COPYRIGHT AND CITATION CONSIDERATIONS FOR THIS THESIS/ DISSERTATION

- Attribution — You must give appropriate credit, provide a link to the license, and indicate if changes were made. You may do so in any reasonable manner, but not in any way that suggests the licensor endorses you or your use.

- NonCommercial — You may not use the material for commercial purposes.

- ShareAlike — If you remix, transform, or build upon the material, you must distribute your contributions under the same license as the original.

How to cite this thesis
FACILITATION OF HEALTHY SELF-MANAGEMENT OF
FEMALE EDUCATORS’ EXPERIENCE OF THEIR
AGGRESSION WITHIN A
SECONDARY SCHOOL CONTEXT

by

Beverly Evangelides

THESIS

submitted in fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree

DOCTOR EDUCATIONIS
in
PSYCHOLOGY OF EDUCATION
in the
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
at the
UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Promoter: Prof CPH Myburgh
Co-Promoter: Prof M Poggenpoel

May 2007
Life is no brief candle for me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations.

*George Bernard Shaw*
ABSTRACT

Daily media reports alert nations worldwide of the ever escalating aggressive acts of behaviour over many decades and has subsequently aroused deep concern as progressive growth in population becomes increasingly evident. Our future lies in the hands of our youth who are exposed to a wide range of educational, family, employment, political and health challenges that depart in major ways from those of young people one or two generations ago. The educational challenge is not limited to academia solely but more importantly focuses on the upholding and envisioning of a values-based education that stirs the conscience of a nation encouraging moral, responsible law abiding citizens. This responsibility lies squarely on the shoulders of our female educators amongst others in a democratic educational system.

Female educators outweigh males significantly in number in our educational system yet research reveals that some female educators are not given sufficient support, acknowledgement and recognition for their committed roles in education. Faced with overwhelming demands female educators are expected to fulfill multiple roles and yet maintain a healthy balance between work commitments and family responsibilities. Some cultures have the added expectation that women bear the prime responsibility for childcare and domestic work. As a result, notable gender differences in aggression arise primarily from contrasting gender roles which augments into the workplace.
The overall purpose of the study is to develop and describe a psycho-educational programme to be used as a framework of reference to facilitate the healthy self-management of secondary school female educators’ experience of their aggression. The implementation and evaluation of the programme will serve as a facilitative process through the promotion of personal growth and the mobilisation of female educators to constructively self-manage their experience of aggression.

Attempts to meet this broad objective were accomplished by employing an explorative, descriptive and contextual research design. In this research study field notes were used in conjunction with eight in-depth phenomenological interviews conducted with female educators. The findings of their experiences of aggression at their secondary school evolved around their associated emotions; the resultant measures of support and the coping strategies the female educators sought as a current means of addressing their mental health status as educators and community stakeholders. The data analysis of the findings revealed that female educators do have the potential to facilitate and mobilise the available resources in order to promote their own mental health and grow towards wholeness.

The future scenarios that schools are likely to face are both challenging and daunting: can schools actively shape the future by listening to the heartbeat of its female educators or merely respond to its exigencies. The liberal awakenings and gradual movement from oppression to equality for the female in South Africa as well as issues of aggression, political violence, single parenting and abuse on women further extrapolate the need to listen to the voices of women. An
awareness of their plight as evidenced in this study will hopefully draw
attention to their needs and bring offers of subsequent support to the
mothers of our nation which will inadvertently impact on our
youth...our future as a nation.

A shared vision building process will thus only become a living force
when each individual truly believes s/he can shape her/his future. The
ability of our educational system to compete in an increasingly global
economy depends on our ability to prepare both learners and
educators for new or changing landscapes.
OPSOMMING

Op 'n daaglikse basis maak mediaberigte nasies wêreldwyd bewus van die toenemende aggressiewe gedrag oor die dekades heen. Ons toekoms is in die hande van die jeug wat blootgestel is aan 'n wye reeks uitdaginge op die opvoedings-, familie-, werks-, politieke en gesondheidsvlak wat enorme afwykings toon van die jeug van een of twee geslagte gelede. Die opvoedkundige uitdaginge is nie alleenlik beperk tot die akademiese nie maar meer belangrik vir die handhawing en beskouing van 'n waarde gebaseerde onderrigstelsel wat 'n nasie se gewete sal prikkel om morele en verantwoordelike wetsegehoorsame burgers aan te moedig. Dit is nou uitsluitlik die verantwoordelikeheid van ons vroue-opvoeders in 'n demokratiese onderwysstelsel.

Die getalle vroue in die onderwys oorskadu oor die algemeen die getalle mans maar tog word daar deur navorsing bewys dat sommige vrouens nie die nodige ondersteuning en erkenning kry vir die toegewyde rol wat hulle in die onderwysstelsel speel nie. Daar word van die vrouens in die onderwys verwag om menlgvuldlige rolle te vertolk al word hulle deur oorweldigende eise gekonfronteer. Hulle moet ook 'n gesonde balans handhaaf tussen werkeise en hul verantwoordelikeheid teenoor hul families. Van party van die kultuurgroepe word daar ook verder verwag dat vrouens alleen die primêre verantwoordelikeheid van kindersorg sowel as huishoudelijke pligte hanteer. Gevolglik ontstaan daar aansienlike geslagsverskille ten opsigte van aggressie tussen die geslagte wat primêr ontwikkeld as
gevolg van teenstellende geslagrolle wat op werksgebied verder uitgebrei word.

Die oorkoepelende doel van die studie is om 'n psigo-opvoedkundige program te beskryf en te ontwikkel wat as 'n raamwerk van verwysing gebruik kan word om 'n gesonde selfbestuurprogram te fasilliteer vir die onderwyseresse van middelbare skole om sodoende hulle aggressie te kan hanteer.

Die implementering en evaluering van so 'n program sal dien as 'n fasilliterende proses wat persoonlike groei sal bevorder en vroue in die onderwys in staat sal stel om hul ondervinding van aggressie op 'n konstruktiewe basis self te bestuur.

Pogings om hierdie breë doelwit te bereik is verkry deur die gebruik van 'n ondersoekende, beskrywende en samehangende navorsingsontwerp. Gedurende die navorsingstudie is die veldnotas gebruik tesame met agt diepgaande fenomenologiese onderhoude in die data analise wat onthul het dat onderwyseresse wel die potensiaal het om die nodige hulpbronne tot hul beskikking te mobiliseer om sodoende hulle eie geestesgesondheid en groei in totaliteit te bevorder.

Die toekomstige situasies wat skole moontlik in die toekoms in die gesig sal staar is uitdagend en oorweldigend: Kan skole aktief die toekoms verander deur na die hartklop van onderwyseresse te luister of sal hulle bloot reageer op krisis situasies? Die liberale ontwaking en geleidelike beweging van onderdrukking na gelykheid vir vroue-onderrig in Suid Afrika, asook die saak van aggressie, politieke geweld, alleen-ouerskap en die mishandeling van vrouens beklemtoon die
verdere behoefte om na die stem van die vrou te luister. 'n Bewustheid van hul benarde toestand soos uiteengesit in hierdie werkstuk sal hopelik die aandag vestig op hul behoeftes en gevolglik steun aan die moeders van ons nasie gee wat onbewustlik 'n indruk sal maak op ons jeug ... ons toekoms as 'n nasie.

'n Verdeelde, insiggewende bouproses sal dus slegs 'n realiteit word indien elke individu waarlik glo dat hy of sy hul ele toekoms kan bepaal. Die vermoë van ons onderwysstelsel om te kan mededing in 'n toenemende wêreldwye ekonomie word bepaal deur ons vermoë om leerders sowel as hul opvoeders voor te berei op nuwe of veranderende omstandighede op onderwysgebied.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere gratitude and thanks to:

Professor Myburgh and Professor Poggenpoel: My two guiding stars who listened to my heartbeat and inspired me all the way

Female Educators: Connecting with you will always be close to my heart. Hopefully your heartbeats will be heard by those willing to pause and listen

Headmaster and Managing Director: Sharing a common vision and passion strengthened my purpose in delving deep...

Neville Swain: Your unconditional support generated the time, space and resources I needed

Patrizio Buane: Your music washed away the dust of everyday from my soul

Above all to Glenn and Kerri-Lee: Your patience, understanding and love charged my vision with renewed hope each day
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## CHAPTER 1: RATIONALE AND OVERVIEW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>PROBLEM STATEMENT</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>RESEARCH OBJECTIVES</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.1</td>
<td>Meta-theoretical Assumptions</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.2</td>
<td>Theoretical Assumptions</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.3</td>
<td>Conceptual Definitions</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4.4</td>
<td>Methodological Assumptions</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.1</td>
<td>Research Design</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.2</td>
<td>Research Method</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.3</td>
<td>Phase One: Exploration and Description of Female Educators' Experience of their Aggression</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.3.1</td>
<td>Population and Sampling</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.3.2</td>
<td>Sampling Criteria</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5.3.3</td>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1.5.3.4 Data Collection 41
1.5.3.5 Data Analysis 41
1.5.3.6 Trustworthiness 42
1.5.3.7 Ethical Considerations 43
1.5.4 Phase Two: Development of Psycho-Educational Programme for Female Educators’ Experience of their Aggression 45

1.6 CHAPTER DIVISION 45

1.7 SUMMARY 46
# CHAPTER 2: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

2.1 INTRODUCTION  

2.2 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH  

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN  
   2.3.1 Qualitative Research  
   2.3.2 Explorative  
   2.3.3 Descriptive  
   2.3.4 Contextual  

2.4 REASONING STRATEGIES  
   2.4.1 Analysis  
   2.4.2 Synthesis  
   2.4.3 Inductive Reasoning  
   2.4.4 Deductive Reasoning  
   2.4.5 Retroductive Reasoning  

2.5 RESEARCH METHOD  
   2.5.1 Phase One: Situation Analysis  
      2.5.1.1 Data Collection  
         2.5.1.1.1 Phenomenological Interviews  
         2.5.1.1.2 Field Notes  
      2.5.1.2 Data Analysis  
      2.5.1.3 Trustworthiness  
         2.5.1.3.1 Truth Value  
         2.5.1.3.2 Applicability  
         2.5.1.3.3 Consistency  

2.5.1.3.4 Neutrality 79
2.5.1.4 Literature Control 80
2.5.1.5 Ethical Considerations 81
2.5.2 Phase Two: Programme Development 81
2.5.3 Phase Three: Programme Implementation 84
2.5.4 Phase Four: Programme Evaluation 85
2.5.4.1 Design: Planning to Evaluate 85
2.5.4.2 Fieldwork, Data Collection and Data Analysis 87

2.6 CONCLUSION 88
CHAPTER 3: DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS AND LITERATURE CONTROL

3.1 INTRODUCTION 89

3.2 SAMPLE REALISATION 90

3.3 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS 91

3.3.1 Theme A: Experience of Aggression and/or Frustration 95

3.3.2 Theme B: Associated Emotions during Experience of Aggression 129

3.3.3 Theme C: Measures of Support during Experience of Aggression 143

3.3.4 Theme D: Coping Strategies employed by Female Educators 161

3.4 CONCLUSION 168
CHAPTER 4: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF PROGRAMME FOR THE FACILITATION OF HEALTHY SELF-MANAGEMENT OF FEMALE EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCE OF THEIR AGGRESSION WITHIN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

4.1 INTRODUCTION 170

4.2 REASONING MAP 171
4.2.1 Context 172
4.2.2 Agent 172
4.2.3 Recipients 174
4.2.4 Procedure 175
4.2.5 Dynamics 175
4.2.6 Outcome 176

4.3 RELATIONSHIP STATEMENTS 177

4.4 DISCUSSION OF CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE FACILITATION OF HEALTHY SELF-MANAGEMENT OF FEMALE EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCE OF THEIR AGGRESSION WITHIN A SECONDARY SCHOOL
4.4.1 Facilitative Process 179
4.4.2 Interrelated Phases of the Facilitative Process 186
4.4.2.1 Illumination 186
4.4.2.2 Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth 187
CHAPTER 5: IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME FOR THE HEALTHY SELF-MANAGEMENT OF FEMALE EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCE OF THEIR AGGRESSION WITHIN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

5.1 INTRODUCTION

5.2 IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF FACILITATIVE PROCESS

5.2.1 Aim of Facilitative Process

5.2.2 Implementation of Illumination Phase

5.2.3 Evaluation of Illumination Phase

5.2.4 Implementation of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth Phase

5.2.5 Evaluation of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth Phase

5.2.6 Implementation of Mobilisation Phase

5.2.7 Evaluation of Mobilisation Phase

5.3 CONCLUSION
## CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.2</td>
<td>CONCLUSIONS</td>
<td>212</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY</td>
<td>217</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>RECOMMENDATIONS</td>
<td>219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.1</td>
<td>Education</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.2</td>
<td>Management</td>
<td>221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.4.3</td>
<td>Research</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>SUMMARY</td>
<td>225</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

REFERENCES 226
TABLES

Table 2.1  Identification of Aspects and Strategies of Trustworthiness  73
Table 2.2  Application of Strategies of Trustworthiness  73
Table 3.1  Female Educators’ Experience of their Aggression within a Secondary School Context  93

FIGURES

Figure 4.1  Reasoning Map  171
Figure 4.2  Graphic Design of Facilitative Programme of Self-Management  180
ANNEXURES

Annexure A  Application for request to conduct research: Managing Director
Annexure B  Application for request to conduct research: Headmaster
Annexure C  Application for request to conduct research: Prospective Participants
Annexure D  Ethical clearance from research Institution
Annexure E  Approval of proposed title
Annexure F  Transcription of Phenomenological Interview
Annexure G  Evaluation Form completed by Recipient
CHAPTER 1
RATIONALE AND OVERVIEW

1.1 RATIONALE AND BACKGROUND

Among the various human activities, man's aggressive potential has escalated over many decades and has aroused deeper concern as progressive growth in population becomes increasingly evident (Bandura, 1973:1). When populations were widely spread, the consequences of any given aggressive acts were principally confined to persons toward whom the behaviour was directed. Under conditions of urbanized life, intricate interdependent systems or microcosms develop and destructive behaviour can subsequently manifest as a result of the many changes in the social conditions of life (Bandura, 1973:1). Urbanization in South Africa is currently taking place at a pace unprecedented in its history, making our country's cities the fastest growing cities in the world. This increase in population has resulted in escalating aggressive acts of behaviour evident in our daily media reports. According to a study completed by the University of Stellenbosch's Institute for Future Research, it has been estimated that up to eighty percent of South Africa's population will reside in cities or towns by the year 2026 (The Star, 18 August 1996).

In everyday life it is commonly assumed that males are more aggressive than females. Statistics indicate that males are more likely
than females to commit acts of aggression (Baron & Richardson, 1997:244). In addition males describe themselves as being aggressive to a greater extent than do females and show greater potential for acting aggressively in situations of interpersonal conflict (Reinisch & Sanders, 1986 cited in Geen, 1990:141). Sex roles in many cultures suggest that males are, and should be, tougher, more assertive, and more aggressive, than females (Eagly, 1987 cited in Baron & Richardson, 1997:238).

According to research completed by Goodenough in 1957 cited in Gerdes (1988:139) the sex difference in aggression begins to emerge between the ages of two and two-and-a-half years. Goodenough reported that qualitative differences in the aggression of boys and girls differed somewhat. In boys, aggression was described as a general restless force or gross motor energy kept barely under control, whilst in girls aggression was perceived as an expression of anxiety or confusion (Macoby & Jacklin, 1978:329 cited in Gerdes, 1988:139). Hutt (cited in Gerdes, 1988:139) , summarizing research in which she participated , reported that boys not only displayed more aggression, but also elicited it more often. In girls, aggression is likely to take subtle, catty forms, and in boys more direct, often physical forms.

Recently, there has been an explosion of research investigating these more subtle types of hurtful behaviours that may be more common among girls. Girls express their anger and contempt in subtler but still hurtful forms called social aggression. Underwood (2003: 4) defines social aggression as behaviour directed toward harming another's friendships, social status or self-esteem and may take direct forms such as social rejection; negative facial expressions or body
movements; spreading rumours; friendship manipulation or social exclusion. Research further suggests that although social and physical aggression appears to be so different in form, they in fact both are relatively stable over time and predict negative consequences (Underwood, 2003: 6). Crawford and Gentry (1989:10) relate stereotypical views of gender citing males as thinking rationally whilst women think intuitively, attributing a biological etiology to gender differences.

Despite the gift of reason, Wollstonecraft (cited in Darling & Glendinning, 1996:21) felt that women’s behaviour was often frivolous, manipulative, and guided by ignorance. In 1886 the President of the British Medical Association was of the opinion that excessive study was injurious to women’s health: it was not in their nature to be able to cope with undue mental effort. Despite the existence of such highly conservative views and opinions, very large numbers of females joined the teaching profession in the period after 1870 (Darling & Glendinning, 1996:25). Chipman and Thomas et al (cited in Gustafson & Magnusson 1991:1) posited that those in sympathy with the movement known as ‘feminism’ after decades of admonition, find girls are still relatively more likely than boys to grow up to be nurses and secretaries rather than physicians and corporate executives. They further add that girls still avoid mathematics courses required for careers in ‘non-traditional’ professions like science and engineering. The potential career development of women is a great deal more complex than men, due to the combination attitudes, role expectations, behaviours and sanctions known as the socialisation process (Fitzgerald & Crites, 1980:45 cited in Gustafson & Magnusson 1991:2).
Childbearing is a prime example of how the potential career development of the female life course is punctuated. Men on the other hand expect a life of full-time, paid employment, regardless of their marital status; women do not—necessarily (Gustafson and Magnusson, 1991:2). The roles of men and women vary from culture to culture, where men’s roles are generally more highly valued and rewarded than women’s. Park, Fedler and Dangor (2000: 28) purport that cultural notions of women as the weaker sex and of women as property in some cultures result in a patriarchal attitude that women are owned by men. Women bear the primary responsibility for childcare and domestic work in almost every culture, whereas men have traditionally been responsible for providing the family livelihood (Giddens, 2001:112). Papalia, Sterns, Feldman and Camp (2002:280) verify that many women in addition to juggling work and family are under special pressure in the workplace, especially in corporations where their superiors are often men. Some women complain that an invisible but inflexible ‘glass ceiling’ inhibits their advancement to the highest ranks resulting in additional stress.

Additional findings concerning gender differences in aggression indicate that while males are indeed more likely to employ forms of aggression, direct assaults against persons who have provoked them or other targets; females are more likely to employ indirect forms of aggression-actions that harm the targets in a more oblique way (Baron and Richardson, 1997:239). Research by Campbell, Muncer and Gorman (1993:19) also shows that while females hold an expressive view of aggression, males hold an instrumental view. That is, when females express anger they are able to reduce stress through the
release of an aggressive drive, while males regard aggression as a means to attain various social and material rewards.

According to Baron and Richardson (1997:241) aggressive interchanges do not occur in a 'social vacuum' but rather seem to stem from aspects of the social environment that instigate its occurrence, and influence both its form and its direction. In other words, aggressive behaviour is likely to be influenced by the pressures and actions of other people in the social environment. They further stress the impact of social and cultural factors. Eagly, 1987 and Eagly and Wood, 1991 (cited in Baron & Richardson, 1997:241) suggests that gender differences in aggression stem primarily from contrasting gender roles: shared expectations, within a given culture, concerning the appropriate and expected behaviour of both sexes. Females are expected in some nations to assume higher roles than males in adopting communal attributes-friendliness, concern for others, emotional expressivity. Males, in contrast, are expected to be higher than females in agentic attributes-independence, assertiveness, masterfulness. According to the social-role theory, gender differences in aggression stem primarily from the fact that in most cultures, males are expected to behave more aggressively than females in a wide range of situations.

There have been a number of attempts to define aggression and the terms relating to aggressive behaviour. Aggression is not a unitary concept as there are many types of aggression that can be classified on the basis of the type of response or stimulus that elicits the particular type of aggression. Baron and Richardson (1997:7) offer a rather simple and straightforward definition of aggression as any form
of behaviour directed toward the goal of harming or injuring another living being who is motivated to avoid such treatment.

On closer examination, aggression may thus be described as a behaviour and not as an emotion, attitude or motive; it is an intentional form of behaviour and it involves either harm or injury to the victim. It further implies that physical damage to the individual is not essential as long as the individual has experienced some form of aversive consequence. Goldstein (1998:54) concurs that the defining feature of aggression, which is absent from aggressive play - is the intent to injure another person. This definition also suggests that only actions that harm or injure living beings may be viewed as aggressive in nature. Finally, aggression may be said to have occurred only when the victim is motivated to avoid such treatment at the hands of the aggressor (Baron & Richardson, 1997:11).

