful handling and sorting of the collected data obtained from both the students and the college faculty regarding the usefulness of the PGP in their lives and for the college.

Credibility was also obtained through the confidential rapport that was developed between the researcher and the participants. Because the researcher had a previous relationship of trust with the students as their counsellor at the college, this assisted the researcher in getting complete feedback from the students regarding their challenges that they experienced and if the PGP was useful to them in coping with these challenges.

A further method in which credibility was obtained was through the close trust and confidential relationship and rapport the researcher had with the faculty of the college. In this way the researcher was able to investigate which modules of the PGP the lecturers found were important for the students and would help cope with their challenges, according to their experience of them. To ensure credibility of this research study, the researcher endeavoured to record all information as accurately as possible so that the results could be used for practical use in the college and beyond.

7.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

- The research study done for the purpose of the creation and evaluation of the Personal Growth Programme involved only one context specific environment. It is recommended by the researcher to expand this research through the creation of similar programmes in other environments and contexts.
- According to the literature review in this research project, a ‘great divide’ exists between traditional mainstream education and its ‘holistic’ counterparts. This ‘great divide’ is coupled with inadequate measures taken by various education institutions, so that an attempt to assist our students in becoming ‘whole’ human beings seems to be lacking. A follow-up study in other educational institutions is recommended by the researcher.
- It is the opinion of the researcher that concentrating only on the academic abilities of a student results in one-sided development. To develop the whole human being within the context of education, it is recommended by the researcher that we go back to the roots – the goal of education which Forbes (2003:17) eloquently coined “Ultimacy”, which he describes as: “...the highest state of being that a human can aspire to...”.
- A further investigation into the types of challenges experienced by our students and how they handle these challenges would help determine their needs and the limitations of their resilience. If this is done, further alternative programmes can be created to assist individuals to obtain better self-knowledge and self-understanding. This would better enable them to create a foundation for coping with their everyday challenges.

7.4.1 Implications for practical use

In any research project a hypothesis or theory will always remain just what it is – a thought – unless tools can be found to transform the theory into something for everyday practicality. This refers not only to the practical use of the PGP for the College of the Transfiguration but also for the creation of similar programmes for other settings within the field of education and beyond to help empower and enable people to cope with everyday challenges. Guba *et al.* (1985:124) coined the term *transferability* to refer to this type of practical implication for a research project.

7.4.1.1 Transferability

Transferability, also called “fittingness” by Guba *et al.* (1995:124), refers to the possibility of generalising the results of the research to another group of people in another setting. Although most qualitative research projects are context-based, and are difficult to transfer to another setting, Guba *et al.* (1985:124) believe that a hypothesis can be transferred to another setting if it ‘fits’ an alternative setting.

The researcher believes that transferability of the PGP can take place in alternative settings if the context of the setting and the needs of the particular participants in the alternative setting are investigated. In so doing, the PGP could be adapted for any number of alternative settings. Guba *et al.* (1995) indicate that the responsibility for transferability would then rest with the researcher making the transfer, not the original investigator.

The first factor which helps to make this research transferable is the complete descriptions supplied by the researcher about the context, setting, and demographics of the students participating in this project. The researcher also showed the connection between the literature review done in this project and the actual research project, by outlining clearly the type of programme which is needed to fill the gaps between mainstream and holistic education today. Transferability was also enhanced by the researcher, as verbatim quotes were taken from the students regarding the applicability and usefulness of the PGP in their lives.

7.4.1.2 Dependability

In traditional qualitative research, dependability would be termed reliability. The reliability of a study would traditionally be determined by repeatability. However in qualitative research measuring the same thing twice would result in two different results, as one can not qualitatively measure an element twice and get the same result.

Guba *et al.* (1989:242) define dependability as being: "...concerned with the stability of the data over time". The researcher endeavoured to ensure the dependability of this research project by furnishing complete descriptions and diagrams of the research methodology done.

7.4.1.3 Confirmability

Guba *et al.* (1985) used the term confirmability to describe the fourth criterion for judging a qualitative research project. This term refers to the degree to which the results of the study can be confirmed by others. Guba *et al.* (1989:243-244) emphasise the importance of objectivity in the confirmability process. They go on to say that to ensure confirmability the researcher must ensure that data, interpretations and outcomes of the research project are: "...rooted in contexts and persons apart from the evaluator..."

To increase confirmability, the researcher transcribed electronically verbatim interviews with the students who participated in the project, so that all data can be tracked back to their sources. To ensure that biases of the researcher which might have been present in the interview situation were kept to the minimum, the review questionnaires were done on an anonymous basis.