Munetsi (cited in Booysen, 1999: 15-26) states that the general position of women in the South African workplace is far from ideal. Besides discriminatory racial legislation during the Apartheid era, it was also permissible to discriminate on the basis of gender and disability. However, more recent research on female educators’ experiences of aggression within a secondary school context deems appropriate as within our present political, cultural, social and educational systems, females have been assigned significant roles as leaders. Inroads have been made whereby females have been acknowledged and have been given due recognition in many government and some corporate enterprises within recent years. President Mbeki is committed to improving the position of women in South Africa. Women constitute 52% of the adult population and 41%
of the workforce in South Africa. Whilst women are well represented in government, very few women occupy top positions in business (The South African Youth Card Magazine Say, August, 2005). Major transformations in gender relations in the late twentieth century was apparent in the way men and women related to each other in the public and domestic sphere in many Western European countries (Dench, 1997 cited in Arnot, 2002:256). However, South Africa lags somewhat behind as traditional roles are to some degree still firmly entrenched in gender matters.

This study will explore how females, in trying to balance their previous roles as homemakers and primary caregivers respond to their roles as career women in the making and the challenges which face them as a result of this transition. Van Rooyen (1981:85) states that employed women must be able to follow an androgynous life approach enabling them to deal with changing situations according to either a nurturing or assertive approach. A staggering 77% of educators at government schools – most of them at secondary schools – are stressed or suffering from emotional problems, according to a survey conducted by Vulindlela Consortium (Naidu, 2005:1).

A study by the Human Sciences Research Council (The Sunday Times, 23 October 2005) that was commissioned by the Education Labour Relations Council to investigate how educators used their time at school revealed that less than half their time is spent teaching learners. Researchers found that school management as well as assessments was among the most significant activities that ‘crowd out’ teaching. The case studies further revealed that three-quarters of
educators indicated that their workload had increased ‘a lot’ since 2000 and added that they were suffering from stress as a result.

Another Human Sciences Research Council study (The Sunday Times, 23 October 2005) found that at least 54% of the country’s 350 000 educators had considered leaving the profession because of stress and increased workloads. These statistics are alarming as education still remains one of our nation’s greatest challenges despite some concerted effort over the past decade. Of South Africa’s 27 000 schools, only 7 000 are secondary. Despite considerable expenditure by Government, schools especially in poorer areas, continue to be plagued by sub-standard results and a desperate shortage of resources. Despite the refurbishment of 66 000 classrooms, improvements in the learner-educator ratio from 1:45 to 1:34, the introduction of a new revised curriculum and the upgrading of teachers, long-term success is still a daunting and challenging process (Miracles that are changing a nation, 23 October 2005).

This study will hopefully have a broad implementation value for all females, especially those female educators whose contributions are not limited exclusively within the educational context. It will provide relevancy within a psycho-educational context by facilitating further understanding of the causes or frustrations experienced by female educators and how they tend to respond and deal with their aggression.

Social change, gender change and educational change are locked together in complex and often unpredictable ways (Arnot, 2002:256).
Schools will be under pressure to help young people cope effectively with massive social change even though the requirements for social stability will be demanding too. The future scenarios that schools are likely to face are both challenging and daunting: can schools actively shape the future or merely respond to its exigencies. However, Beck (cited in Arnot, 2002:262) argues that new alliances will be formed based on shared common risks; ascribed statuses such as gender, class and regionality will pale into insignificance and the position of men and women will become increasingly unequal, more conscious and less legitimated.

The liberal awakenings and gradual movement from oppression to equality for the female in South Africa as well as issues of aggression, political violence, single parenting and abuse on women further extrapolate the need to listen to the voices of women. An awareness of their plight will hopefully draw attention to their needs and bring offers of subsequent support to the mothers of our nation. New economic dimensions will be required as a result of globalization which Beck (cited in Arnot, 2002:263) argues will be a form of ‘cosmopoliticisation’ whereby women (and ethnic groups, immigrants and other marginalized groups in the national space and developing nations) may be privileged because, as an excluded group, women will be more likely to become more self-aware and therefore more able to become new world citizens.

In the educational context, the focus will essentially be on female educators within the secondary school context, as females outnumber males significantly. There are 355 730 educators in ordinary schools in South Africa, of which 230 549 educators are female as established by...
the Department of Education in 2004. 95.6% of the total number of educators comprises educators in public schools whilst 4.4% are in independent schools. Female educators outnumber male educators significantly as the ratio 7:5 signifies.

However, although lesser in number, male educators dominate the complement of staff in the executive roles they play within the management team of schools. Although female educators outnumber male educators, they have lesser if not minimal input in the decision-making and strategic planning of policies and systems within the school context. Dialogue is best conducted with the total group, not with committees of four or five. Through dialogue, shared meaning emanates which is the cement that holds society together (Horn, 2000:76). According to Wolf (1993: 287) women have been uncomfortable in the 'male' workplace largely because they have not had enough power to remake the workplace in a way that is more congenial to them. When women have enough power, they will probably reconfigure it somewhat differently or use it to serve agendas differently to those of men. Wolf (1993:287) further argues that we should not characterize the 'different voice' of women as an aversion to power, but rather that it is an evolving re-imagining of a force that is just as attractive to women - if secretly - as it has always been openly for men.

Arnot (2002:103) further asserts that women have become colonized within a male-defined world, through a wide variety of 'educational moments' which comprise a pattern of female experience that is qualitatively different from that of men. She further posits that in education women have 'learnt to lose' and how to lose. Through such
experience they have learnt to accept that the 'the masculinel man is one who achieves, who is masterful: the feminine woman is the one who underachieves, who defers' (Brewster, 1980:11 cited in Arnot, 2002:103). Researchers at Sheffield University in northern England discovered startling differences in the way the brain responded to male and female sounds. Whilst male voices engaged in a simpler mechanism in being deciphered, female voices used the auditory part of the brain that processes music. Hence, it was established that it is more difficult to listen to women's voices and to process meaning in the communication thereof (The Star, 8 August 2005). With the many gender differences made apparent, power relationships between individuals and groups in a school culture do however, contribute to the success or failure of change (Horn, 2000:56).

On the contrary, Hoerr (1997:3) offers a passionate view of unionism practiced by the Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers. This union, organized by women workers and a few men, represent Harvard's support staff: secretaries, library and laboratory assistants, dental hygienists, accounting clerks and other office workers who are most often invisible in the literature of higher education. The contingent of staff performs vital duties yet has no voice, or standing, or recognition of any sort. Hoerr further adds that these workers have had to put up with exploitative management policies that denied them respect and decent wages. However, these women achieved equality and ended discriminatory treatment after a fifteen year struggle to establish the union in the face of fierce opposition from the President, the dean of schools and staff lawyers who vehemently opposed this movement. Across the globe in Iceland, women abandoned desks, classrooms and kitchen stoves to join a remarkable protest strike for
equal wages. Icelandic women complain that the average female wage is 64.1% of the male income, even though a large majority of women hold down jobs and take on the largest share of the country’s child care. This has not been the first strike as thirty years ago Icelandic women began a strike that became a landmark for the international feminist movement (The Sunday Times, 30 October 2005).

Through the use of post-formal professional development strategies, educators can develop the skills needed to deal with the issues of power that deny their inclusion in policy-making and in so doing can develop a systemic view of their profession that informs their practice and facilitates knowledge (Horn, 2000:153). These development strategies may have the potential to facilitate an understanding of change and empower educators to realize that they too are instrumental in developing change and will encourage a culture of positive growth. Arnot (2002: 104) clearly emphasizes that there is a need to describe the processes of gender discrimination in education and its effects by offering suggestions, proposals and programmes for educational reform in order to help liberate women.

There is considerable evidence, however, that females are more likely than males to experience guilt, anxiety and fear after aggressing (Brock & Buss, 1964; Wyer et al, 1965 cited in Geen, 1990:144). These emotional reactions on the part of females may inhibit further aggression. In addition, the correlation between aggression and anxiety, which is negative for both genders, has been shown to be of greater magnitude among females than males (Schill and Schneider, 1970 cited in Geen, 1990: 144), indicating that females feel more anxious when aggressing than males do.
Female educators often find circumstances overwhelming and beyond their immediate control. Increasing parental expectations and demands of educators have further contributed to an erosion of the creative challenge and idealism of teaching is a worldwide phenomena (Wong, 1991:71). With little or no help or support forthcoming from both the school and/or home context they resort to aggressive behaviour within the school context as their tolerance levels are somewhat lowered.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Female educators comprise the greatest number of educators in the educational system. They outweigh males by far in number. Although some women are well represented in government, they are not given sufficient acknowledgement and recognition for their acts of service and dedication within the educational system. At times they are overlooked when executive or management positions become available and are seldom considered for promotional posts. According to the South African Council of Educators Act 31 (2000), an educator must refrain from undermining the status and authority of his or her colleagues and must respect the various responsibilities assigned to colleagues and the authority that arises there from, to ensure the smooth running of the educational institution. Some female educators believe that their status is undermined when males are appointed to managerial positions above them.

In addition, female educators find it challenging to balance dual and at times multiple roles, each demanding added responsibilities. However, according to BBC’s Michael Buerk, lots of new jobs require people skills
and multi-tasking which women are a lot better at (The Star, 18 August 2005). Some female educators are required to play simultaneous roles: being a parent, wife and mother within the home domain and at the same time actively engaging in a career.

Early protagonists such as Emily Davies insisted that the opportunity for women should be identical to that of men, rather than equivalent or comparable (Egginns, 1997:17). Historically, women’s primary role has been the care of the home and the family, but women’s work, whether inside the home or outside, has traditionally been regarded as of less value and of lower status than that of men, and has brought fewer rewards (Darling & Glendinning, 1996:9).

The needs of learners within the educational context are becoming increasingly demanding. Educators as facilitators experience that they are increasingly required to act in parentis locus which requires them to provide not only sound educational knowledge, skills and attitudes but basic nurturance and guidance in many life skills too. Their roles in the classroom as educators require them to implement an Outcomes-Based approach since South Africa’s democratic government inherited a divided and unequal system of education (Revised National Curriculum Statement, March 2005). Under apartheid, South Africa had nineteen different educational departments separated by race, geography and ideology. Curriculum change in post-apartheid South Africa was instrumental in laying down the foundation for a single national core syllabus. Outcomes-Based Education considers the process of learning as important as the content. This approach to learning attempts to embody and uphold a democratic vision of the
society and the citizens that should emerge from our school system (South African Qualifications Act, 1995).

For some educators educational change is a daunting and time consuming task and some actively resist change and at times are rather pessimistic. Some educators too, are not only impotent in effecting change, but cannot even determine what would improve education (Horn, 2000:18). Senge (cited in Horn, 2000:64), a system’s theorist proposes that the best way to deal with change is through a learning organization which is constantly involved in ‘study and practice’.

He further affirms that a successful learning organization requires commitment from each member of staff who is able to ‘work on themselves while they are working on their system’. He firmly advocates that a shared vision which requires each stakeholder to actively participate in constructing a common goal whilst encompassing their own personal vision, is a palpable force of impressive power in people’s hearts rather than an idea embellishing a letterhead. This process will facilitate the stakeholders’ ability to work through a diversity of views, conflicting visions, polarization, discouragement and proselytizing that derail many well-intentioned vision-building efforts. This shared vision building process will thus only become a living force when each individual truly believes they can shape their future. Life takes on shape and meaning when a person is able to transcend the barriers of personal survival and become a unique conduit for its vital energy (Zander and Zander, 2002:117).
The ability of our education system to compete in an increasingly global economy depends on our ability to prepare both learners and educators for new or changing environments. This is in line with the mission in the corporate plan of the Department of Education to ensure that all South Africans receive flexible lifelong learning education and training of high quality (Education Labour Relations Council, 2003).

Support at home is at times not forthcoming as there are many families with absent father figures and if present, they too have demanding jobs and subsequently need to unwind on arriving at home. Support at school is also at times not forthcoming as colleagues and the executive or management team has multiple responsibilities and duties to perform within a structured framework. Educators are deemed after all to be professionals and are assumed to have the necessary coping skills to deal with their plight within an inflexible structure owing to the very nature of their jobs. Ernst and Young, a corporate enterprise have introduced a number of options, including flexible hours, working from home or other locations, job sharing, working more hours a day and fewer days a week or month, or reduced work commitments as a means of balancing their careers with family responsibilities for both males and females (Business Times Careers, 7 August 2005).

Facing these circumstances, some female educators become anxious and feel resentful towards others, but do not have the necessary channels to diffuse or release their levels of frustration in an appropriate and constructive manner. These pent up emotions may result in aggressive acts of behaviour.
The researcher's need for investigation was triggered by the experience of aggression shared by a number of female educators in a secondary school context. The secondary school is an independent school situated in a Sandton suburb nestled against a backdrop of indigenous fauna and flora. The school was established in 1999 with eighteen educators including management and approximately three hundred learners ranging from Grade R to Grade Twelve. In its short history the school has proved to be striking competition for the more traditional and well established independent schools in the neighbourhood.

The headmaster believes that the school provides an ideal teaching/learning environment for both its educators and learners. It is a well resourced school; boasting educators and learners who are both highly motivated with committed and superb work ethics. Most of the staff is results driven (personal communication, 20 October 2005). Calfee, 1994: 340–350) advocates that high standards of learners' cognitive learning requires high levels of instructional support by efficient and professional educators. Most of the learners enrolled are converts to excellence and subsequently achieve outstanding Matriculation results.

According to Potter and Powell (1992:116) the factors that are characteristic of a good school outside the home background and the ability of an individual include effective teaching, leadership and management which are evidently manifested in the said school. West-Burnham (1997:134) supports Potter and Powell by stating that effective teams are crucial to quality organisations and are one of the most powerful catalysts in an organisation. The school not only advocates academic excellence but embraces holistic education: sport and cultural activities too are pivotal in achieving overall excellence.
There are at present forty-four staff members: thirty-nine females as opposed to five males of which two form part of the management team. Female educators outnumber male educators significantly as the ratio 1:8 signifies.

The management team at the school is comprised of two males: the Principal and Deputy Principal and one female: the Senior Deputy Principal. These three executive members all originate from a previous government Institution and were the founder members of the school when its doors opened in 1999. The Deputy Principal position however, was assigned to a female member of staff initially who has since resigned from the position as she decided to go on early retirement. The headmaster emphatically states that his choice of deputies is not a matter of male/female preference but one based on competence and pleasant, conducive relationship building. The existing team shares a common history: emanating from a government to a private educational institution.

According to the headmaster (personal communication, 20 October 2005) the greatest challenge which faces him is the educators themselves. His main role centres on motivating the educators via staff meetings, conferences and personal letters at the conclusion to each year. He asserts that although he believes he is generally well-liked by his staff, there are those members who continuously find fault with his communication style and general management of the school. Seven years later the school boasts forty-four educators and four hundred and fifty learners. The headmaster admits that he at first experienced great difficulty in making the decision to resign from his previously well established government school and inherit an ‘empty space’. He now knows that he made the right decision.
The general aim of the study is therefore to investigate female educators’ experience of aggression in the workplace. A great deal of work remains to be completed in order to advance the understanding of the many experiences shared by female educators. The present study aims to contribute towards the clarification of these experiences. Weaknesses and limitations of previous research, methodological and conceptual gaps in the literature will be considered.

The specific purpose of the study is to determine possible experiences of aggression of female educators with reference to their career paths, personal lives and support bases on offer. Aggression will be assessed by means of a qualitative study – phenomenological interviews. Only females will be selected as subjects for the proposed research since the literature indicates gender differences in aggression and different determinants of aggression which may influence the form or direction of aggression.

It is against this background that the researcher believes that this study will provide greater knowledge to fellow educators. It will further inform and create awareness amongst the echelons of educational institutions, schools which are microcosms of the larger community and global stakeholders the reasons as to why female educators do experience aggression.

A psycho-educational development programme will be formulated addressing the needs of female educators. The programme will provide them with the necessary strategies in order to express their feelings in a constructive and positive manner.
In view of this problem statement, the following research questions were formulated:

- How do secondary school female educators experience aggression in their school?

- What are the needs of secondary school female educators in order to facilitate the mental health of aggression in secondary schools in Gauteng?

- What strategies need to be included in a Psycho-Educational Programme in order to facilitate the healthy management of aggression in secondary schools to promote Mental Health in Gauteng?

1.3 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The overall purpose of this study is to develop and describe a Psycho-Educational Programme to be used as a framework of reference to facilitate the mental health of secondary school female educators. In order to actualize this goal the following two research objectives were formulated from the research questions as a proposal to offer direction to the study:

- to explore and describe secondary school female educators’ experience of their aggression within a secondary school;

- to develop, implement and evaluate a Psycho-Educational Programme to provide secondary school female educators with
the necessary strategies in order to express their feelings of aggression in a constructive, positive and mutually conducive manner.

1.4 PARADIGMATIC PERSPECTIVE

In this research study, the focus was the development of a Psycho-Educational Programme as a frame of reference in order to facilitate the mental health of secondary school female educators. These educators do not work in isolation; they form an integral part of their families and the community as a whole. This study can further espouse the facilitation of the mental health of female educators in secondary schools in Gauteng.

The content of the paradigmatic perspective consisted of meta-theoretical assumptions, theoretical assumptions and methodological assumptions.

1.4.1 Meta-theoretical Assumptions

Meta-theoretical assumptions originate from the philosophy and are not meant to be tested, but are used rather to form the definitive context of this study (Mouton & Marais, 1996:192). Although these assumptions are not epistemic pronouncements, they are presuppositions applicable to research and they do influence the research decisions throughout the study.

The belief system of the researcher is posited on Viktor Frankl's own version of Modern Existentialism known as Logotherapy (Frankl,
The term, Logotherapy is derived from the Greek word *logos* which denotes *meaning* and focuses on: the future, the meaning of human existence as well as man's search for such a meaning. The core of Frankl's theory (Frankl, 1985:121) is the belief that man's primary motivational force is his search for meaning. Human life according to Frankl, under any given circumstances, never ceases to have a meaning.

As a long-time war prisoner in the concentration camp, Auschwitz during World War II, Frankl found himself stripped to naked existence with his life-long goals as a thriving psychiatrist snatched away. He however, believed that despite all the enforced physical and mental primitiveness of life in a concentration camp, it was possible for him to deepen his spiritual life (Frankl, 1985:55).

According to Frankl (1985:16), life holds a potential meaning under any conditions even the most miserable ones. He argues that even when man feels completely and unavoidably influenced by his surroundings, one still has the freedom to choose one's attitude in a given set of circumstances. He reiterates that human liberty does play a role in spiritual freedom: man is not a product of many conditional and environmental factors: biological, psychological and sociological in nature. He further asserts that man is able to escape the influences of his surroundings by exercising his freedom of choice by shaping his own fate through action in the face of such circumstances.

His own personal experiences within the camp led him to believe that exceptional, difficult external situations can give man the opportunity to grow spiritually beyond himself. He himself, aimed to give his fellow
prisoners ‘inner strength’ by pointing out to them future goals to which they could look forward and challenged them to find meaning in their existence within the confines of their boundaries of the camp. This striving to find meaning is unique and specific in that it must and can be fulfilled by the individual alone, only then does it achieve significance which will satisfy the individual’s own will to meaning. However, only a few people were capable of reaching great spiritual heights whilst in the camp.

In view of the importance of Frankl’s revolutionary approach to psychotherapy, the researcher further examined the theory in terms of its application in a female educator’s daily and school life. According to Logotherapy man’s search for meaning in life can be discovered in three ways:

- **By creating work or doing a deed:** the female educators in their school of choice: an independent secondary school; have committed themselves to rendering educational services to learners despite the imminent negative nuances they face within their environment.

- **By experiencing something or encountering someone:** female educators, in their endeavours to create and provide ideal learning opportunities for their learners, achieve excellent results in their sterling contributions towards the learning processes of their learners. It’s a two-way process between learner and educator and the measure of success experienced is as a result of the partnership between both
learner and educator. The learning experience becomes meaningful for both players.

- **By the attitude they choose to adopt toward unavoidable suffering:** female educators who experience stress or suffer from emotional problems as an effect of stress and who were previously deemed as helpless victims of a hopeless situation, may choose to rise above and grow beyond themselves and in so doing bring effective and positive change within themselves. They may convincingly divert a bleak future into a triumphant future, their once bleak predicament into human achievement. When they realize that they are unable to change the environment within which they find themselves; they may choose to change themselves by adopting a positive attitude.