The questionnaires were administered by another member of staff at the college to ensure that the students were not swayed by the presence of the researcher – to please her by giving a false positive report. In this way the researcher hoped that the students participating would feel 'free' to contribute their thoughts and feelings about the PGP.

To further ensure confirmability of the collected data from the questionnaires, the researcher did an 'audit' (Guba *et al.* 1989) in collaboration with the faculty member who administered the

questionnaire. By doing this, the results of the questionnaire was confirmed by someone other than the researcher alone, making the results objective.

A final measure to ensure confirmability, credibility and dependability was taken by the researcher when she summarised the finding of the review questionnaire and undertook to report back and discuss the findings with the participant students. This was done in small focus groups, thereby confirming the results of the study with them.

7.5 FINAL SUMMARY

This study has revealed both the general and the cultural limitations that were present (and that need to be kept in mind for future research) when the research was being done with the students at the College of the Transfiguration.

It investigated the project's credibility and believability by using feedback from the students (see chapter 6) instead of exclusively the opinion of the researcher. In this way conclusions were obtained for the research findings in chapter 6.

It has always been the two-fold purpose of this research to determine whether the PGP was credible and also to determine if it was suitable for practical use. Research shows that the PGP and the information therein is transferable, although it catered for the specific needs of the students at COTT (see comments 6.2.1.1). Research has also shown that the PGP is both dependable and confirmable. Evidence of this is given by both the results of the Annual Review Questionnaire and the in-depth interviews conducted during the research period from 2006 to 2008.

The following statement by Krishnamurti (1953:85-86) concludes this study: "Nothing of fundamental value can be accomplished through mass instruction, but only through the careful study and understanding of the difficulties, tendencies and capabilities of each [individual]; and those who are aware of this, and who earnestly desire to understand themselves and help the young, should come together and start a school that will have vital significance in the [individual's] life by helping [him/her] to be integrated and intelligent" (my emphasis).

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APPENDIX 1 – Annual Review Questionnaire for 1st-Years

COLLEGE OF THE TRANSIGURATION PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME ANNUAL REVIEW Year 1

PLEASE HAVE YOUR PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME WITH YOU WHEN FILLING THIS IN TO REFER TO.

This is not a test, just a review to facilitate the development/direction of the programme for next year. Please answer all the below questions. Tick box/es to indicate your answers – more than one may be ticked in some cases.

OVERALL

1. Did you find the Personal Growth Programme (PGP)
 - Interesting
 - Relevant to **YOUR** personal growth/development
 - Boring
 - Irrelevant to me as an individual

2. Did you find that it helped you integrate into the College community?
Yes No

3. Did you find the module 1 – why am I here?
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

4. Your 'who am I?' module - did this help you to reflect on who you are?
Yes No

5. Was the 'what do I believe in' module
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

6. Did it help you to focus on your spiritual awareness?
Yes No

7. Did you find module 4
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

8. Were you made more aware of the importance of taking care of yourself before you can take care of others.

Yes No

9. Did module 4 make you aware of your anger?

Yes No

10. Did you find module 5

Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

11. If asked to deal with a situation where one of your colleagues has bad body odour, would you do anything about it, even if they are not aware they smell?

Yes No

If **no**, do you need more help with this or do you feel it is irrelevant? Please write your comments.

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12. Did Module 6 help you reflect on your need for personal timeout.

Yes No

13. Did you find module 7 important for your life at COTT?

Yes No

14. Do you feel module 7 in the PGP was

Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

15. Did module 8 help you to reflect on you journey at COTT and as an individual?

Yes No

16. How would you rate creating a journal/diary for you

Excellent - helped me reflect on my life

Good - made me think

OK

Poor – took up time I could have used on other studies

Irrelevant to me

Other

17. Did you find any module:

- Helped me understand areas I previously didn't understand
- Helped me develop as an individual
- Helped me deal with College life
- Totally irrelevant to my personal growth and future calling

18. Did you feel that 3 A5 pages a month were too much for you to cope with?
 Yes No

19. Was the facilitator
 Excellent Good OK Poor

20. Did you find the group sessions
 Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

21. Did you find the individual sessions
 Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

22. Would you prefer feedback to be in :
 a) a large group b) a small group – sign up with friends
 c) on my own d) group & individual sessions

23. What would you change for this programme for next year?
 Nothing

Please write your changes here.....

ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ABOUT THE PERSONAL
 GROWTH PROGRAMME

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Thank you for your participation
 Tonia

APPENDIX 2 – Annual Review Questionnaire for 2nd -Years

COLLEGE OF THE TRANSIGURATION PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME ANNUAL REVIEW Year 2

PLEASE HAVE YOUR PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME WITH YOU WHEN FILLING THIS IN TO REFER TO.