One of the basic tenets of Logotherapy states that man’s main aim is not to gain pleasure or to avoid pain, but rather to see meaning in his life. The female educators need to successfully find and fulfill meaning in their lives by transcending the many challenges that they face. They need to choose to shape and discover their true potential in being human (Frankl, 1985:136). Frankl further admonishes that one must not aim specifically at success as the more you aim at it and make it a target; the more one will miss it. He believes that success, like happiness cannot be pursued, it must rather ensue and it only does so as the unintended side-effect of one’s personal dedication to a cause greater than oneself (Frankl, 1984:12).
1.4.2 Theoretical Assumptions

Theoretical assumptions are measurable and offer epistemic pronouncements about the research field which may include theories, typologies and models (Mouton & Marais, 1996:15). Theoretical assumptions are derived from a study of existing theoretical announcements which may be included in qualitative studies once data gathering and data analysis has been completed.

A psycho-educational programme will be developed to maintain, restore and address the educational needs of female educators, their families and the community within the broad educational system of South Africa. The study will provide them with the necessary strategies in order for them to address their feelings in a constructive and positive manner. Psycho-Education is directed at the prevention and management of mental challenges, focusing on the development of human potential through the development of skills, insights and competencies of both individuals and groups (Schoeman, 1988:6).

The first theoretical assumption is posited on Ulrich Beck’s (Beck cited in Giddens, 2001:68) idea of ‘the second modernity’. This German sociologist has written extensively about risk and globalization. He speculates that as technological change progresses more and more rapidly and new forms of risk develop, we must constantly respond and adjust to these changes. He argues that these risks and globalization contribute to a risk society which is not limited to environmental and health risks alone - it includes a whole range of interrelated changes within contemporary life: shifting employment patterns; heightened job insecurity; the erosion of traditional family
patterns and the democratization of personal relationships. Female educators currently find themselves challenged in the workplace, on the home front and within their personal relationships in a changing world.

Beck (cited in Giddens, 2001:677) whilst rejecting post-modernism, believes we are moving into a phase 'beyond the modern' which he identifies as 'the second modernity'. Modern institutions are becoming global and everyday life is breaking free from the hold of tradition and custom. Within these imminent changes, new risk situations are created that are different from previous ages. Many decisions in everyday life too will become infused with risk. Beck further states that risk and gender relations are closely related. Relationships between the sexes have become uncertain and involve risk calculations. A generation ago, some female educators in developed societies, felt secure in a marriage which was assumed then to be a fairly permanent situation and they felt secure in their chosen career paths too. Today, female educators realize that traditional roles and expectations have detrimentally changed which have subsequently posed additional and further challenges to their daily lives. They need to judge the likelihood of securing happiness and security against an uncertain backdrop.

A second theoretical assumption is posited on Michel Foucault's Post-Modernistic (Mills, 2003:33) concern focusing on the relation between social structures, institutions and the individual. In the relationship between the individual and the institution, power will be found operating not as an oppressive force but rather as a strategy which needs to be constantly performed rather than achieved. He is keenly aware of the role of institutions in the shaping of individuals but
prefers not to see the relationship between the two as one of oppression and constraint. He asserts that power is to be challenged and resisted and not simply passively oppressed.

Foucault (Mills, 2003:69) further argues that it is not possible for power to be exercised without knowledge, it is impossible for knowledge not to engender power. In producing knowledge, Foucault claims that one is also making a claim for power. Where imbalances of power relations between individuals or institutions exist, there will be a production of knowledge. Within a secondary school context, power imbalances between the educators noticeably exist, especially in vital decision-making processes. He continues to state that because of the institutionalized imbalance in power relations between men and women in Western countries, information is produced about women and a scarcity about men. He argues that the object of such research is frequently people who are in less powerful positions (Mills, 2003:70). Knowledge, therefore does not simply emerge from scholarly study but is produced and maintained in circulation in societies through work of a number of different institutions and practices. We are led to believe that knowledge is not objective but is rather influenced by the subtle nuances or interests which circulate amongst particular groups of individuals much of which is evident in an educational environment.

The focus of Foucault’s work is discourse which is defined as the structured ways of knowing which are both produced in, and the shapers of, culture (Ramazanoglu, 1993:123). Foucault stresses that discourse is associated with relations of power and are not merely linguistic phenomena. Discourses are shot through with power and are
Institutionalized as practices. Educational discourse is therefore not simply a set of terms but includes more importantly, the power that the educator's presentation of the situation bears in relation to that of the learners, as well as the institutional patterning of the educational ethos. Foucault's decisive thoughts and works invite us to revisit our current state of knowledge and to question the way we think, not just what we think and the conceptual tools we use to think.

In view of the nature of Foucault's challenging and iconoclastic theoretical work largely focusing on concepts of power, knowledge and discourse the researcher further examined the theory in terms of its application to female educators' daily lives both in the workplace and at home. According to Foucaultian thought, some methodological stances and approaches include the following elements:

- **Be skeptical**: female educators, in executing their daily duties are encouraged to suspend judgement and rather adopt a critical view of their own position. Rather than assume that a particular analysis of events is *true* and therefore *fact* to back up an issue of conflict or difference, female educators need to pride themselves on their objective stance and suspend judgement.

- **Don't make second order judgements**: these are judgements which one has not made on his/her own. Choosing to adopt another's judgement or theoretical perspective may creep into one's own analysis and influence a value judgement. Female educators' own opinions need to be heard and encouraged without influence by another party thus minimizing political claims.

-28-
• **Look for contingencies rather than causes:** Foucault claims that in some research in gender, there is an assumption that gender causes differences in behaviour – the fact that certain people are male causes them to behave in certain ways (Mills, 2003:115). A Foucauldian analysis of gender would see sexual identity as being only one of the many factors which plays a role in particular types of behaviour and, indeed, would see that gendering process as being shaped by the activity itself. Female educators need to discount the gendering factor when engaging in responsible duties by taking ownership of their ability to achieve without doubting their performance. They need to analyse contingencies so that they may move beyond the ways in which they may be currently limiting themselves. They are encouraged not to look for causes and effects but should simply trace the way that certain events happened, and examine the contingent events which may or may not have played a role in the development thereof.

• **Investigate problems rather than a subject:** Individuals are the vehicles of power, not its points of application (Mills, 2003:35). When encountering obstacles or faced with challenging situations, female educators need to be flexible in their thinking in the process of solving problems. Focusing on or isolating one specific subject or issue restricts one’s thinking. Problems do not exist in isolation but arise as a result of interrelated events or circumstances. As vehicles of power, female educators are encouraged to work successfully through
the process of creative problem solving rather than targeting a specific point.

- Don’t overgeneralise from your findings: Despite the many challenges female educators face, great care must be taken not to make grand statements about conditions, resources, public relations and many more issues which they believe may impede their progress and well-being in a global environment. Foucault (Mills, 2003:116) states he doesn’t try to universalize what he says; conversely, what he doesn’t say isn’t meant to be thereby disqualified as being of no importance.

1.4.3 Conceptual Definitions

The following concepts used in this study are defined:

- Person
- Environment
- Mental Health
- Multiple Roles
- Psycho-Education
- Facilitation

Person

Educator means any person who teaches, educates or trains other persons at an education institution or assists in rendering education services or education auxiliary or support services provided by or in an education department, but does not include any officer or employee as
defined in section 1 of the Public Service Act (1994: Proclamation No. 103: Education Labour Relations Council, 2003). The participants in the research study comprises of secondary school female educators who teach at an educational institution which is defined as a public or independent school (South African Schools Act, 1996:No.84).

Environment

For the purpose of this research study the external environment is the school, which impacts on the daily lives of the learners; the educators; the management team; the parents and the immediate community which in turn influences the social environment. The nature of the internal environment is the whole body, mind and spirit of an individual whose intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships affect his/her well-being and ability to make a meaningful contribution to the school as a microcosm of the larger community. The psychological environment will be the educators' opinions and feelings of aggression as experienced in the school.

Mental Health

Mental health poses a challenge to the values and ethics of health professionals. The term in itself has caused and continues to cause considerable debate and uncertainty as health has a number of meanings. One definition produced by the World Health Organisation 1946 (cited in Cribb & Duncan, 2002:12) defines health as not merely the absence of disease, but a state of complete physical, emotional, social and spiritual well-being. This all embracing definition accounts for many things which may contribute to an individual's well-being:
not only basic things like food, shelter and income; but also other fundamental building blocks like education, leisure, or personal and social relationships; and all kinds of cultural and meaning-related goods such as art and religious belief (Cribb & Duncan, 2002:13).

Mental health is an integral part of health. The individual, through the facilitation of acquiring social skills in developing interpersonal relationships, dwells in an environment that is punctuated by turbulent times. In this unstable climate, the individual is continually interacting with significant others who influence his/her patterns of interaction between the psychological, physiological and social environments that are part of the daily working.

Multiple Roles

Seven roles and their associated competencies are outlined aptly in the Policy Handbook for Educators (2003) describing what it means to be a competent educator. These roles include:

- **Learning mediator** in which the educator will mediate learning in a manner which is sensitive to the diverse needs of learners.

- **Interpreter and designer of learning programmes and materials** in which the educator will understand and interpret learning programmes, design original learning programmes, identify the requirements for a specific context of learning and select suitable textual and visual resources for learning.
• **Leader, administrator and manager** in which the educator will make decisions appropriate to the level, manage learning in the classroom, carry out classroom administrative duties efficiently and participate in school decision making structures.

• **Scholar, researcher and lifelong learner** in which the educator will achieve ongoing personal, academic, occupational and professional growth through pursuing reflective study and research in their learning area, in broader professional and educational matters, and in other related fields.

• **Community, citizenship and pastoral role** in which the educator will practise and promote a critical, committed and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others.

• **Assessor** in which the educator will understand that assessment is an essential feature of the teaching and learning process and know how to integrate it into this process.

• **Learning area / subject / discipline / phase specialist** in which the educator will be well grounded in the knowledge, skills, values, principles, methods and procedures relevant to the discipline, subject, learning area, phase of study, or professional or occupational practice (National Education Policy Act, 1996).

Notwithstanding the seven roles as outlined above, female educators have further role expectations to play: parent; wife and mother within the home domain.
Psycho-Education

Psycho-Education refers to an empirically based form of facilitation that seeks to impart information to distressed individuals and groups, with challenges which they and their families may face. Stress management as a technique assists them in developing an understanding of the disturbances or challenges they may experience and build the necessary coping skills which will enhance their resilience and ability to harness their strength in dealing with their challenges more effectively (Goldenberg & Goldenberg, 2000:323).

A further definition states that Psycho-Education is the educating of a person in subject areas that serve the goal of treatment and rehabilitation. A person experiencing behavioural or psychological difficulties needs specific information in order to understand the nature of his/her manifesting challenge; the implications thereof and the necessary coping strategies and problem-solving skills as a means of managing his/her circumstances in an effective and appropriate manner.

Psycho-Education involves teaching people about their problem or challenging circumstances, it further guides them how to treat and recognize the signs of a possible relapse thus enabling them to seek treatment before their difficulty worsens or reoccurs. Psycho-Education is multi-disciplinary in nature as it involves families, friends and/or caregivers who focus on assisting the person under question in developing coping strategies which will improve his/her mental health. It enables the person to put the situation into perspective and to begin
to modify his/her own life thus reducing levels of stress and anxiety. (http://www.psychoeducation.com/psychoeducation.htm2005:2).

According to Fox and Prilleltensky (1997:116) Psycho-Education is an intervention which positions the helper as an educator and collaborator with the client. The client is deemed to be the collaborator rather than the problem. This programme emphasizes the significance of the social environment as well as the pivotal role the significant others play in the person’s mental health and equilibrium.

Facilitation

Facilitation is an act where there is the creation of an opportunity or climate for the individual, family or community; for the mobilisation of resources that are facilitative elements in the quest for wellness (Gmeiner, 1992:14). Poggenpoel (1994:13) asserts that the mobilized resources are any means of assisting individuals to regain and maintain their mental health. These resources include personal resources like the significant activities and objects as well as professional resources like people and organizations.

1.4.4 Methodological Assumptions

Methodological assumptions are based on a functional approach, which Botes (1991:19) describes as knowledge that is gathered must be of value to educational practice. The methodological assumptions further reflect the researcher’s views about the nature and structure of science. These assumptions are stated in terms of the aim and methods of research and the criteria for trustworthiness. The
methodological assumptions give form to the research objective and the research context, which in turn influences the decisions about the research (Botes, 1995:10).

The methodological assumptions of the researcher were as follows:

- The purpose of the research was functional.
- The functional reasoning approach employed by the researcher implied the reciprocal and interdependent relation between practice and research; the practice serving as the primary source for the research themes whilst the research provided guidelines for actions in practice.
- Applied research was thus employed which aimed at addressing female educators' experiences of aggression within a secondary school context.
- This did not imply that basic research was irrelevant, since the applied research was based initially on the basic research.
- A single tangible reality was to be explored in this research: experiences of aggression as impacting on the mental health of female educators.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

1.5.1 Research Design

A qualitative research design (Burns & Grove, 1997:67-71) will be employed in this study. The idea of qualitative research, as Creswell (1994:148) describes, is to purposefully select participants who will best answer the research question. Denzin and Lincoln (1994:210)
state that qualitative research design begins with a question, with the intent of entering the social setting of the selected participants in order to gain an understanding of the meaning of the participants’ lives in the participants’ own terms. The researcher will enter the world of the subject and place herself in his/her shoes by observing and studying the actions, decisions, behaviour, practices, rituals from her perspective (De Vos et al, 2002:80). According to Babble and Mouton (2002:270) the focus of qualitative research is on process rather than outcome. They further add that in-depth descriptions and an understanding of actions and events is the primary aim. The interviews will take place at the selected secondary school with which the participant is familiar.

The research design will be exploratory, descriptive (Brink, 1996:11) and contextual (Maxwell, 1996:59) in nature. Babble and Mouton, (2002:80) state that exploratory studies assist the researcher in gaining new insights and a better understanding of the participants involved through the process of in-depth interviews. An attempt to develop an initial, rough understanding of phenomenon will be explored. Descriptive studies however, involve the precise measurement and accurate reporting of the characteristics of the selected participants (Babble & Mouton, 2002:105). The researcher will carefully and deliberately observe and then describe what was observed in the interviews. Finally, contextual studies (Babble & Mouton, 2002: 272) aim to describe and understand events within the concrete, natural context in which they occur. Qualitative researchers argue that one can truly claim to understand events when one is privy to the context in which the events occurred. The background of the whole context adds meaning to the events as they occur.
Understanding social action in terms of its specific context is thereby achieved.

1.5.2 Research Method

A structured framework consisting of four phases will be adhered to by the researcher for the purpose of conducting the research:

- In **Phase One** the researcher will follow an inductive reasoning strategy employing a contextual, descriptive and exploratory focus which typifies the situation analysis.

- In **Phase Two** a conceptual framework will be developed. The data collected from Phase One will be used to develop a Psycho-Educational Programme for the female educators in a secondary school who experience aggression; in order to facilitate the healthy management of aggression. The literature control will support how and why the Psycho-Educational Programme will be developed.

- In **Phase Three** the conceptual framework of the programme of dealing with the experience of aggression by female educators will form the basis for the development and implementation of the psycho-educational programme. Programme implementation will be deemed as the intervention strategy in facilitating the mental health of female educators.
• In **Phase Four** the programme will be evaluated through the collective collaboration of female educators together with the facilitator which will form a critical reference group (Wadsworth, 1997: 16). The effectiveness of the development and implementation of the programme will be determined by the evaluation process.

**1.5.3 Phase One: Exploration and Description of Female Educators’ Experience of their Aggression**

**1.5.3.1 Population and Sampling**

Sampling, according to Burns and Grove (1997:24) is a process of selecting subjects that are representative of the population being studied. The research study employs purposive sampling which is a type of non-probability sampling method. The researcher uses her own judgment in the selection of sample methods (Babble & Mouton, 2002:202). Purposive sampling is suitable to qualitative studies because this method requires ‘information rich cases’ (De Vos, 1998:198). The participants have direct and personal knowledge of the phenomenon under study. As a strategy, purposive sampling is used to choose small groups or individuals likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon of interest (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001:433).

The population for a study is that group of people about whom one wishes to draw conclusions and from whom one selects a sample as
being representative of the population (Babble and Mouton, 2002:100).

In this research study the population will be educators in a secondary school. The target population will comprise of female educators who have experienced aggression in their school. The participants will be purposively selected for this study. A literature control will be completed on relevant and related studies to establish the uniqueness of the study and to establish whether the findings will fit into other contexts outside the study situation (transferability).

1.5.3.2 Sampling Criteria

Sampling criteria are defined by Burns and Grove (1997: 225) as the characteristics essential for inclusion in the target population. The sample will consist of female educators who have experienced aggression in their school; who represent gender and who are able to communicate in English. They must be able to relate their experiences of aggression in their workplace.

1.5.3.3 Sample Size

Factors which need to be considered in determining sample size include the type of study, number of variables, sensitivity of the measurement tools, data techniques and expected effect size (Burns & Grove, 1997:245). However, in the research study sample size will be determined by the data saturation (Talbot, 1995:529).
1.5.3.4 Data Collection

According to Burns and Grove (1997:293), data collection is the process of acquiring subjects and collecting the data needed for the study. Researchers collect data within the natural setting of the information they seek, and the key data collection instruments are the researchers themselves (Hittleman & Simon, 1997:43). In the research study data will be collected through individual semi-structured phenomenological in-depth interviews conducted face-to-face (Kvale, 1983:174) with a purposively selected sample of female educators at the selected secondary school in Gauteng. Data will be recorded on audio-tape and later transcribed. Field notes will also be taken to record events as they occur. The researcher will carry out a pilot study with one of the female educators in the secondary school who satisfies the criteria. According to Denzin and Lincoln (1994:213), a pilot study allows the researcher to focus on particular areas that may have been unclear previously and to solidify rapport with participants as well as to establish effective communication skills and patterns. Each female educator will be asked to describe one central question: ‘Tell me your experience of aggression at your school’. The purpose of this question is to capture the female educator’s experience of aggression at the secondary school.

1.5.3.5 Data Analysis

The researcher will use Tesch's method (De Vos et al, 2002:343) as a method for data analysis. Brynard and Hanekom (1997:48) state that data analysis will enable the researcher to discard that which is not relevant to the research study and retain only that which is.
Interpreting collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect on the interests, ideas and theories that initiated the inquiry will provide the researcher with feedback (Babble & Mouton, 2002:101). Each interview will be transcribed verbatim before the data is analysed according to Tesch’s descriptive, qualitative and systematic approach to data reduction (Creswell, 1994:154-155). Data collection and data analysis will be completed simultaneously. Two qualitative data analysts will assist in analyzing data used in order to give the study highly qualitative findings. Results will then be re-contextualised in the literature by means of literature control which will verify the findings. Details will follow in Chapter Two.

1.5.3.6 Trustworthiness

For measures to ensure trustworthiness, Guba’s model of trustworthiness (De Vos et al, 2002:349) will be used to ensure the validity and reliability of the research. The model uses four criteria for trustworthiness: (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:289)

- the method for ensuring truth-value is credibility
- the method for applicability is by using the strategy for transferability
- the consistency by using the strategy for dependability
- neutrality by using the strategy for confirmability
The application of these strategies will be followed closely by adhering to set standards for qualitative research (Krefting, 1991:216) and will be discussed further in Chapter Two.

1.5.3.7 Ethical Considerations

De Vos et al (2002:24) define ethics as a set of moral principles which is suggested by an individual or a group is widely accepted and which offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and participants, employers, sponsors and other researchers and students. The following rules will be adhered to in conducting this research:

- **Informed Consent**

  The principal of the school was informed of the aims of conducting the research who then duly informed the prospective participants of the study. The researcher made an appointment with the principal to assist in compiling a list of prospective participants, to allocate a venue for the interviews to take place and to answer any questions and clarify any further information required. The prospective participants were informed that they were free to withdraw from the study should they choose to do so and that they would not be penalized in having exercised this option.
• Voluntary Participation and Privacy

The female educators were informed that their participation in this study is voluntary and that they had the right to withhold any information they wished to (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:102).

• Confidentiality and Anonymity

The researcher, two independent coders and two supervisors will be the only people to have access to the material used during the research process. The researcher is the only person who is aware of the identity of the participants (Dane, 1990:51). The names of the participants who participated in this study will be omitted to ensure anonymity (Babbie, 1992:342) enabling the female educators to provide honest and complete information willingly.

• Feedback

The summary of the findings including the development programme described in the study will both be made available to the principal of the school and may be, with permission from the principal be presented at an International Headmasters’ Conference which takes place bi-annually.
1.5.4 Phase Two: Development of Psycho-Educational Programme for Female Educators’ Experience of their Aggression

Data from the results from Phase One will be used to form a framework of reference in developing themes which will assist in formulating a Psycho-Educational Programme for female educators in a secondary school who experience aggression. The programme will facilitate female educators to address their feelings of aggression in a constructive, positive and mutually conducive manner thus facilitating healthy management of aggression.