This is not a test, just a review to facilitate the development/direction of the programme for next year. Please answer all the questions below. Tick the box/es to indicate your answers – more than one may be ticked in some cases.

OVERALL

1. Did you find the Personal Growth Programme (PGP)
 - Interesting
 - Relevant to **YOUR** personal growth/development
 - Boring
 - Irrelevant to me as an individual

2. Did you find that it helped you integrate into the College community?
Yes No

3. Did you find the module 1 – where are my goals and values now
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

4. Did the 6 steps help you?
Yes No

5. Was the stress module
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

6. Has this helped you reflect, recognise and deal with the stress you are feeling?
Yes No

7. Did you find module 3
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

8. Do you respect the time of others? Are you on time for lectures, appointments,

meetings? Do you call if you are going to be late or cannot make the meeting? If no to any of these, do you need to reflect more on this through your PGP?

Yes No

9. Did you find module 4

Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

10. Was/is the topic of Xenophobia appropriate for the PGP as part of your formation to become a priest/lay person within the Anglican Church?

Yes No

11. Did you find module 5

Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

12. Were you aware for priorities challenges after looking at this section?

Yes No Irrelevant to me

13. Did Module 6 help you reflect on your need for better time management?

Yes No

14. Do you feel you want this in the PGP again next year?

Yes No

15. Did you find module 7 on Spiritual Awareness

Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

16. Did module 8 help you to reflect on you journey at COTT and as an individual?

Yes No

17. How would you rate creating a journal/diary for you

Excellent - helped me reflect on my life

Good - made me think

OK

Poor – took up time I could have used on other studies

Irrelevant to me

Other

18. Did you find any module:

Helped me understand areas I previously didn't understand

Helped me develop as an individual

Helped me deal with College life

Totally irrelevant to my personal growth and future calling

19. Did you feel that 3 A5 pages a month were too much for you to cope with?
Yes No

20. Was the facilitator
Excellent Good OK Poor

21. Did you find the group sessions
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

22. Did you find the individual sessions
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

23. Would you prefer feedback to be in :
a) a large group b) a small group – sign up with friends
c) on my own d) group & individual sessions

24. What would you change for this programme for next year?
Nothing

Please write your changes here.....

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ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ABOUT THE PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME

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Thank you for your participation
Tonia

APPENDIX 3 – Annual Review Questionnaire for 3rd -Years

COLLEGE OF THE TRANSIGURATION PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME ANNUAL REVIEW Year 3

PLEASE HAVE YOUR PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME WITH YOU WHEN FILLING THIS IN TO REFER TO.

This is not a test, just a review to facilitate the development/direction of the programme for next year. Please answer all the questions below. Tick the box/es to indicate your answers – more than one may be ticked in some cases.

OVERALL

1. Did you find the Personal Growth Programme (PGP)
 - Interesting
 - Relevant to **YOUR** personal growth/development
 - Boring
 - Irrelevant to me as an individual

2. Did you find that it helped you integrate into the College community?
Yes No

3. Did you find the Moral Values module
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

4. Your 'Attitude' module - did this help you to reflect on who you are?
Yes No

5. Were the tips
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

6. Did the 'sexual' harassment module help you understand better what sexual harassment is?
Yes No

7. Did you find module 4
Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

8. Were you made more aware of what was around you when you looked at module 5?

Yes No

9. Did module 6 make you aware of your anger?

Yes No

10. Did you find module 6

Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

11. Is Ubuntu relevant to the PGP?

Yes No

12. Did you find the module on Ubuntu?

Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

13. Did module 8 help you to reflect on you journey at COTT and as an individual?

Yes No

14. How would you rate creating a journal/diary for you

Excellent - helped me reflect on my life

Good - made me think

OK

Poor – took up time I could have used on other studies

Irrelevant to me

Other

15. Did you find any module:

Helped me understand areas I previously didn't understand

Helped me develop as an individual

Helped me deal with College life

Totally irrelevant to my personal growth and future calling

16. Did you feel that 3 A5 pages a month were too much for you to cope with?

Yes No

17. Was the facilitator

Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

18. Did you find the individual sessions

Excellent Good OK Poor Irrelevant to me

19. Would you prefer feedback to be in :

a) a large group

b) a small group – sign up with friends

c) on my own

d) group & individual sessions

20. What would you change for this programme for next year?

Nothing

Please write your changes here.....

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ANY OTHER COMMENTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO MAKE ABOUT THE PERSONAL GROWTH PROGRAMME

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Thank you for your participation
Tonia