A literature control will support why and how the Psycho-Educational Programme will be developed.

1.6 Chapter Division

This study will be divided into the following chapters:

Chapter 1: Rationale and Background

Chapter 2: Research Design and Method

Chapter 3: Discussion of Findings and Literature Control

Chapter 4: Conceptual Framework of Psycho-Educational Programme for the
The overall purpose of this study was to develop and describe a Psycho-Educational Programme as a framework of reference. The conceptual framework of the programme was to be implemented and evaluated in order to facilitate the mental health of female educators in a secondary school.

In this chapter, an overview of the rationale behind the study was described, the research strategy and method that was used to achieve the stated overall purpose as well as the presentation of the theoretical framework that would direct the study was also described.

The following chapter contains a comprehensive research design and method.
CHAPTER 2
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, the research design and method are discussed; the researcher will give a detailed plan and structure of the research method and design to be implemented in the study.

A structured framework consisting of four phases was adhered to by the researcher for the purpose of conducting the research:

- In **Phase One** the researcher followed an inductive reasoning strategy employing a contextual, descriptive and exploratory focus which typifies the situation analysis. In-depth phenomenological interviews were conducted and field notes supplemented the recorded events as they occurred. A literature control was completed to conceptualise and justify the research topic. Sampling of literature was done to prevent its influence on the selected topic and at the same time to validate the findings of the study. The findings were contextualized.

- In **Phase Two** a conceptual framework was developed. The data collected from Phase One was used to describe and
develop a Psycho-Educational Programme for the female educators in a secondary school who experienced aggression as a means to facilitate the healthy management of aggression. The literature control supported how and why the Psycho-Educational Programme was developed. Guidelines will be described to operationalise the programme.

- In Phase Three the Psycho-Educational Programme was implemented. The programme needed to be effective and relevant to the needs of the female educators; it had to be systematically implemented and meaningful to those for whom it was developed and it also needed to be credible (Wadsworth, 1997:31).

- In Phase Four the Psycho-Educational Programme was evaluated collaboratively by the female educators who formed a critical reference group. Evaluation helps one to establish what value people place on things; how they think and feel; the reasons why and what they would prefer (Wadsworth, 1997:10 & 11). Evaluation determines which aspects of the programme were effective and worthwhile and those which need to be improved.

2.2 PURPOSE OF RESEARCH

The overall purpose of this study is to develop and describe a Psycho-Educational Programme to be used as a framework of reference for the implementation and evaluation of the programme to facilitate the
mental health of female educators. In order to actualize this goal the following objectives in line with those in Chapter One were formulated as a proposal to offer direction to the study:

- to explore and describe secondary school female educators’ experience of their aggression within a secondary school;

- to develop, implement and evaluate a Psycho-Educational Programme to provide secondary school female educators with the necessary strategies in order to express their feelings of aggression in a constructive, positive and mutually conducive manner.

2.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design will determine the planning and execution of the study. A qualitative, explorative, descriptive and contextual research design was employed in order to understand the phenomenon being studied, namely the experiences of female educators’ aggression within a secondary school context.

2.3.1 Qualitative Research

Qualitative research is an approach that assumes that people act on the basis of their interpretations of experience (Schumacher & McMillan, 1997:42). Mouton and Marais (1990:175) establish that qualitative research is characterized by the fact that the researcher tries to get to the heart and soul of the issue in order to understand it. Qualitative research is further described as a systematic, subjective
approach used to describe life experiences and give them meaning by exploring the depth, richness and complexity inherent in phenomena.

Human emotions are difficult to quantify by assigning a numeric value to the emotions under scrutiny; hence qualitative research appears to be a more effective research method of investigating and understanding human experiences within a holistic framework (Burns & Grove, 1995:393). The insights gained through this process were used to guide the development of the programme (Patton, 1987:9). In view of this notion, the researcher gained insight into the nature of female educators’ experience of their aggression. Polit and Hungler (1987:24) further establish that qualitative research involves systematic collection and analysis of more subjective materials, using procedures in which there tend to be a minimum of the researcher’s imposed control.

This study was qualitative as the researcher sought to analyse the female educators’ experience of their aggression through individual in-depth phenomenological interviews in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the complexity of their lives (Uys & Basson, 1991:51). As part of the phenomenological approach, the researcher employed communication skills and techniques such as focusing, clarifying, paraphrasing, reflecting, probing, validating and open questioning to gain insight into the experience of aggression as related by the female educators (Streubert & Carpenter, 1995:43; Schurink, 1993:307-311). According to Burns and Grove (1997:29-71) the researcher is involved as a participant observer and interviewer whilst the participant is a self-interpreting individual who is viewed by the
As the only reliable source of information to answer the researcher's questions in qualitative research.

In qualitative research design, reasoning strategies are required so that the researcher can make sense of research phenomena by using data analysis approaches such as comparison, organization, category themes and coding (Poggenpoel, 1994:338-347). The data collected was used in the design of the psycho-educational programme as a framework of reference to facilitate the mental health of female educators in secondary schools. The analysis of data was in words, not numbers, to further indicate the qualitative nature of the study, as experiences cannot be quantified.

2.3.2 Explorative

The researcher's main objective for using the exploratory design is to explore the dimensions of a phenomenon, the manner in which it is manifested and the factors with which it is related in order to provide further insight into the nature of the phenomena (Brink, 1996: 11).

The research was explorative as it sought to explore a relatively unknown research area (Mouton & Marais, 1996:43) through in-depth phenomenological interviews which required a relationship of mutual trust between the researcher and the participants (Polit & Hungler, 1987:19) in order to gain new insights into the phenomenon. The newly acquired insights formed the basis from which to formulate a psycho-educational programme to be used as a framework of reference to facilitate healthy management of female educators’ aggression within a secondary school context.
Open-ended questions, constructive communication skills and techniques were used to facilitate and encourage the female educators to relate their experience of aggression as they were lived (Schurink, 1993: 309-310). The researcher reflected empathy and did not display prejudice (Uys & Basson, 1985: 58) in conducting the interviews which subsequently assisted the researcher in gaining a richer understanding of the phenomena at play. These experiences were used as a point of departure to describe the psycho-educational programme as a frame of reference in order to facilitate the mental health of the female educators.

The research design was descriptive as the experiences and views identified through exploration were described.

2.3.3 Descriptive

The design of this research design was descriptive as it sought to provide a picture of a situation as it naturally happens (Burns & Grove, 1995: 178). A descriptive design is also a way of obtaining complete and accurate information about a phenomenon through observation, description and classification (Brink, 1996: 11). Descriptive research involves the level of enquiry which asks questions such as, 'What is this? What are the salient behaviours, events, beliefs and attitudes?' (Seaman, 1987: 182). The participants in this research study described their experiences of aggression as evident in the workplace.

In understanding human behaviour or experience, the participant needs to interpret the action or experience as it is for the researcher who, in turn must interpret the explanation offered by the participant.
In order to describe the intended psycho-educational programme (Mouton & Marais, 1996:66). The premise of this research study, subsequently focused on the meaning of one’s lived experience within the domain of a secondary school. Once meaning was attached to the female educators’ experiences of guilt, a description of new insights was obtained through words (Creswell, 1994:145).

2.3.4 Contextual

Phenomena in a contextual study are examined for the interest which they may have as examples of a larger population of similar events (Mouton & Marais, 1996:48). This research study was therefore contextual as it sought to investigate the phenomenon in relation to the views and experiences of the female educators. A purposive sample of female educators was taken till data saturation was achieved.

A contextual design implies that the research study be conducted in the participants’ natural setting. De Vos (1998:281) states that in order to understand the dynamics of human beings as fully as possible, the main objective of a contextual study is to observe people in their natural habitat. Her view is further expounded by Valle, King and Halling (1989:7) as quoted by Huysamen (1994:167), who reiterates that human behaviour cannot be understood without appreciating the context in which the behaviour takes place. The information to be obtained is specifically about the experiences of aggression by female educators in a secondary school. The research study was contextual in nature in that the researcher interviewed the
participants in their natural and immediate setting of their specific school or venue within the local community.

The research context is only valid within a certain time period and value context (Botes, 1991:7). The specific intervening conditions that were of interest in the phenomena being studied included manifold political, adopted norms, values and cultural backgrounds which set an important backdrop against which the female educators experienced aggression. Further influential factors which needed to be considered included the socio-economic factors of the country as well as the educators relationships with self, others and time which is determined by future directedness.

These different innuendoes or backgrounds were taken into account as to disregard them would deny this study its main objective, which is to explore and describe the secondary school female educators' experiences of aggression in their school and to develop, implement and evaluate a psycho-educational programme to provide secondary school female educators with the necessary strategies in order to express their feelings of aggression in a constructive, positive and mutually conducive manner.

2.4 REASONING STRATEGIES

Reasoning strategies were employed in this research study to formulate the processing and organizing of ideas in order to reach conclusions (Burns & Grove, 1995:13). The experience of aggression as described by the female educators were explored and described; the reasoning strategies that were used included: analysis, synthesis,

2.4.1 Analysis

Creswell (1994:153) explains that qualitative analysis occurs concurrently with data collection, data interpretation and narrative report writing. Words as opposed to numbers were used in this study as a qualitative data technique to form the basis of analysis which has to be rigorous and precise with a tentative end product.

Analysis is the process whereby data is systematically organized; divided into manageable units, categories or themes and then synthesized to form patterns which result in a discovery of what is important and what is to be learned (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998:157). Mouton (1996:111) confers by stating that data is analysed by identifying patterns and themes in the data from which certain conclusions can be drawn.

Each phenomenological interview was transcribed verbatim according to the descriptive analysis method suggested by Tesch (Creswell, 1994:155). The data analysis clarified and refined concepts and statements resolving a complex whole into its parts. During this process, the constituent factors or variables that were relevant to the understanding of a phenomenon or event were isolated (Mouton & Marais, 1996:102).
2.4.2 Synthesis

Synthesis is the process of clustering and the inter-relating of ideas from several sources to form a gestalt or new, complete picture of what is known and what is not known in an area (Burns & Grove, 1993:781). Synthesis of data in this research study was employed concurrently with the process of analysis of data as outlined by Tesch (Creswell, 1994:165). Although Walker and Avant (1995:58) profess that it is not done by moving from one step to another, but by circling through steps several times until the process is ‘theoretically saturated’; Tesch’s Method using eight steps did in fact combine both strategies of analysis and synthesis and achieved same.

Synthesis in this research study was employed to identify common threads of loose information which previously was disconnected. The information collected consisted of the female educators’ experience of aggression in their workplace. Borne from this process were resultant new concepts and new statements which developed into a new programme which is particularly useful in descriptive research (Walker & Avant, 1995:57). Conclusions were drawn and recommendations based on the in-depth interviews were included.

2.4.3 Inductive Reasoning

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1998:6) qualitative researchers tend to analyse their data inductively as they do not search out data or evidence to prove or disprove hypotheses held by them before entering a research study. They maintain that abstractions are built
from the bottom up as disparate pieces of information are gathered as
evidence which is interconnected and grouped together. Inductive
reasoning is therefore defined as the form of reasoning which is based
on the process of moving from specific observations to generalizations
(Streubert & Carpenter, 1995:316).

The researcher employed Induction as a research method as no explicit
conceptual framework on female educators’ experience of aggression
was formulated before entering the study. In-depth phenomenological
individual interviews were held in this research study which served
initially as disparate pieces of information. The interviews generated
concepts for the development of a psycho-educational programme to
be used as a framework of reference to facilitate the mental health of
female educators in secondary schools.

Once the data had been generated, the researcher attempted to
scrutinize the collection of data closely. Data which emerged as being
repeatedly intertwined or connected led the researcher to discover
relationships or patterns. The data were further analysed and
interpreted by means of inductive abstraction and generalization.

2.4.4 Deductive Reasoning

Streubert and Carpenter (1995:314) contend that deductive reasoning
is a process which progresses from generalizations or a general
premise to specific conclusions or a particular conclusion. Therefore, if
all the premises are true then the conclusion must be true. A deductive
argument relies on certainty where all the information or factual
content in the conclusion was already contained, at least implicitly in the premise leading to an unmistakable conclusion (Mouton, 1996:77).

In this research study, processes and abstract relationships were used to derive specific questions. Deductive reasoning was employed as a process based on conclusions drawn concerning the female educators' experience of aggression and the effect thereof on their mental health. This process enabled the psycho-educational programme to be developed as a framework of reference to facilitate the mental health of female educators in a secondary school.

Deductive reasoning was used as a strategy in the formulation of guidelines. The guidelines, which were based on the research findings were used to implement the psycho-educational programme and were included throughout the discussion of the facilitative interventions.

2.4.5 Retroductive Reasoning

As naturally curious human beings one also needs to know the reason as to why people act in specific ways; hold certain opinions or surpass others in performance. Mouton (1996:81) comments that humans are interested in explanations of phenomena and events in the social world. New hypotheses or theories may develop in pursuit of finding these explanations which need to be verified as being plausible if sufficient and accurate observable phenomenon is judged to be good. Retroductive reasoning goes beyond the evidence at hand and the explanations are put forward as new hypotheses.
In this research study, the accounts verbalised by female educators who experienced aggression were used to provide an explanation for their observable patterns of behaviour which in turn, affected their mental health.

2.5 RESEARCH METHOD

The research method comprised of the following four phases which were employed for the purposes of conducting the research: a situation analysis; programme development; the implementation and the evaluation of the psycho-education programme.

2.5.1 Phase One: Situation Analysis

Data collection firstly included the setting or establishing of boundaries; secondly the gathering of information through observation via field notes and in-depth phenomenological interviews and finally the creation of a protocol for recording the information or data collected (Creswell, 1994:148). Once the data had been analysed a literature control was applied to confirm the results of the research study.

2.5.1.1 Data Collection

Polit and Hungler (1987:643) define data collection as the gathering of information needed to address the research problem. Brink (1991:16) further adds that a qualitative researcher uses several methods to obtain different slices of data on the same research question, and then
cross-check accounts against one another for consistency and compatibility. The researcher firstly conducted a pilot study on one female educator who experienced aggression in her secondary school. Further data was collected from the other participants who were also selected on the grounds that they fitted into the inclusion criteria. The interviews took place at the school or suitable venue where the female educators had volunteered to partake in this research study. In this study the researcher gathered information needed to address the research problem by employing semi-structured in-depth phenomenological interviews (Kvale, 1983:174) and by taking field notes (Wilson, 1989:380). Triangulation was used for improved understanding and comprehensiveness of the study. Denzin and Lincoln (1994:2) define triangulation as the use of multiple methods in the study to secure an in-depth understanding of the same phenomenon.

2.5.1.1.1 Phenomenological Interviews

Phenomenological interviews (Kvale, 1983:184) will help the researcher to develop insight regarding the experience of aggression as described by the female educators. After securing informed consent from the participants, the date, time and place for the interviews were confirmed. In accordance with the appointment schedule, the researcher conducted in-depth personal face-to-face interviews in this study (De Vos, 1998:90). The purpose of conducting a phenomenological study is to describe and interpret the female educators' experience of aggression in order to understand the essence of their aggression as perceived by the participants themselves (McMillan, 2000:270).
The qualitative research interview that was conducted was 'semi-structured' being neither a free conversation nor a highly structured questionnaire. An interview mode focused on themes rather than exact questions. The mode of understanding in qualitative research interviews includes the main aspect in its structure, which is centred on the interviewees' experiences and life-world: seeking to understand the phenomenon in that life-world. It becomes descriptive, specific, without prejudice and presuppositions.

Whilst focusing on specific themes, the researcher in engaging interpersonally with the participants; needs to place herself momentarily 'in the shoes' of the female educators as a means of entering their life worlds as a perceptual framework from which the female educators truly experiences life (De Vos, 1998: 80). The depth of phenomenological interviews is not to be determined by the number of interviews undertaken but rather in terms of the experiences as described by the participants as fully and richly as possible (Omery, 1983:61). Data is collected until the data is saturated and no new information is obtained (Field & Morse, 1985:94).

There are four important aspects which need to be considered regarding the interviewing process: the location; the participant; the events and the process (De Vos, 1998:46).

- Firstly the location needs to be determined from which the interviews are to take place. The research undertaken is specified to a secondary school in Gauteng in which the female educators teach. Some female educators chose alternate venues which suited their personal needs.
Secondly the participants who are being interviewed and observed are purposively selected until data saturation is achieved (Creswell, 1994:148). The phenomenological semi-structured in-depth interviews include female educators who have volunteered to describe their experience of aggression in their school.

Thirdly a series of events involve the female educators in the process of being interviewed as an attempt to establish their experience of aggression. Kvale (1983:175) states that the researcher emerges herself in this process by trying to understand and observe the participants’ role in the research problem. Meanings are determined from what was said during the interviews.

Finally reference is made to the interview process. This focuses essentially on the feelings, experiences and life views as experienced by the female educators (Kvale, 1983:175). The interviews were audiotaped and field notes were supplemented.

One central question was asked during each interview:

Tell me about your experience of aggression at school?

Further questions were guided by the conversation. While the participant was talking, the researcher listened carefully so that probing open-ended questions, which can elicit further information, was used. Participants were made to feel that their contributions were valued and confidential. During the interviews the researcher made
use of a variety of communication skills and techniques to determine the depth of the problem.

The communication skills and techniques are clarified as follows:

- **Probing**

  The participant’s response should be evaluated continuously by the researcher as a means of collecting reliable and valid information. Through probing, the researcher is able to stimulate the participant in divulging additional information and any vague answers clarified. Probing needs to be done in a friendly, non-threatening manner reassuring the participant that although the response given is acceptable, further information is still required (Schurink, 1993:310).

Techniques fostering the description of phenomena include:

- **Active listening**

  The researcher needs to pay close attention to both verbal and non-verbal communication, patterns of thinking, feelings and behaviour.

- **Empathy**

  The participant’s feelings are acknowledged and recognized.
• Questioning

The researcher uses open-ended questions in order to achieve the relevant depth in the ensuing discussion.

• Restating

The researcher repeats the exact words used by the participant to remind her of what she said; to let her know that she is heard.

• Verbalising the implied

The researcher rephrases the participant’s words to highlight an underlying message.

• General leads

The researcher uses neutral expressions to encourage the participant into continuing with the talking.

• Silence

The researcher deliberately plans the absence of verbal remarks to allow the participant sufficient time to think and say more.

• Clarification

The researcher asks the participant to restate, elaborate or give examples of ideas or feelings.
• **Focusing**

The researcher pursues a topic until its meaning is clear (Keltner, Schwecke & Bostrom, 1999:119).

• **Reflecting**

This refers to communicating to the participant an understanding of her concerns and perspectives. The researcher reflects on stated and implied feelings, what has been observed non-verbally, what is felt has been omitted or emphasized, and specific context (Okun, 1992:70).

• **Paraphrasing**

This refers to making a verbal statement which is interchangeable with the participant’s statement, although words may be synonymous with the response used (Okun, 1992:70).

• **Clarifying**

This refers to an attempt to focus on or understand the basic nature of the participant’s statement (Okun, 1992:70).

• **Minimal responding**

This means that the interviewer adopts a less active role and allows more time for the participants to talk (Stuart & Sundeen, 1983:122).
A key factor in qualitative research is the use of the researcher's personality. Empathy and Intuition are deliberately used and the skills in these areas are cultivated by researchers in the same way. The researcher in this study became closely involved in the experiences of the participants as a means of fully understanding it. The perceptions of the participants were openly accepted and no personal meanings were attached to them by the researcher.

Strategies employed to facilitate openness by the researcher included bracketing and Intuition.

Bracketing encompasses the ability of the researcher to put aside what is known about the phenomenon being studied in order to achieve an open context (Oiler, 1982 in Burns & Grove, 1993:567). Bracketing assists the researcher to see all the different aspects of the phenomena at play and the formation of new gestalts developing. The researcher deliberately rids herself of all preconceived Ideas, views and prejudices developed from her own world of experience and entered the world of the participants with an open mind.

Intuition on the other hand is the process of actually looking at the phenomenon by focusing all awareness and energy on the subject of interest in order to interpret it (Burns & Grove, 1993:566). In this research study the researcher exercised intuition through complete absorption and devoted concentration on the phenomenon under scrutiny as a means of developing an increase in insight and subsequently intuition.
2.5.1.1.2 Field Notes

After each interview field notes were made, not merely as summaries or events, but as detailed reproductions of what occurred (De Vos, 1998:285). Glatthorn (1998:173) describes field notes as a detailed description of what was observed. According to Wilson (1993:222) a qualitative researcher requires a system to use for remembering observations, retrieving and most importantly analyzing the observed data. The field notes were used to describe the underlying themes and to capture the dynamics of the situation during the interviews as a means of assisting the researcher recall all the aspects of the interview process. Field notes do not only relieve the researcher of the burden of remembering the events but provide a written record of the development of the observations and ideas which may be used in future publications of the research methods and findings (Wilson, 1993:222-223). In this research study field notes were used in the data analysis, in conjunction with the information collected from the in-depth phenomenological interviews.

Wilson (1989:434-435) divides field notes into four categories:

- **Observational notes**

De Vos (1998:285) states that observational notes give an account of what happened. The researcher described the events employing the techniques for listening and observing events as they occurred. These notes contained the: who, what, where, and how of the situation as described earlier and contained as little interpretation as possible. The researcher used these observational notes to great effect as they
contained the number allocated to the particular interview, the observations made during the interaction, the setting and the way in which the interview had been conducted with a basic interpretation attached.

- **Theoretical notes**

Wilson (1989:382) states that theoretical notes are purposeful attempts to derive meaning from the observational notes. In this research study, the researcher read through the observational notes as a means of deriving meaning and understanding of what transpired during the interview in order to develop an analytic scheme.

- **Methodological notes**

Cryer (1996:73) states that methodological notes are messages or instructions to oneself. Wilson (1993:222) reiterates that these notes are critiques of one’s tactics and reminders about methodological approaches that might be of great benefit to the researcher and thereby enhance the study. In this research study the researcher evaluated the process of conducting the interviews against the proposed research design and method.

- **Personal notes**

Personal notes are about one’s reactions, reflections and experiences (Wilson, 1993:223). The researcher in this research study made personal notes about her own reactions, reflections or experiences that

.68.
related directly to her frame of reference in order to gain insight on the topic. These included her doubts, anxieties and pleasures.

According to Hammersley and Atkinson (1983:165) field notes enables the researcher to reflect on the internal dialogue, to question what she already knows and how that knowledge was acquired, the degree of certainty of such knowledge and what further lines of enquiry are implied. According to Emmerson, Fretz & Shaw (cited in Atkinson et al. 2001:352) field notes therefore do not record facts, they do more than simply mirror or frame reality. They are essentially descriptive accounts and are thus shaped by the researcher’s own sense of active involvement within the field.

Once the notes were recorded, they were duly typed, paginated, labeled and filed to serve as a basis for analytic memoranda. During the process of analyzing the data, field notes can be instrumental in developing categories and relations to the interview (Wilson, 1993:223).

2.5.1.2 Data Analysis

Creswell (1994:153) explains that qualitative data analysis occurs concurrently with data collection, data interpretation and narrative report writing. It is imperative that the information collected be interpreted rather than social actions described. Every attempt must be made to ascertain the truth of the female educators’ experiences of aggression (Mouton, 1996:168). Data that is collected can be cumbersome and unstructured hence the process of data being divided into themes and categories (De Vos, 1998:48). Qualitative analysis
techniques make use of words rather than numbers as a basis of analysis.

The following four guidelines can be of assistance in the process of data analysis:

- Data is collected via field work.

- The unstructured data is interpreted and scaled down to certain patterns, themes and categories.

- The information collected is written in the narrative which will assist the reader’s understanding thereof. The interviews are referred to at intervals between each theme.

- The various categories that become apparent in the collection of data, are rewritten (Creswell, 1994:153 & 154).

In this study each interview was transcribed verbatim according to the descriptive analysis method suggested by Tesch (Creswell, 1994:155). Tesch provides the researcher with eight steps to consider during data analysis:

- Gain a sense of the overall picture. Read through all the transcripts carefully, making brief notes as they come to mind.

- Select one interview that is interesting. Whilst reading the chosen female educator’s experiences of aggression, reflect a
moment and try to establish its underlying meaning. Write down your thoughts in the margin.

- Make a list of all the topics. Group the similar topics together. Place these topics into columns and then identify the major topics, unique topics and the leftovers.

- Compare the list with the data. Topics will be abbreviated as codes next to the appropriate sections of the text. New categories may emerge during this stage.

- Find the most descriptive wording for the topics and turn them into categories. Group the topics that relate to each other. Draw lines between the categories to indicate inter-relationships.

- Make a final decision on the abbreviation for each category and alphabetize these codes.

- Assemble the data material belonging to each category in one place and perform a preliminary analysis.

- The transcribed data is then given to an independent coder who specializes in data analysis. The researcher will consult with the coder for consensus discussion.

Tesch's analysis method was employed in this study. The development and description of concepts and themes relevant to the psycho-educational programme was achieved through in-depth individual
interviews which facilitated the healthy management of female educators’ aggression within a secondary school context.

A clean set of data and the related protocol of data analysis were handed to two independent coders who were doctoral prepared and experienced in qualitative research with a request to analyse the transcribed data. A consensus discussion ensued between the independent coders and the researcher to compare their analyses.

### 2.5.1.3 Trustworthiness

For the purpose of this study, Guba’s model (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:289) was implemented to establish trustworthiness of qualitative research as a means of ensuring rigor in this study. Guba’s model is well developed and applicable hence its use by many social researchers. The researcher will ensure that the current study is trustworthy by being impartial and accurately reflecting the phenomena observed (Merriam, 1998:199).

Krefting (1991:215) describes Guba’s model as being based on the identification of four aspects of trustworthiness and defines the different strategies employed to increase the rigor of qualitative studies. In Table 2.1 the aspects are identified and the strategies used to increase rigor are tabulated:

.72.
Table 2.1: Identification of Aspects and Strategies of Trustworthiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of Trustworthiness</th>
<th>Strategies used to increase rigor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>truth value</td>
<td>credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>applicability</td>
<td>transferability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>consistency</td>
<td>dependability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neutrality</td>
<td>confirmability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Table 2.2 a more detailed description is included: **Strategy; Criteria** and the **Application** of the strategy used to ensure the trustworthiness of this study:

Table 2.2: Application of Strategies of Trustworthiness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Application</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>credibility</td>
<td>prolonged and varied field experience</td>
<td>long term interaction with the population to be studied; facilitator in Psycho-Education research study; field notes; pilot study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>reflexivity</td>
<td>field notes were kept</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>triangulation</td>
<td></td>
<td>data collection from female educators</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

.73.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In-depth individual interviews</td>
<td>Follow-up interviews were conducted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature control was completed</td>
<td>A combination of different communication skills used to assist participants in expressing their experiences and views about their aggression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member checking</td>
<td>Two independent coders were used to analyse the data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer examination</td>
<td>Two supervisors who are experts in the field of Psycho-Education and qualitative research methods were employed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| structural coherence | peer examination completed as a process of engaging with relevant peers  
|                      | the experiences of female educators at a secondary school was the focus  
|                      | the results obtained were consistently reflected in accordance with the principles and theory held for Psycho-Education  
|                      | the research process developed into a Psycho-Education Programme |

| transferability | purposively selected sample  
|                | a purposively sampling method was employed  
|                | in-depth discussion determined demographics of the realized sample  
|                | verbatim interviews from individual participants  
<p>| dense description of research results |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependability</td>
<td>Dense description of results</td>
<td>as discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>as discussed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Code-recode procedure</td>
<td>Mutual consensus on identified categories between researcher and independent coders reached</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmability</td>
<td>Confirmability audit</td>
<td>The entire study was reviewed by an independent panel of experts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Triangulation</td>
<td>Auditing was procedurally completed throughout the study and not only at the conclusion to the study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reflexivity</td>
<td>as discussed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.5.1.3.1 Truth Value

In qualitative research, truth value is obtained from the discovery of human experiences as they are lived and informed by the informants (Krefting, 1991:215). Truth value questions whether the researcher is confident about the truth of the findings established by the informants and the context in which the study is undertaken. In this study, truth value or credibility is obtained from female educators’ experiences of aggression in a secondary school. Truth value is subject-oriented which Lincoln and Guba (1985:301) identify as credibility. Lincoln and Guba (1985:215) further argue that internal validity, which is equivalent to credibility in quantitative research, is based on the assumption that a single tangible reality exists which is to be measured. If this assumption is to be replaced by the idea of multiple realities, the researcher’s task becomes one of representing those multiple realities revealed by the participants as adequately as possible.

A qualitative study is credible when it presents such accurate descriptions or interpretations of human experience that people who also share that same experience would immediately recognize the descriptions. Credibility is the strategy that is used to ensure truth value.

Six techniques are identified by Lincoln and Guba (1985:301) to ensure the credibility of findings as tabulated and discussed previously (see Table 2.2): prolonged and varied field experience; reflexivity; triangulation; member checking; peer examination and structural coherence.
2.5.1.3.2 Applicability

Applicability refers to the degree to which the findings can be applied to other contexts and settings on other participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:290). This allows for findings to be transferred to larger populations. Transferability refers to the ability to compare the findings to another similar study (Pillay, 1996:31). The criterion of transferability was used as a control measure to ensure applicability, thus ensuring the probability that the findings of this research study has meaning and quality in order to fit others in similar situations.

The ability to generalize is not relevant in qualitative research; the strength thereof lies in a qualitative method of conducting research in a natural setting with minimal controlling variables. The original author conducting the research should present sufficient descriptive data so as to allow comparison in addressing transferability adequately in a similar setting. Lincoln and Guba (1985:298) assert that if there is to be transferability the original investigator is less burdened with proof as opposed to the other individual seeking to apply elsewhere.

2.5.1.3.3 Consistency

De Vos (1998:350) states that data consistency ensures trustworthiness. This means that the findings of the study would be consistent if the inquiry was to be replicated with the same (or similar) participants in the same (or similar) context. This is a difficult requirement to achieve in qualitative work as subjectivity is a factor. Consistency is not possible without the application of dependability as a necessary strategy (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:316). Sandelowsky
(1994:28) equates this strategy with reliability in quantitative research. The criterion of dependability is thus used as a control measure to ensure consistency.

Dependability allows the researcher to emphasise the uniqueness in each participant as well as her experiences of aggression in the workplace. The instruments that were assessed for consistency in this qualitative research study included the researcher and the participants/ female educators who differed vastly in terms of world experience within the realms of the research study. Field and Morse (1985, cited in Krefting, 1991:216) states that the uniqueness of the human situation needs to be emphasized so that the variation of experience is sought rather than the identical repetition. Therefore variability is sought in qualitative research when applying the strategy of dependability in the application of consistency as an aspect of ensuring trustworthiness.

### 2.5.1.3.4 Neutrality

Neutrality is the freedom from bias in the research procedures and results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:300). Guba (1981, cited in Krefting, 1991:216) states that neutrality refers to the degree to which the findings are a function solely of the informants and conditions of the research and not of other biases, motivations and perspectives.

Researchers in qualitative studies attempt to increase the worth of their findings by decreasing the distance between the researcher and the participants via prolonged engagement or lengthy periods of observation so as to ensure a realistic interpretation of data and
thereby avoid bias. The strategy of confirmability was implemented as a control measure to ensure neutrality.

In qualitative research Lincoln and Guba (1985:300) further indicate that rather than looking at the researcher's neutrality, the emphasis needs to be shifted from the researcher to the data. Confirmability is suggested as the criterion of neutrality which is achieved when truth value and applicability are both established.

Neutrality was demonstrated by the researcher in this research study, among others, by clearly illustrating the evidence and thought processes which produced resultant conclusions (see Table 2.2). Neutrality was further established by the experts whose expert knowledge, skills and attitudes in the field of qualitative research evaluated the resultant programme. Confirmability as a strategy was applied to ensure neutrality.

2.5.1.4 Literature Control

A literature control contributes to the trustworthiness of a research study through confirmation of results obtained (Creswell, 1994:22). The results of the research study were discussed in light of the relevant theories and results of studies that were related to the subject of this particular study. New obtained insights or findings were compared and combined with literature to determine the current knowledge of the phenomena (Burns & Grove, 1997:711). Woods and Catanzaro (1998:136) reaffirm that by comparing the results of the study with existing theory attained from literature, the confidence of
the research study will be promoted. By including literature control in this study a logical argument was integrated to verify the results.

2.5.1.5 Ethical Considerations

In Chapter One ethical considerations were provided which outlined the ethical principles to which the study adhered in order to protect the participants from any kind of harm or risk (Holloway & Wheeler, 1996:39). As a researcher an ethical consciousness (Miles & Huberman, 1994:288) needs to be upheld characterised by a sense of professional responsibility (Fetterman, 1998:129). Participants needed to know that they were not to be exploited in any way by this study.

2.5.2 Phase Two: Programme Development

A conceptual framework was developed in Phase Two. Dickoff, James and Wiedenbach's (1986: 56) survey list was utilised. Six questions were addressed:

- Who is the agent?
- Who is the receiver?
- What is the procedure?
- What is the context?
- What are the dynamics?
- What is the objective?

The data collected from Phase One was used to develop the Psycho-Educational Programme for female educators in a secondary school who had experienced aggression. The significance of this research study was primarily developed to promote the mental health of female
educators by addressing their needs within a secondary school environment. Strategies were included in the programme to facilitate the healthy management of aggression as experienced by the female educators who needed to express their feelings in a constructive and positive manner as described in the problem statement (1.2).

In developing the programme, the educational needs and mental health of individuals, family and community within the context of the South African educational system were recognized, maintained, restored and addressed. The research study also created an opportunity for the participants in this study to verbalise their experiences of aggression within their workplace from which they benefited as the programme was later implemented.

According to Wadsworth (1997:57) many ‘who’ questions need to be asked in the development of a programme:

- Who is experiencing the problem?
- Who will benefit from the programme and for whom is the programme developed?
- Who will participate in such a programme?

Firstly, female educators who have had experiences of aggression in their workplace and have not had previous opportunities of voicing their sentiments volunteered to participate in the programme. Once female educators realized that they could not change the environment within which they found themselves but were able to change themselves by adopting a positive attitude; they were in a position to divert a former bleak future into a triumphant success.
Educational change for some educators can be a daunting experience and there is often resistance to change. Senge (cited in Horn, 2000:64), a system’s theorist advocates that the best way in which to deal with change is through a learning organization which is constantly involved in ‘study and practice’. A successful learning organization requires a commitment from each member of staff who is able to ‘work on themselves while they are working on the system’.

A shared vision, which requires each participant to actively participate in constructing a common goal whilst encompassing their own personal vision, is a palpable force of impressive power in people’s hearts rather than an idea embellishing a letterhead. This daunting process will facilitate the participant’s ability to work through a diversity of views, conflicting visions, polarization and discouragement which may derail many well-intentioned vision-building efforts. This shared vision building process will thus only become a living force when each individual truly believes she can shape her future.

The facilitator who is instrumental in the development of knowledge in the Psycho-Educational Programme, demonstrated how qualitative research can be both practical and valuable in educational research. Challenges that formerly faced the female educators were clarified and demystified many speculative ‘truths’. Strategies specifically designed around the specific needs of female educators were developed and this research study informed and created awareness amongst the echelons of educational institutions, schools which are the microcosms of the larger community and global stakeholders the reasons as to why female educators do experience aggression.
Information in Phase Two was obtained through:

- A situation analysis, which perpetuated data collection: phenomenological in-depth interviews, observations and field notes.
- Data analysis determined which themes needed to be considered in developing a programme addressing the needs of the female educators.
- The findings of the research study were discussed in the light of relevant theories and previous research studies that were related to the subject of this study.

The findings were assimilated and defined according to categories and themes which determined the presentation of a programme:

- Challenges as experienced by female educators were probed and possible solutions were exhorted.
- An in-depth process was developed which encouraged female educators to implement those strategies which they felt may have benefited them most positively within their environment.
- Finally, a Psycho-Educational Programme was to be implemented in the school.

2.5.3 Phase Three: Programme Implementation

Wadsworth (1997:31) maintains that there are three important tenets that need to be considered when implementing a programme:

The programme needs to be:
• effective and relevant
• systematic and meaningful and
• trustworthy

Subsequently the following questions are formulated:
• Who will be implementing the programme?
• How will the programme be implemented?
• When will the programme be implemented?
• Where will the programme be implemented?

The evaluation of the programme will thereupon be discussed.

2.5.4 Phase Four: Programme Evaluation

Evaluation as a constituent part of the research cycle helps to determine or establish what people think and feel, the reasons why they think the way they do and what their preferences are (Wadsworth, 1997:10 & 11). Evaluation is able to determine which aspects of the programme prove to be effective and which aspects need to be improved upon.

2.5.4.1 Design: Planning to Evaluate

The evaluation of the Psycho-Educational Programme which serves as a framework of reference to facilitate the mental health of secondary school female educators is imperative. The following questions need to be addressed: what is to be evaluated; for what purpose and by whom. The programme has been developed to provide female educators with the necessary strategies as a means of addressing their
feelings of aggression in a constructive, positive and mutually conducive manner.

Evaluation does not serve as a ‘measure of control’ in establishing the effectiveness of the programme but rather as an effective measure in determining whether the female educators who, through the programme have discovered their unique abilities/strategies in successfully expressing their feelings of aggression in an appropriate and positive manner. The female educators need to complete a self-evaluation with respect to their own experience of aggression as previously held.

The evaluation was completed by the researcher who was instrumental in the implementation of the programme. The evaluator, with regard to the study undertaken; is an active member of the specific community and thereby was able to enter the ‘world of experience’ of the female educators and derive meaning from the experience of aggression as described by the female educators. However, it must be stressed that the evaluator needs to uphold an objective viewpoint whilst entering the domain of the subjects.

The evaluator furthermore, needs to exercise expertise and aplomb when offering or proposing adjustments that need to perpetuate within the educational institution, as this affects the entire community within the organization. She needs to be competent and fully conversant within the realm of the educational sphere relating to the implementation of the programme under discussion and the subsequent educational knowledge, skills and attitude that are
proponents thereof to be effective in her recommendations which follow.

During the process of evaluation, communication is of vital importance. The evaluator needs to communicate and engage with the participants via oral, written and structured records for the evaluation process to be effective. At the conclusion of each presentation an evaluation form (refer to Annexure G) is completed and a one-on-one discussion ensues.

2.5.4.2 Fieldwork, Data Collection and Data Analysis

Data collection (refer: 2.5.1.1) and data analysis (refer: 2.5.1.2) are both important proponents of qualitative research (refer: 2.3.1) as previously discussed in this chapter.

During the evaluation process, data is collected via evaluation forms and followed by personal discussions. The purpose of a follow-up discussion forum is to ascertain which new strategies proved to be effective; or perhaps other new ideas or ways of addressing experiences of aggression proved to be better for the individuals to make positive inroads into a once well-trodden path. The reasons for individual choice as to the adopting or adapting to new coping strategies will be discussed in depth. Old moulds of thinking may be challenged and broken and newfound paths may be a source of inspiration to others in dealing with future experiences of aggression.

Data is thus collected and the possible newfound/improved strategies are assimilated using Tesch’s Method. Each participant’s Input is thus
included and effectively implemented in the revised programme (Giorgi, 1985:12 – 18).

2.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter dealt in detail with the research methods to be followed when conducting this research. The researcher was of the opinion that the following chapters of this study were well guided by the discussions in this chapter.

The next chapter will include the results of the findings and a detailed discussion thereof.
3.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the research design and method were discussed. This chapter deals with the research results obtained from the findings as described in Phase One of the Situation Analysis. The process involved data collection and the presentation of eight phenomenological interviews conducted with female educators who each described their experiences of aggression at their secondary school. The discussions evolved around the associated emotions; the resultant measures of support and the coping strategies the female educators sought as a current means of addressing their mental health status as educators and community stakeholders.

A literature control has been integrated as a mechanism to demonstrate the applicability and implications of the findings as a further measure of trustworthiness, according to Woods and Catanzaro (1998:136). An example of an interview is found in Annexure F.

Informed consent was obtained from the Managing Director; the Headmaster; as well as individual female educators who are employed
by the educational institution. Examples of consent letters are found in Annexure A, B and C.

The background or context of the individual phenomenological interviews was as follows:

3.2 SAMPLE REALISATION

The sample of this study comprised of eight female educators who participated voluntarily in the individual phenomenological interviews. All eight educators were employed in the same secondary school and were aged between approximately twenty-five and sixty-five years of age which subsequently reflected a varied number of years of teaching experience shared among educators which ranged from four to thirty-five years. The learning areas in which they had specialized reflected a diverse range too viz. Mathematics; Biology; English; History; Art and Design; Technology and Life Orientation. The sample of female educators' marital status indicated that four members were married, two were divorced and three were single.

One-on-one semi-structured in-depth phenomenological interviews were conducted with most of the educators electing to be interviewed at school in their classrooms lasting on average thirty minutes or until the data was saturated. One educator requested to be interviewed in the privacy of her home. All female educators communicated proficiently in English punctuated at intervals with colloquialisms. Data was saturated by the eighth participant as evidenced by the repetition of themes.
Marital status was sought as a means to clarify family dynamics in terms of establishing the delicate balance between the demands at work with those at home. The learning areas in which the educators were actively engaged were spontaneously ‘spilled over’ during the interviews and added an interesting diverse range across the curriculum. The number of years of experience needed to be established as the original staff members, who were founder members of the campus entered into a contract agreement with the original employers and this contractual agreement was found to be an avidly discussed topic during the interviews. Some of the female educators grappled with the word ‘aggression’. They found the term was a harsh one or that it implied a negative connotation as previously experienced in their life world. Some requested to use the term ‘frustration’ instead or asked the researcher to define the term more specifically before electing to enter discussion. Hence, the interplay between these two terms were employed to accommodate the needs of the individual female educators’ specific preferences.

The audio-taped material was subsequently transcribed verbatim. Two independent coders were approached to assist with the co-coding of the data collected to establish themes, categories and sub-categories.

3.3 DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The experience of aggression as described by female educators who participated in this study will be discussed according to the enumerated themes and categories (refer Table 3.1). Excerpts and quotations from the phenomenological interviews highlight the discussion. Field notes supplemented the interviews and were duly
recorded during the interviews. These were employed to validate the data and were also integrated into the identified categories and themes. The discussion of the results of this research integrated relevant and similar literature studies which determined corresponding and unique factors of this study.

The coding process proved to be a timeous one as the researcher had to consult and reach consensus with the two independent coders before the results of this study could be finally established. Tesch's coding procedure for the analysis of qualitative data was employed (Creswell, 1994:154-156).

Following the consensus meeting with the independent coders, the results from the experiences of the female educators revealed four major themes outlined as follows:

- Theme 1: Experiences of aggression and/or frustration
- Theme 2: Associated emotions during experiences of aggression
- Theme 3: Measures of support during experiences of aggression
- Theme 4: Coping strategies employed by female educators

The experiences of aggression as described by female educators who participated in this study will also be presented (see Table 3.1) according to enumerated themes and categories.
Table 3.1 Female Educators’ Experience of their Aggression within a Secondary School context

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THEMES</th>
<th>CATEGORIES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>THEME A</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EXPERIENCES OF</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGGRESSION AND/OR</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FRUSTRATION</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CATEGORY 1</strong></td>
<td><em>Negative effects on mental health: poor interpersonal relations</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Head Office: business oriented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Management Style: incongruent with current trends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Staff: incompetencies and lack of solidarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Learners: individual challenges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack of vision: organizational change stifled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CATEGORY 2</strong></td>
<td><em>Lack of communication between stakeholders</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Management: inadequate consultancy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Appraisal Process: lack of transparency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Remuneration: long term prospects poor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CATEGORY 3</strong></td>
<td><em>Imbalance of priorities</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Balance: family and career</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Time: insufficient</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Theme B

**Category 1**

**Associated Emotions During Experiences of Aggression**

Female educators express emotions of anger, fear, sadness and happiness

- **Anger**: hurt, disrespect, undermined, rejection, resentment, frustration, tension, stress, bitterness, discrimination, exclusion, hostility, antagonism
- **Fear**: fearful, bullied, inadequate, confused, disloyal, ambivalent, competitive, insecurity
- **Sadness**: disheartened, despair, unhappiness, 'whimphish', tearful, demoralized, upset, devastation, inadequate, trust broken, loss of compassion
- **Happiness**: happy, passionate, positive, loyal, emotionally supported, relaxed

### Theme C

**Category 1**

**Measures of Support During Experiences of Aggression**

Interpersonal support

- **Management**: Emotional: Headmaster, Deputy-Heads
- **Parents**: learners’ progress
- **Self-support**: assertive behaviour, cope on your own
- **Support to others**: upliftment, empowerment
- **Family**: husband
- **Department of Education**: acknowledgement of skills

---

.94.
### CATEGORY 2

**School support**

- **Resources:** Head Office
- **Workshops:** outside school
- **Innovations:** outside school

### CATEGORY 1

**Coping strategies employed to facilitate the self-management of aggression**

- Communication
- Work experience
- Personal development
- Sense of humour
- Passivity
- Time management

---

### Theme D

**Coping strategies employed by female educators**

#### 3.3.1 Theme A: Experience of Aggression and/or Frustration

This theme emerged as a result of poor interpersonal relations between the stakeholders at play in the secondary school context in which the female educators experienced aggression and/or frustration. Interpersonal relations claim that human beings are inherently social beings and that most of our activities involve interaction with other individuals. The ability to communicate is essential in our daily existence which is clearly evident in this particular context. However,
communication requires clear transmission and operates at different levels which display complex interpersonal dynamics (Grieve & van Deventer, 2005:139). The quality of relationships, choice of management style and clarity of vision are all conceived, affirmed, conducted and at times broken via communication. The resultant lack of communication which emanated from the theme impacted negatively on the mental health of the female educators. According to Baron and Richardson (1997:7) aggression is a form of behaviour and not an emotion, attitude or motive and is intentional as expressed by the female participants in the research study.

Category 1: Negative effects on mental health: Poor Interpersonal relations

A number of negative effects as a result of poor interpersonal relations manifested viz. Head Office; Management Styles; Staff; Learners and Lack of Vision. Each will be discussed with quotations taken from the interviews.

- **Head Office: business oriented**

The secondary school under question is one of a group of twenty-two independent schools which is managed by a central Head Office. Some female educators, although admitting to perhaps living in a protected environment in the teaching world, strongly believed that Head Office is business oriented, insensitive to their personal needs and does not take cognizance as to how schools in general operate. One participant remarked:
'A school set up is very different and I don't think that they truly understand how things work.'

Aggressive interchanges do not occur in a ‘social vacuum’ but stem from a social environment that instigate its occurrence and directly influence its form and direction (Baron & Richardson, 1997:241). The apparent discourse between Head Office and the female educators hints at incongruent displays of behaviour which is further locked together by intricate social, gender and educational changes in complex and often unpredictable ways (Arnot, 2002:256).

Many female educators described Head Office as having demonstrated insensitive behaviour when changes in their employment contract were negotiated. They believed that Head Office’s approach in dealing with the financial and service conditions were business oriented and of no benefit to them personally and had, in fact, impacted negatively on them. In this regard one female educator expressly aired her thoughts:

'I couldn’t believe that people could treat other people in what I thought was such a despicable manner...there was no room for discussion...but because we’re so terrified of losing our jobs, we accepted the new contract.' Another participant retorted: 'It got to a point where they had tried every tactic and where you were lead to believe initially that it was a matter of choice...it’s not overt aggression, it’s a sort of subterfuge almost that you become aware of.'

While females hold an expressive view of aggression verbalising their feelings of anger, disappointment and disillusion with the ethics upheld
by Head Office, males regard aggression as a means to attain various social and material rewards (Campbell, Muncer & Gorman, 1993:19).

References made about Head Office were generalized, no specific names of individual members were divulged, Head Office was referred to as one unit that functioned as one and appeared to be a force with which to reckon as exemplified by another participant who added:

'I was just whimpish. I didn't want conflict.'

A further description was noted:

'It's a totally chauvinistic organization...the whole of Head Office is dominated by males. They use 1980's management style, there is no democratization whatsoever...there's no concern with gender equity and gender dignity.'

The poor interpersonal relationship between the female educators and Head Office was further clarified by another participant who remarked:

'When I went there it was sort of like we were bullied when we had that meeting...I don't trust them anymore. We need to sign the contract because they need to make a profit and it's to the company's advantage.'

The female educators experienced feelings of aggression and/or frustration as they perceived the behaviour demonstrated by Head Office as uncaring; unsympathetic; insensitive and untrustworthy which subsequently affected their mental health negatively. Giddens

.98.
(2001:112) verifies the perception that the school is part of a male dominant culture by stating that whilst roles of men and women do vary across cultures, men's roles are generally more highly valued and rewarded than women's at this particular institution. Men are the more dominant gender present at Head Office; their financial and human resources acumen are acknowledged and recognized to the detriment of females as expressed by female educators.

- **Management Style:** Incongruent with current trends

The management style of both Head Office and the Executive Team at the school under discussion was described by the female educators as outdated. The Executive Team is comprised of a Headmaster whose role is supported by three deputies: two deputy males, one of whom has been newly elected since my data collection and one female who occupies the senior deputy position. The headmaster (personal communication, 20 October 2005) stated that his choice in deputies rested on their competence and those who shared a pleasant, conducive building of relationships and emphatically not on male/female preference. Safilios-Rothschild (1974:48) concurs that one set of strategies has to be directed toward the use of already trained women in jobs that best utilise their skills, talents and experience. Three members of the executive team share a common history: emanating from a government to an independent educational institution. The headmaster stressed that mutual respect between members of his team is vital in leading the school as a whole. When people respect someone as a person, they admire him. When they respect him as a friend, they love him. When they respect him as a leader, they follow him (Maxwell, 1996:70).
However, incongruent interpersonal relations between some stakeholders in the workplace were evident as described by one female educator:

'\textit{I actually think there’s a bit of a hidden agenda there and then pressures are brought to bear that don’t encourage growth, participation and a co-operative sort of atmosphere, some of the tactics are...um...sometimes overtly authoritarian and...um...at other times they are terribly subtle. That’s the kind of aggression that comes to my mind.}'

Another female educator experienced her personal relationship with the Executive Team as positive although an underlying negative dynamic appeared to be evident as stated:

'I have a great amount of respect for all the members of the executive team. I find that if I go and speak to them about something then it’s generally sorted out. Other members of staff...perhaps I have definitely sensed some kind of...you know there’s definitely a hostile dynamic going on. But as I said, generally it is sorted out. Between members of management itself...never, never.'

The Executive Team as described by the participant appeared to be approachable and objective towards some members of staff on the one hand and conversely on the flip side on the coin. Senge (1990: 268) purports that without a shared language for dealing with complexity, team learning is limited. This sentiment was verified by another participant who added:
'The hierarchy is really quite set, and where... um... certain people are favoured and certain are not...'

Templar (2003: 194) advocates that every boss has a favourite even though s/he shouldn't. Since we are all human it is quite natural. He encourages employees when faced with obvious favouritism in the workplace, to become the favourite by grooming one's skill, presence, charisma, talent, expertise, experience, likeability, charm and personal affability. The incongruence with the management style was further expounded:

'I'm experiencing that the management style is becoming increasingly conservative and I just feel that in many areas we are being left behind and I'm faced with the question of do I move on because of my frustration with the management system.'

Senge (1990: 349) further advocates that embracing change does not mean abandoning a core of values and precepts, but rather balance the desire for continuity with the desire to be creative. Another participant echoed her sentiment highlighting the disparity in management style:

'I was yelled at and shouted at by the person concerned in front of the headmaster who did not intervene and I was told that this person was tired of me creating waves and reporting on performance to management and this would not be tolerated and so management didn't support me at all about my concerns. It's just allowed to happen, because it's part of a management power strategy.'
The female educator was however given recognition and acknowledgement for her skill capacity in her particular learning area by other educationalists who exist outside of school. She has been invited to deliver papers at conferences, has written a book and continues to empower educators on her campus. She further added that the outmoded management style of the Executive Team and lack of support, 'is an undermining process and creates terrible tension and is a total breakdown of my esteem as an educator. It's really bad.'

Senge (1990: 67) adds that individuals often blame outside circumstances for their problems, when in fact the individual and the cause of her/his problems are part of a single system. He advises the cure often lies in the relationship with one's 'enemy'. A further imbalance and discrepancy in the management styles of Head Office and the Executive Team appears to exist as described by another female participant:

'Where I work, I am very supported, I haven't had any aggression. However, with Head Office - they are not prepared to listen and their manner and tone is very aggressive and you back off. If you question them on a point, they verbally attack you. I have to be honest, for me, when you mention Head Office, it's like a swear word in my life.'

This view is supported by another educator who believed that:

'A lack of systems in this type of environment is one of my biggest concerns. A lot of my frustrations have come because I haven't had somebody to go and say, "Is this okay?" More systems of knowing
exactly where, what and how instead of self-discovery would have helped me at stages.’

Buchanan and Huczynski (2004: 93) confirm that work in groups is more likely to provide meaningful work, develop responsibility and satisfy human needs than work that is allocated to separately supervised individuals. Staff morale too needs to be boosted. Greenberg and Baron (1997:177) verify that morale is the extent to which an individual’s needs are satisfied and the extent to which an individual perceives that satisfaction as stemming from the total job. Another participant who described herself as a dedicated, passionate and compassionate educator described further incidents of insensitive behaviour by management:

‘They took a whole group of the Grade Elevens out and gave them to another teacher to teach and that really killed me, I cried about that, I really did. I wasn’t part of the discussion...the split occurred at the last minute, literally on the day school started. So I was very bitter.’

However, she described her relationship with management as being good and renegaded by adding:

‘You know there’s one particular person that’s got particular ... I just feel disloyal discussing ...’

It was clear from her final statement that despite her disillusionment with the management style of the Executive Team in dealing with her personal timetable, she still remained loyal to the team. Covey (1997: 56) adds that to be loyal one has to be self-aware; to have a sense of
conscience, a moral sense of right and wrong and to have the intestinal fortitude to make it happen. The participant clearly stood by management and demonstrated her moral strength clearly by her choice of action.

- **Staff:** Incompetencies and lack of solidarity

The staff complement at the school constitutes forty-four educators excluding the Executive Team of which some are part-time staff who arrive at school only to fulfill their academic duties. The members of staff interviewed during this research study clearly held that incompetencies in work performance did exist and although the staff was described by many participants as caring and considerate, a lack of solidarity and subtle tension at times was evident in the workplace. It became clear that a rift or division existed amongst some staff members in some instances. The following quotes bear testimony:

'I have a major thing with part-time staff...they're extremely frustrating because they're not always there when you need them.'

One female educator described the staffroom situation as:

'A little tense now and again and there can be aggressive behaviour in terms of tone of voice or a bit of body language, the rolling of eyes...it's when people are outspoken or about what they feel about something that aggression actually manifests itself and there's a difference of opinion.' She continued: 'I think in a lot of cases there is more teacher aggression than student aggression.' Another female educator uttered: 'We have a wonderful staff, I'm very happy, but I
just wish there was more creativity.' Yet further along in the interview she added: 'Staff members don't stand together...each person is there for himself.'

Ambivalent feelings were further expressed by another participant:

'You also get a divide between the smokers and non-smokers, but there is also some of the staff...who...um...socialize together and have their own sort of clique and that is quite noticeable.'

The division in staff during breaks was further mentioned by a participant who quietly observed the groupings of staff members.

'There's a definite grouping of people...actually quite a big divide.'

This sentiment is supported by another participant who relayed:

'Frustrations with staff is...not coming to the party. Once there's a set of rules and then often somebody breaks the rules because they are far too grand or far too important or far too whatever or far too busy to keep to the rules that have been set. I find that frustrating.'

Hechter (1987: 59) verifies that the group solidarity theory suggests that the survival of any group hinges on members' routine and consistent compliance with the rules and obligations governing the production of joint goods. Some female educators as described above chose not to comply even though their noncompliance resulted in a loss of access for the good of all. Dale (1993:116) further adds that interpersonal relationships between team members and their
managers are critical to the creation of a developmental climate. A developmental climate, Lane (1991:121) explains as the one where educators are regarded as professionals and certain responsibilities for their supervision and evaluation shifts from the headmaster to the educators themselves.

Frustration which contributed to the lack of solidarity was furthermore expressed:

'When you have to get the marks in and it's pressure and we're running and some people are running behind, the frustration becomes aggression...not that I think it's a physical aggression, you can actually vent off.'

A female educator who masked her true sentiments with humorous quirks stated:

'I have a problem with competent, incompetent. If a person elects to do something and then does not do what they have elected to do properly, then I get all huffy and puffy.' Competency as described by Covey (1997: 334) states that competency can be an unconscious or conscious action. At times an individual can be unconsciously incompetent demonstrating complete ineffectiveness and not being aware of this or conversely, be consciously incompetent by demonstrating an awareness of being ineffective but doesn’t have the internal desire or discipline to create needed change. She further elaborated that a divide did indeed exist and expressed: 'To know that you're part of this exclusive little ivory tower is nice. The Headmaster
gets a lot of mileage out of our achievements and he uses it quite a bit to promote the school, the whole thing he does.'

The secondary school, in which the female educators teach, prides itself on headhunting top professional educators throughout the country. Choosing the right candidate for a job is a critical decision. Making incorrect decisions can lead to frustrated employees and poor performance (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004:166). A participant, clearly frustrated by some selected candidates claimed otherwise:

'The professional standards and practices that we are meant to embrace are not always evident; that, in fact...um...it comes right back down to basic...gossip and stuff like women are stereotyped as being guilty of.'

The frustration of working with incompetent colleagues, which in this case, is consciously being exposed by two other participants:

'When I expressed that this person didn't have the necessary training and hadn't gone through the new processes of training I was questioned, "Are you doubting the person's competency?" It is an emotional issue for me and also tells me that at management level, value is not attached to professional competencies.'

'There is the notion that if I take a tour, take this individual with because he is male. I then express that I am quite okay with a hundred kids, I don't need male presence. So there is decidedly a sentiment that male competency is very important.'
• Learners: Individual challenges

The female educators described the academic performance, attitude and behaviour of their learners as the least frustrating aspect in describing their experience of aggression in their school environment. Meyer, Moore and Viljoen (2003:486) state that the educational relationship between educator and learner should be recognised as constructors of reality. The education process would imply dialogical conversation between the educator and the learner and that a consensus would have to be reached through the co-evolution of ideas. Varied insights allude to this ideal relationship in the ensuing shared experiences of female educators. One female educator found dialogue to be minimal as evidenced in her comment:

'I think there are very few frustrations in my actual classroom. Children are passive learners as opposed to being very active in days gone by. I think because they are used to watching TV.'

Of all the mass media, television is the most intimate medium. Television's influence is potent and pervasive because people spend hours watching it – more than half of the South African population spends some time in front of the television every day (Cutlip et al. cited in Barker and Angelopulo, 2006: 213). Although Comstock and Scharrer (1999: 199) profess that a link between televised acts of violence and adolescents' subsequent behaviour does exist for some people and particularly in the United States, the female educator tends to believe that in her experience with adolescents, television has had quite the opposite effect.
The participants in the secondary school context described some of their learners as being far less active or overtly aggressive than those in a preparatory school context. This was verified by another participant who commented:

'I've never witnessed physical aggression between learners...but I do think there is a lot of underlying aggression and that it manifests itself normally in, if I can use the word, 'bitchy' behaviour and also quiet, passive behaviour in terms of sulking or holding a grudge or ignoring somebody...amongst the girls especially. It's nothing in terms of them not doing their homework.'

Karen Horney (cited in Grobler, Schenck & Du Tolt, 2006: 135) distinguished between overt and covert interactions in patterns of behaviour between individuals. Overt behaviour refers to people's visible behaviour, whilst covert behaviour refers to expressions of people's characters which are identified in patterns: moving towards people; moving against people or moving away from people. Girls in particular, as illustrated above appear to employ covert patterns of behaviour in harbouring underlying aggression. Underwood (2003: 45) supports this claim by stating that when girls feel angry or resentful, they hurt one another sometimes by fighting physically, but more often by verbal insults, friendship manipulation or nonverbal expressions of disgust or disdain. Once again, this sentiment was attested to by a third interviewee:

'I've never had any kid in my class get physically aggressive. If it's between peers I usually send both out. They go to separate parts of
The educators agreed that they personally do not experience aggression as a result of their interpersonal relationships with their learners but that it appears to have emanated more so from the relations between the learners themselves. However, another participant differed in her experience of frustration within her classroom situation as described:

'When I know a kid can draw like that and it doesn’t happen. But boy, does it... make it up when a kid does draw like that picture. It’s very rewarding and then the frustration levels sort of die down a quiet death.'

One learner who behaved in a manner which he believed would help him to be accepted by his peer group was described by his female educator:

'He gets so feisty that he literally wants to attack the child physically and when the incidents have been reported to us it seems that it’s been both sides, he was provoked.'

The learners appear to be individually challenged as described in each set of circumstances. The educators themselves are not directly challenged by the learners thus their levels of frustration and aggression appear to be negligible in their independent secondary school. However, Maseko (1994:13) illustrates a different scenario in state schools. He maintains that one of the serious problems facing
South African Education is the high level of demoralisation among the educators and learners, and consequently, the collapse of the culture of teaching and learning.

The world is constantly changing at an increasing rate and the current trends subsequently challenge each one of us to keep abreast of the imminent changes with which one is faced on a daily basis. One needs to learn how to survive and thrive in a constantly shifting environment, where rules are made, changed and broken on an ongoing basis (Your Child Magazine, 2006: 15). One female educator expressed her view quite frankly in this regard:

'I haven't got quite that compassion for kids that I used to have and I've sort of put it down to the fact that I'm obviously older and maybe less patient...' She further added that learners too have changed as elucidated: 'I've got one pupil who causes a lot of frustration. He has no Maths skills and puts no effort into his work. He does no homework and actually said that he doesn't need it for varsity, it doesn't matter. I can't let this get to me as I would get too upset because he's a very aggressive boy.'

Some individual learners posed individual challenges for the female educators, which they, in many instances chose not to address as a means of protecting their own mental health.

- **Lack of Vision:** organisational change stifled

Barker and Gaut (1996:200) define organisations as collected groups of people that are constructed to achieve specific goals that could not
be met by individuals acting alone. One female educator realised that she acted alone on many occasions when sourcing learning material for her specific learning area. She expressed her viewpoint succinctly:

'You know, it's pointless having an argument, because the person is not necessarily going to change...um...if you want anything that is new and original, you have to do it for yourself or go outside school ...say...I find that frustrating.' She further added: 'We have a wonderful staff, I'm very happy, but I just wish there was more creativity. Maybe it doesn't come to everybody.'

Ambivalent messages have been communicated by the female educator; whilst having integrated very well socially with her colleagues, she finds that in their behaviour there is unwillingness or perhaps an inadequacy to be innovative and contribute towards novel and new ideas within the discipline. She purports to have to seek personal and professional growth from elsewhere as verbalized:

'I've joined a Maths Interest Group with a whole group of other schools and we develop worksheets. You see, we do nothing like that here...there's no new staff being developed.'

Kreps (1990: 37) echoes her sentiment by stating that there is a need for organizations to obtain information, to adapt to changes in environmental conditions.

Further frustration as experienced by another participant is captured:
'So much has changed in the world, in the country and in our community and I feel that the vision of the organisation is not changing. I feel that it is becoming increasingly conservative and I just feel that in areas we are being left behind and I'm faced with the question of do I move on because of my frustration with the management system or do I stay here and continue to make a difference in my classroom and impact learners which I feel I am doing.'

Daniels and Spiker (1997: 35) support the participant's viewpoint by stating that in view of the changing nature of organisations in South Africa, the study of organisational communication has become particularly important in recent years and organisations need to keep abreast of these changes in order to survive.

Another participant clarified her frustration with the current lack of development in the training needs of staff:

'The organisation with specific reference to this campus, has not embraced the new teaching methodology so they have not concerned themselves with sending all the educators through to receive formal training in methodology for the FET (Further Education Training) and they pay lip service to the process of training but in fact many of the educators in the classroom have not undergone the training process and it's almost as though there isn't serious intention given to this process of transformation and I almost feel it is a professional arrogance that, as we are an advantaged institution that It's just going to come together.'
According to Senge (1990: 3) an organisation needs to be a place of learning where people can continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free and where people are continually learning how to learn together. The apparent lack of 'learning together' is experienced as further frustration by a participant who believes that the lack of delivery is responsible for the lack of vision and future growth within the organisation or school as such:

'I think a lot of frustration is experienced because the Department of Education is not giving us any guidelines and FET (Further Education Training) is still...there hasn't been much training on FET so we all...I've trained OBE (Outcomes-Based Education) so I have a better idea of what's going on but I don't actually know, besides the learning outcomes and assessment standards, we don't know what standard to set the work at, whereas now we've had four years of OBE to work around it and get it to a point where we are all happy.'

In terms of Outcomes-Based Education, an educator is a teacher who fulfils the role of facilitator or even mediator (Mothatha, 2000:64). It is someone who assists and guides in taking the knowledge and learning forward, without being directly involved in the learning process. Another participant who received training in Outcomes-Based Education concurred with the female educator's feelings of frustration by adding:

'This leads to aggression. I think the lack of systems in this type of environment is one of our biggest concerns or one of my biggest
concerns as a teacher. I think the biggest thing that could have helped me at stages was more systems of knowing exactly where, what and how instead of self-discovery.’

As a result of a lack of clear and consistent channeled information and direction, overwhelming confusion appears to have contributed to the frustration and experience of aggression by some female educators within the said organisation. These experiences accede to the fact that in order for organisations to keep abreast with imminent changes they need to be held together by communication and depend essentially on receiving, processing and transmitting information in order to achieve their goals (Steinberg, 2005; 154). To this effect the resultant poor interpersonal relations within the organisation impacted negatively on the mental health of the educators leaving them with feelings of frustration and aggression.

Category 2: Lack of communication between stakeholders

An open communication climate promotes the collaborative working together of stakeholders in which ideas and information are exchanged (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2004: 206). The female educators however, described a closed communication climate wherein an atmosphere of recrimination, secrecy and distrust prevailed among management and educators regarding inadequate consultancy; the appraisal process and remuneration.

• Management: inadequate consultancy

‘You can’t turn the radar on only when you want something
to appear in your range, nor can you maintain a relationship by acknowledging its existence only when it is convenient for you. You need to be present, in some sense, all the time.’

~ Downes and Mui ~

This quotation cited in Barker and Angelopulo (2006: 331) largely sums up the experiences expressed by some of the participants in the research study. Steinberg (2005: 152) describes communication as the life-blood of an organisation as it provides a basis for understanding virtually every human process that takes place. Communication between stakeholders is essential in sharing a common purpose within an organisation as verified by Barker and Gaut (1996:200) who state that people are grouped together within an organisation to achieve specific goals together that could not be met by individuals acting alone.

One participant shared her feelings of frustration by stating:

'I think many places suffer from a communication problem and that you’ll say, "But when were we told this?" or "Were we given a memo?" I’m very good at filing or sticking things into a diary. I find communication a great frustration...a lack of communication. Management does address this but not often to the extent that I would like them to, but I do realize that they have other things that they have to cope with.’

Insufficient communication between stakeholders was voiced by another female educator:
'The introduction of the new classroom navigator system, I have not bought into...I argued that there was not adequate consultation and I also argued that it undermines my teaching philosophy-I don't operate on fear.'

In trying to create compulsory internal personal growth training programmes; some organisations can get into considerable difficulty if they become too aggressive in promoting personal mastery for its members (Senge, 1990: 172). Senge advocates that this modus operandi is a sure way to impede the genuine spread of commitment to personal mastery in an organisation. Organisations need to build a safe place for people to create visions, where inquiry and commitment to the truth are the norm and where challenging the status quo is to be expected. This ideal organisational climate will strengthen personal mastery since personal growth is valued and ‘on the job’ training will be provided as it is vital to the continual, ongoing process.

Inconsistencies in communication between stakeholders appear to exist within this context as the participants revealed that staff meetings deem to be the forum to address contentious issues. Instead of venting frustrations as and when the need arises, many stakeholders wait for the meeting as expressed by another participant:

‘Generally I think in staff meetings...it’s when people are generally outspoken or about what they feel about something that actually... that aggression actually manifests itself and there’s a difference of opinion.’

A further breach in communication is explicitly expressed by a female educator who was instrumental in developing a new approach to a
weekly school gathering. However, the autonomous body’s vision in harnessing this innovative programme’s thematic approach was not fully supported by some members of staff:

'Now when the criticisms came through I was not called in, to consult with me that there was a feeling that this was not the required tone but then was admonished for pulling out albeit that there was no consultation as to why some members of staff were unhappy with the serious tone.'

Senge (1990: 173) reiterates that there is nothing more important to an individual committed to his/her own growth than a supportive environment.

- **Appraisal Process:** lack of transparency

The group of schools made a decision to implement a uniform *Staff Developmental Appraisal System* in 2003 which is intended to benefit both the individual and the organisation by leading to the affirmation that performance development expectations are being met, and areas of development are being identified.

The group of schools recognizes the need to evaluate the quality of performance continuously at all levels and in all departments (Academic, Administrative and Support) relative to agreed standards, and to the group’s Vision, Mission Statement and Statement of Purpose as expressed in the Policy Documentation (Appraisal Document, 2003). 

118.
Creating a working environment that is open, honest and responsive to all employees, is crucial to the establishment of healthy communication channels among employees. The appraisal process may be described as one of many ‘punctuated pauses’ during which time the individual staff member and a member of the executive team arrange to meet to discuss the employee’s work performance to date. Although this developmental process is formalized annually, staff members are encouraged to discuss any aspects on a needs basis and not to regard the annual appraisal meeting as the sole platform to voice areas of concern in an open and transparent manner. The aim of the appraisal system is to affirm and improve the quality of performance achieved by each school and all of its members, by providing continuous support and development opportunities that will enable them to reach their personal and professional goals, and ultimately the enhancement of the organisation as a whole.

The appraisal meeting was viewed by one female educator as a negative experience:

‘The one thing that I think is the worst ordeal, for me, and for many others who have shared the same sentiment is that staff assessment thing at the end of the year because then all the little things get thrown back in your face, you know. Any little weakness, any little oversight or thing like that gets brought up again and now you must please explain and the way that those interviews are conducted are like an interrogation. I actually regard that as corporate aggressive behaviour.’

Another participant initially expressed feelings of hopelessness:
‘But then things start coming out of the wood...especially at the beginning of the year about what was said in appraisals regarding subject choices. Staff members will go to the person who compiled the timetable and generally they will come out with the same timetable.’ She did however add that the staff’s expectation of the appraisal meeting was misconstrued: ‘It’s not perceived as negative but I don’t know how people actually think that it’s going to be beneficial to them until they see something concrete out of it.’

One female educator confessed that whilst she found the appraisal system personally satisfying, this experience was not shared by many other staff members:

‘What is a big point of discussion usually in January is when you get your percentage increase. That’s a point of discussion. I can see aggression happening there...um...if you feel you’ve done a good job or the best to your ability and it’s not seen. But...um...it’s actually not our management that can do anything about that basically. They distribute the pie, but the size of the pie is determined by someone higher.’

Finally, the appraisal process as described by this participant appeared to describe the exact opposite of the appraisal system’s statement of intent:

‘You’re outnumbered, you don’t know whether ... whoever it is, is going to be impartial or objective or supportive or any of that and it actually turns into...um...a sort of interrogation. You’re very much on the
defensive and put in a corner there actually to substantiate your existence as a teacher.

The appraisal process is thus designed and intended to entrench strengths, develop potential and overcome weaknesses. Newell (2002: 25) notes that workers’ performance levels are boosted when someone takes an interest in them and that the opportunity to interact with other employees boosts morale. Hindle (1993:14) concludes that the appraisal process may be regarded as a gateway to the professional development of educators.

The overall intent and procedural expectations of the appraisal system is however, not embodied by some staff members who have shared their experiences and have concluded that the process in itself is an end product and is not process driven. The female educators’ experience of aggression and/or frustration increased which affected their mental health adversely.

- **Remuneration:** long term prospects poor

Only one participant, with regard to her long term prospects as an educator, described remuneration as contributing towards her experience of aggression. An assumption was made by the participant that other participants experienced same but to the contrary. Perhaps remuneration was not considered to be directly related to the experience of aggression as described by the other female educators. She expressed her feelings of bitterness candidly:
'The only topic that comes to mind, as I'm sure everybody has already mentioned, is the remuneration. You know, teachers work so hard contrary to all beliefs, you put your everything into it, you give your everything – your weekends, your nights, your family life basically. It's a bitterness I really feel very bitter about it. You know, if I had to choose again, I wouldn't choose teaching.'

Hallett (1996: 98) concurs that women teachers in England, Wales and Northern Ireland are also likely to be affected by the greater financial instability as a result of changes to the way they are funded, since so much depends on learner recruitment which is inconsistent each year.

She added that for her to address this issue with management would not help as they would have to raise the whole teacher remuneration structure. Another female educator whilst not making direct comment regarding remuneration stated that when staff increases are indicated at the beginning of the new academic year, aggression is tangible:

‘You can feel the tension...aggression is there!’

Traditionally, males were considered to be the breadwinners and therefore needed to be paid a ‘family wage’ whereas females were simply working for pin money or to support themselves. Based on that premise females could be paid less (Newell, 2002: 138). Some female educators within this particular institution still believed that they more deserving of increased financial benefits.
Category 3: Imbalances of priorities

Female educators found that balancing their chosen careers with that of looking after their families challenged them as individuals who found it difficult to maintain a healthy equilibrium between the two demands. Further aggravating circumstances which contributed to the complexity of delicately balancing their priorities was that of time restraints and an unceasing workload which impacted negatively on their mental health.

- **Balance: family and career**

Balancing dual and at times multiple roles contributed to some female educators’ experience of aggression. Each role demanded newfound additional responsibilities which directly challenged their people skills and ability to multi-task. According to Judy Jayes of The Stress Clinic, today’s educator is expected to play a multitude of roles: educator, psychologist, sports coach, nurse and policeman. Especially in schools with a large single-parent population, educators are increasingly being called on to act as surrogate parents.

She continued that many educators have not been trained to perform these roles which places enormous pressure on them as they try to meet these demands and balance the expectations of the Department of Education, the school, parents and learners-while being paid very low salaries (NUE Comment, August 2006: Volume 9, Issue 2). According to Brannen and Moss (cited in Newell, 2002: 158) a ‘good’ mother is expected to give up employment in order to look after her children and is expected not only to nurture her children but also to
help them develop their full potential. Newell (2002: 159) adds that a prevailing assumption remains that a woman should fit her career around her children.

Some participants expressed that they were required to play simultaneous roles: parent, wife and mother within the home domain and at the same time actively engaging in a career at school. Maintaining a healthy equilibrium between family and career proved to be a daunting challenge for pitching priorities at the correct level within the correct order. One participant who personally did not find the need to balance family with career prospects as she enjoyed single status expressed her awareness of other staff members’ dilemmas:

'I love going to conferences where you hear more about your subject and other people, but it's difficult for some staff members who have young children...so...that's far more important than a new idea gained at a conference. Their priorities are different.'

Another female educator communicated a similar sentiment:

'Generally I think there's a lot of...I don't personally experience it...balance between having a family and having an occupation. I think that's probably the biggest frustration having to deal with picking up their children and cooking dinner and dealing with their spouse and...I think that would be the overall feeling that I would have juggling, balancing your family with your occupation.'

Finding the correct balance between two vitally important aspects in life: that of family and career is described by a dedicated participant
who fortunately had a supportive home base. She shared the following:

'The balance between my home life and school life is not actually good ...um...I spend most of my time working but I have an incredible husband who packs my parachute for me.'

Another participant who managed to enjoy equilibrium voiced her sentiment:

'So I have a very clear balance between family time and professional time and I have kept that balance and I just have never had a problem.'

• **Time: Insufficient**

Huge demands face educators today. Our education system competes in an increasingly fast paced global community which depends ultimately on the educators’ ability to prepare learners for new or changing environments. Educators are thus expected to keep abreast of new trends and innovative approaches in an ever-changing technological world. Family responsibilities too contribute to the expected role of the female educator. Some female educators found that time restraints in effect was their ultimate ‘enemy’ which they experienced as a contributing factor to their experiences of aggression in the workplace. In some organisations an unwritten code of practice exists which believes that if an individual wants to progress up the organisational hierarchy they have to work excessively long hours (Newell, 2002:96).
One participant expressed her frustrations regarding insufficient time but simultaneously realised the benefits of engaging in personal development courses:

'It's time consuming to do the ICDL (International Computer Driver's Licence) Course, but once you've got it, it helps you so much...these courses...they've all got to do the FET (Further Education Training) which I can see the frustration and aggression towards time ... it's time, not competence, not a lack of motivation.'

Another participant added:

'I think the major problem is time for me. I don't have enough time. My teaching capacity, my administrative capacity, my going home late at night, you know. Although it doesn't matter because I don't have a family at home...and this is my place, this little classroom here: it's mine. I feel very protective over it.'

A third participant described her work commitment as not always fitting into her working hours at school:

'I think that's how I've learnt to adapt. Um...or making an effort to phone after-hours when I get home.'

The advanced planning and preparation of lessons, the teaching of the lessons, the assessment of completed work assignments, the administrative responsibilities, the extra-curricular commitments, the emotional support offered to learners, the personal development
courses and the demands at home all within a fixed twenty-four hour time period leaves increasingly sparse time for some educators to nurture their personal needs. Newell (2002: 96) advocates that at times, individuals may experience the problem of personal failure that their career ambitions are not going to be met. Aggression and feelings of frustration are the resultant outcomes.

- **Workload: ongoing**

An effective working environment is one that promotes: participative decision-making; openness and candour; supportiveness; trust among group members and high performance goals within a particular climate or atmosphere. Commitment and cohesiveness among group members are two important factors which are pivotal to the success of task accomplishment or workload. Group climate in effect affects the cohesiveness or pulling together of members whilst commitment involves the willingness of individual members to work together in the accomplishment of a work task and the group norms (Steinberg, 2005:131).

In this regard one female educator openly admitted to being a committed team member yet experienced frustration in the work environment:

‘You know I love teaching although I do find it very stressful. You can never say, “I’ve finished my work for the day.”’

Another participant related a disparate commitment which she perceived as contributing adversely to the overall group climate:
'There isn't the equality between the subjects, the learning areas... um ... between the levels of staff that they ought to have.'

Elliot (1998:1), Hayward (1993:19), Lumsden (1998:1) and Mwamwenda (1995:85) have indicated that excessive workloads as the single most significant contributor to educator stress and low morale. Regrettably, this impacts negatively on female educators. A sentiment of an unfair distribution of the workload appeared to emanate from yet another female educator. She experienced a quantitative role overload where she believed that she was required to do more work than is possible within the time allotted for the job (Newell, 2002:54). She commented:

'I think everybody feels that they’re overworked but I personally feel that I’m required to do things above the call of duty. I think that the personal life for female educators does play a big role in believing that they have an unfair workload.'

Group cohesiveness is clearly evident in the following remarks made by this female educator who along with other educators have had to adhere to policy changes within the Department of Education. Gelderblom (2003:49) states that Outcomes-Based Education is one of a number of educational reform strategies that have been proposed by educational reformers. This adds to the burden of their ever increasing workload as described by this participant:

'I think all teachers are under the same amount of pressure. I think with OBE (Outcomes-Based Education) and FET (Further Education Training) it is just getting bigger and bigger and the stress levels are
exceptionally high. The deadlines are tough in teaching because you’re teaching all day, you’re on the sports field in the afternoon, you’re prepping at night and then you’ve still got to mark!’

The ongoing, unceasing workload is typified by this participant:

'It never ends. I mean somebody said, “Enjoy your break.” And I thought I have so much preparation to do because the syllabus is changing and with all that testing and with all that portfolio marking was heavy this year. The teachers took strain, the kids took strain - it was not a good idea!

The increasing and unceasing workload appears to have created an imbalance in priorities in the lives of some of the female educators. Experiences of frustration and aggression were expressed either directly or covertly by the female participants who at times shared a common burden. The disgruntled experiences impacted negatively on the group climate and thus the group dynamics of the overall group of teachers.

3.3.2 Theme B: Associated Emotions during Experience of Aggression

A range of ambivalent emotions were expressed by the female educators who experienced aggression in the secondary school context. The term, emotion is defined as a mental agitation or excited state of feeling (Collins Pocket Reference English Dictionary, 1991:159). According to Coon (2004: 143) the concept of emotion can be defined as a combination of physiological arousal, perceptual-
cognitive processes and observable behavioral expressions. The participants' mental health was compromised as certain of the negative emotions evoked or precipitated feelings of frustration and resulted in acts of negative behaviour whilst the positive emotions appeared to be at times, short lived and of a personal nature.

**Category 1: Female educators express emotions of anger, fear, sadness and happiness**

The female educators expressed emotions of anger; fear; sadness and happiness. The following discussion pertains to the experienced emotions as highlighted in four explicit groups:

**Anger** is the first of many negative emotions as experienced by some of the female educators who participated in the research study. At times, strong emotions such as anger and rage are inhibited and constricted or denied due to fears of ridicule, retaliation or claims of overreaction (Ratele et al, 2004:30). The term, anger is defined as a feeling of extreme annoyance or displeasure (Collins Dictionary, 1994:26). Below are some examples of emotions as expressed by some of the participants:

| Anger: hurt, disrespect, undermined, rejection, resentment, frustration, tension, stress, bitterness, discrimination, exclusion, hostility, antagonism |

One participant described daily frustrations as experienced in the workplace as not easily or necessarily able to disappear which
Inevitably resulted in her personal capacity, as a source of irritation or extreme annoyance:

'I mean things irritate me and I have an explosion! I'll get uptight, raise my voice and ... um ... whoever happens to be standing there, I'll say, “This is ridiculous, I can't handle this!” I feel that’s necessary because if something stews for months, I’m still milling over it cause I’m irritated about it.’

Some participants perceived that they had been unfairly dealt with by the employer with regard to changes implicated in the work contracts of all staff members. Change has both positive and negative aspects. It is widely assumed that that resistance to change is a common and natural phenomenon (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004: 617). In this instance, change was perceived to be negative and meant discontinuity and the destruction of familiar arrangements and relationships. Sentiments of frustration and resentment contributed to personal feelings of irritation, disrespect and hurt as described in this statement:

‘That’s not frustration...it was...hurt to my core...you know it’s not what you say...it’s how you say it and how you deal with it. And maybe because we live in a protected environment in the teaching world, you know, people would say, “Oh but that is how the business world works and I couldn’t believe that people could treat other people in what I thought was such a despicable manner.” We also had an antagonistic meeting with a woman from Head Office. I don’t believe they care at all. You see, you’re not an individual; you’re a number -
maybe that's how business works. Many other staff members too were hurt.'

Other participants further expressed that they were unfairly treated and felt worthless in being discriminated against by certain members of management. All organisations have to make discriminations between individuals. This forms the basis of selection and promotion as the organisation seeks to find the person best suited to the job. From the individual’s perspective, it is also important that she finds a job which matches her expectations and abilities. The problem occurs when discriminations are disparate and are thus deemed to be unfair (Newell, 2002: 135). The following statements as verbalised by the female educators illustrate this claim:

'I did find that I was regularly put on the spot and, in some instances, it was blatantly unfair. Some people are favoured and certain are not. I don’t think that’s a very professional attitude to have.

'I have a great amount of respect for management myself, but there’s a definite hostile dynamic going on between them and other members of staff.'

'They (referring to outside sources) have recognized my skill capacity at this conference and I think this is one of the undermining frustrations that my own campus has not approached me once in two years for assistance but has gone elsewhere to dovetail with another member of staff from another campus. So it's a whole undermining process. I work in total isolation.'
'So it’s a terrible tension and it’s a total breakdown of my esteem as an educator. It’s really bad.'

'Let me tell you, I’ve had a few nights going home and having a jolly good cry and thinking, “Oh gosh, I’m a disaster!”'

'I feel a lot of our aggression or our tension and our stress and frustration in teaching, especially in this environment, could be dealt with sooner; almost pre-empting things to say to us when we start setting our papers is what our benchmark has to be. I think with OBE (Outcomes-Based Education) and FET (Further Education Training) frustrations are just getting bigger and bigger and the stress levels are exceptionally high.'

'I’ve worked hard and I haven’t got a secured retirement so, it’s a bitterness...I really feel very bitter about it. You know, if I had to choose again, I wouldn’t choose teaching.'

The heartfelt sentiments described feelings of anger which have to some degree jeopardized the mental health of some female educators. These emotions were either expressed overtly or latently. Some participants chose to express their feelings in a direct, open, honest and appropriate manner. They used the interview as an opportunity to vent their emotions as a means of therapy. However, the many underlying sentiments not explicitly shared during the phenomenological interviews were captured in the context of the overall message related. Some female educators consciously withheld information, as to divulge such, would for them demonstrate an act of disloyalty to the organisation as a whole.
A second emotion expressed by the female educators during the research process was identified as that of fear which is defined as a feeling of distress or alarm caused by danger or pain that is about to happen (Collins English Dictionary, 1994: 304). Fear is an anticipated emotion, one that is foreseen to happen and is unknown to the recipient resulting in the likelihood of dread, anxiety or alarm as prevalent. Some examples of fear include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fear:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fearful, bullied, Inadequate, confused, disloyal, ambivalent, competitive, Insecurity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Work plays a crucial role in the everyday lives of people. A genuine fear of losing their jobs was expressed by some female educators who believed that rather than contest the new contract, it was easier to just accept the terms and conditions and enjoy a secure future within the organisation. According to Grieve and Van Deventer (2005:341) to lose one’s job is devastating, not only financially but psychologically. One’s place, status and value as a person are often measured by one’s job. The following excerpts serve as a confirmation of the emotion of fear coloured by further examples as experienced by some participants:

'Many staff members too were hurt – but because they’re so terrified of losing their jobs, they accepted the new contract.'

'When I went there it was sort of like we were bullied when we had the meeting. “You will do the following!”'
Competition at times can be seen as a healthy option of motivating people. However, Landy (1989: 485) differs by stating that competition in the work environment and the fact that one bases one’s self-worth on work success causes one to lose sight of the consequences of success and the adverse effects of achievement. In this instance some participants felt rather anxious and confused regarding the competition at stake in the workplace whether it was team or individual effort. Achievement at times was downplayed so as to safeguard the interests of those who did not achieve as much which resulted in confusion amongst the ranks of certain staff members who failed to receive any acknowledgement or recognition for a job well done. This strategy in effect impacted negatively on the mental health of some female educators who in turn adopted a passive behavioural style as a means of avoiding conflict or confrontation in the workplace which is regarded as a negative emotion and assumed to break down relationships. Some shared, varied experiences illustrate the emotion, fear:

'Let’s not take away from the fact that it is a highly competitive environment. I mean you’ve got to pick up and run with it, otherwise, you know, you are going to be left behind, or ousted, or whatever. I think the bullying depends on how you choose to take it. It could actually be a demotivator because then you know you sort of feel as though you’re actually being picked on all the time.'

'The Headmaster gets a lot of mileage out of our achievements and he uses it quite a bit to promote the school.'
'Last year I was actually bullied and harassed by a member of management because I refused to participate in an activity which I believe undermined my professional standing.'

'It's almost as if though there is a desire that we subscribe to mediocrity as it makes other people uncomfortable if certain people excel and so it is not delighted in.'

'I think competition it's definitely a team thing but it's also an individual thing.'

'I've actually become quite increasingly passive because if I voice my opinion it normally results in confrontation because I see things in such an alternate fashion that in many instances it is seen as though I am challenging the existing structures and a lot that happens is personalized.'

One final participant guarded what she really wanted to say. She became fearful midway and backed off completely as is evident in this excerpt:

'You know nothing ever goes your way all the time so obviously people are going to have gripes and who they're going to blame but management because that's where the decisions are made. But I can't think of anything particular...no...you know there's one particular person that's got a particular...I just feel disloyal discussing...'

Despite the negative utterances of fear as expressed by some of the participants, they further indicated that they did experience some
positive emotions and enjoyed being part of the school and representative of the organisation. This was clearly communicated when they stepped 'outside of the school' and were in a position where they were required to promote the interests of the organisation ahead of themselves or within their personal capacities.

**Sadness** is yet another negative emotion experienced by some female educators who participated in this research study. Some synonyms which typify the definition of sadness include: cheerlessness; despondency; gloominess; heavy heart; misery; sorrow; the blues to mention a few (Collins Thesaurus, 1995: 548).

Sadness is an accumulation of a series of unhappy moments, emotions or negative pauses in time which result in a state of sadness. Each unhappy feeling or emotion that is not communicated or left unexplored contributes to a collection of sadness which chokes the mental health of an individual. Some of the female educators had indeed reached a point of despair or loss of hope as a result of evading the reality of facing a situation in which they felt uncomfortable. The resultant emotions as expressed by the participants include:

| Sadness: disheartened, despair, unhappiness, 'whimpish', tearful, demoralized, upset, devastation, inadequate, trust broken, loss of compassion |

Participants voiced their sentiments with regard to feelings of sadness especially when referring to members of the executive team and Head Office. Female educators in some instances were demoralized when feelings of deprivation stripped them of their confidence and
enthusiasm during the appraisal meeting. Others described feelings of
devastation when left with little choice in organisational matters;
others expressed feelings of despair in that nothing within the
organisation was going to change. The following excerpts confirmed
the negative perceptions of the participants:

‘You’re very much on the defensive and you’re put in a corner there to
actually substantiate your existence as a teacher and your motives for
everything you do and I think that is awful.’

‘Certain authority figures feel that ... um ... it’s their province to put
down or to make certain female staff members particularly unhappy.’

‘I think we’re made aware of the fact that, you know what, you’re so
easily replaced and, in fact, it would be to the company’s benefit to
replace older teachers with new younger teachers who would cost
them less money.’

‘I was just whimpish. I don’t want any conflict.’

‘It’s embarrassing when parents want to know why this methodology
hasn’t been in place from day one. I just find that I have no
responsibility for this and so in my subject especially, it’s a very
undermining process and it’s very demoralizing for me.’

‘In fact a number of us did battle with Head Office because we were so
unhappy with our change of our contracts.’
'This whole cost to company thing - I didn't expect them to do anything because they don't do anything. I don't trust them anymore. I'm the one who's going to get upset and then I'm going to get very negative.'

'I haven't got quite the compassion for kids that I used to have and I've sort of put it down to the fact that I'm obviously older and maybe less patient.'

'They took a whole group (learners) of them out and gave them to another teacher and that nearly killed me. I cried about that, I really did. I was quite shattered. I almost ... don't know ... almost felt betrayed, um ... there's nothing you can do about it and it was never discussed.'

Dryden (1998:14) infers that negative emotions can be healthy or unhealthy and questions what determines whether someone experiences anxiety or concern as opposed to depression or sadness. Sadness is believed to be a healthy negative emotion which, according to Dryden, is more constructive than its unhealthy counterparts as it stems from a healthy belief which is an evaluative cognition in that it can appraise the critical activating event. Female educators need to evaluate the events and focus on their belief that there is hope for change. Their manifold expressions of sadness which left many of them with a sense of hopelessness within their environment may be converts to happiness.

The fourth emotion communicated by the participants during research was a positive one, one of happiness. Now whilst the previous
detailed discussions regarding the negative emotions appeared to be significantly devastating leading one to believe that the female educators entered their workplace of choice feeling angry, fearful and sad; this positive consideration will convince the reader that the previously held sentiments fade in comparison with their emotional state of happiness. Some positive emotions as expressed by the participants are highlighted:

| Happiness: happy, passionate, positive, loyal, emotionally supported, relaxed |

Happiness is defined as a feeling of expressing joy or causing joy or gladness (Collins English Dictionary, 1994:382). Newell (2002:102) describes the state of happiness or feeling cheerful as indicative of high levels of arousal and excitement. The overwhelming complimentary and positive claims attested to this description as reflected by the participants:

'We work with a fantastic staff. We've got very caring people and so our staff is generally good.'

'We have a wonderful staff, I'm very happy, but I just wish there was more creativity,'

'I believe that I have an incredibly good relationship with the majority of people on the staff.'

'I've always said that I'm very happy here. It's my vocation; it's not just a job. It's my vocation. I love being here, I love working with the
kids and when you get kids that have done very little and then they pop up and they do something so beautiful then it’s such a rewarding feeling.’

‘You just continue teaching for your passion with the learners. That’s what it’s about, in this environment. I continue because I am so connected with the learners that I’m working with and they just love my learning area and they’ll all go out and make a difference. I love empowering people. I’m here to service their needs and if I’m accomplishing that then I add value to the organization – that is my intention—that is why I am here!’

‘With all the good, all the bad comes to good, so I definitely wouldn’t leave teaching. It is my passion and yes, it is tough and it is never ending but I do still love it and I’m still here for the children.’

‘I love my job, because I love my job and I always have loved my job. I’m still passionate about my teaching.’

Current views on the issue of the relationship between job and life satisfaction is that a reciprocal relationship exists between the two. The happiness of most employees would rarely come entirely from a satisfying job, with little or no support from satisfaction in other domains in life (Mychinsky, 1983:112). Some female educators described their domain as a happy place to be; a place to escape; a peace haven and in one instance a home from home:

‘I love my classroom!’
'I think that in the classroom situation ... um ... a teacher is very much her own boss and can handle what's going on in her classroom and can to a large extent push aside what's happening outside the classroom.'

'I am sovereign in my classroom.'

'I don't have a family at home...um...this is my place, this little classroom here; it's mine. I feel very protective over it. It's part of, I think, who I am...with this mess.'

Part of the expressed happiness as experienced by some female educators is attributed to the learners at the school. Some of the educators claimed that the main purpose or reason for being committed and dedicated to the career of teaching was because of the learners themselves. These educators expressly stated that despite the many associated negative emotions which impacted detrimentally on their mental health; the learners who were in their educational care would benefit most positively in their quest for life-long learning. Their job satisfaction in this particular domain is defined by Locke (1968:158) as a perception or emotional response on the part of individuals based on their unique expectations and their own view on how these expectations are fulfilled. This is congruent with their expected roles as learning mediators which refers that educators will mediate learning in a manner which is sensitive to the diverse needs of the learners. In addition educators are expected to practise and promote a critical, committed and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others (National Education Policy Act, 1996).
3.3.3 Theme C: Measures of Support during Experience of Aggression

According to Newell (2002:75) several organisations, recognising the cost of stress, both to the individual and to the organisation, have introduced support services. The aim is to assist the individual cope more effectively with the stress that is being experienced so that the costs of the organisation can be reduced. In this instance, measures of interpersonal support were not sourced from outside services but were offered spontaneously ‘in house’ by: management; parents; self-support; support to others; family and the Department of Education.

Category 1: Interpersonal support

Interpersonal support occurs between two or more people who offer practical or emotional assistance in a meaningful context. There is a flow of communication between participants evident in the responses or feedback given to each other’s messages (Steinberg, 2005:37). The exchange of communication may be of a verbal or nonverbal nature depending on the needs of the individuals or the specific contexts in which they find themselves. Female educators expressed varying degrees of forthcoming support from various stakeholders and offered support to learners and other staff members mostly on a needs basis. Some participants sought support from immediate family members or from ‘outside’ individuals or organizations who unequivocally offered a lending ear, a guiding spirit or devoted acknowledgement or recognition where due. At times, contradictory utterances were voiced leading to confusing conclusions as to whether they were offered the necessary support or not. Their sharing of emotions fluctuated at times.

.143.
during the phenomenological interviews often leaving the researcher with nebulous thoughts.

- **Management: Emotional: Headmaster, Deputy-Heads**

The management team at the secondary school originally comprised of two males: the Headmaster and a Deputy-Principal and one female: the Senior Deputy Principal. However, the team dynamics of management have changed since the phenomenological interviews were employed. Another male Deputy-Principal has been appointed in a newly created post; the female Senior Deputy-Head has resigned and the original male Deputy-Principal has taken up her post. At present one Deputy-Principal post remains to be filled.

Close relationships are characterised by interdependence, emotional attachment and psychological need (Jordaan, 1998: 356). There is a close relationship among some female educators themselves and with some of the management team largely due to the nature of their environment. Whilst functioning as interdependent educators, they too experience feelings of care which attaches them emotionally in some instances to each other. They may also have their psychological needs fulfilled in their daily interactions with each other. School leadership is inherently and inescapably emotional, as emotions are not optional. They are present in everything one does. Leaders need to be able to make meaning with emotions; alone and with others. A deepened, embodied respect for emotion’s powerful presence in all humans’ lives can inform good leadership and create community (Davies, 2005:122). Some female educators divulged experiences of emotional support.
offered by certain members of the management team whom they clearly held in high esteem:

‘Our management is very supportive and are prepared to listen and you know...I think sometimes you just need to be able to vent your frustrations—cause they don’t necessarily say anything but I just need someone to listen to—what I feel is important—to somebody else.’

‘I must say that when we consulted (contract) with the Headmaster he was very supportive I must say...actually come to think of It. But you also got the idea that he had been brainwashed to promote this as a good idea to the staff because this was the corporate thing to do.’

‘I have a great amount of respect for management and the new Deputy-Principal as well. I find that if I go and speak to them about something then it’s generally sorted out.’

‘The Headmaster is an incredibly supportive person in my opinion. He’s never not given me the recognition or even the pat on the back that I wanted or needed or whatever. It doesn’t always happen from him down but then, they’re busy; they’re busy and I don’t go and tell them that they do a good job either all the time either, so...’

‘On a personal level...in terms of management, I am very supported. If I get too emotional, the Headmaster just sits there...he’s a very nice person, but he’s analytical and unemotional...he will hand me a tissue...he doesn’t handle it well for me. With the other two deputies you can rant and rave and get very emotional and they will calm you down.’
'I’m not the type to be seen as running into management’s office all the time because as a woman I think there are some things that happen that we are totally emotional about...I tend to hang back before I go charging in and normally if it ends up in me going to management it’s the last straw. I need to have my say and tell management to do with it what they like, they’re management, they’re in charge, if they think I’m unreasonable, they must tell me so and I will move on. If there’s something they can use, they must use it and change it but I don’t always expect to get my own way.'

'You know our management actually listens if you go and talk to them, but you must go and talk. And you know, the Headmaster and the Senior-Deputy are so open to people coming in and talking and helping and supporting...they’re unbelievable. Regarding the Headmaster and the Senior-Deputy as...after God, they come next.'

On the contrary, only one female educator expressed her interpersonal relationship with management as lacking in support as stated in the following verbatim quote:

'I had a confrontation with the party involved, it ended as a meeting with the Headmaster in which I was yelled at and shouted at by the person concerned in front of the Headmaster who did not intervene and I was told that this person was tired of me creating waves and reporting on performance to management and this would not be tolerated and so management didn’t support me at all about my concerns and so the matter has never been addressed. It’s just allowed to happen, because it’s part of a management power strategy.'
Although the emotional barometer within the given context did run high at times compromising the mental health of the female educators, the in-depth interviews conducted with the participants confirmed experiences of appeasement at times, offers of support shown in certain instances and the underlying message posted by most of the participants was that they believed that they had a 'safe place' to vent or voice their concerns without reprisal.

Within an organisation members are mutually dependent on each other as verified by Gerrig and Zimbardo (2005: 510) who found that through the support of each member's values, meaningful interpersonal relationships, psychological growth and the enhancement of freedom of choice could enhance the functioning of essentially healthy people. Communication is therefore a critical element in the processing of information and the maintaining of conducive, sound and positive interpersonal relationships. In the instance of a breakdown in a relationship taking place, the cohesive or integrative function of the organisation is compromised. New channels of communication need to be established formally or informally as a means of allowing communication to flow in different directions: upwards, downwards, laterally and through the grapevine (Steinberg, 2005:166).

- **Parents: learners' progress**

  Dedicated support was offered to those learners who required additional lessons or guidance in the specific learning areas. This support was found to be consistent among all participants who stated that the reason why they remained committed to their careers as educators was mainly for the benefit of learners with whom they
mostly shared positive interpersonal relationships. Some learners’ parents offered support in certain instances where they were involved and committed in the learning process of their own children. Mnisi and Shlubane (1998:11) state that parent involvement and support have a profound influence on the culture of learning and teaching. On the other hand, Thompson (2004: 53) questions whether parents have a meaningful role to play in the development of their children. He concludes that parents, both explicitly and intuitively, help their children’s development all the time although not always knowing of the ways in which they grow. At times, he states that parents themselves become obstacles to the process. This claim is supported by the following statements:

'Some parents are very supportive, others you can phone them and tell them that their child is not working hard enough and they do something about it. If the parent is not going to support you or say... um...has the same attitude as the child-you’ve just got to do the best that you can in the class. You know, together you can work for the good of the child. Fortunately the majority of parents are interested in the children and are concerned.'

'My learners are wonderful-they are absolutely wonderful and they just buy into the philosophy that I bring into the classroom and they are just so challenged by the responsibility that I grant them.'

'I’m still here for the children!'

'When they split a class that I was so attached to, I was devastated.'
Respect shown to learners in the care of one particular female educator was clearly communicated in the following statement. She appealed directly to the learner first thereby motivating a sense of self-responsibility before appealing to the parents in question:

'I don't operate on fear; I don't operate on going to the parent first. Everything is through consultation with the learner and if I have a concern I will then tell the learner we are going to have a triangle meeting and I call the parent in.'

Indeed, what is stated here by the female educators demonstrates a committed and emotional attachment between learners, educators and some parents. Attachment, according to Gerrig and Zimbardo (2005:339) is defined as an enduring, social-emotional relationship who further state that John Bowlby, an influential theorist on human attachment, advocates that infants and adults alike, are biologically predisposed to form attachments. The learners have in fact offered the educators support indirectly in that their presence alone, coming to school and participating in lessons makes the educational process meaningful for most of the educators.

- **Self-Support:** assertive behaviour, cope on your own

At times, participants shared moments of hopelessness whilst describing their experience of aggression and how the effect thereof affected their mental health. They felt that their pangs of anger, sadness and even fear experienced momentarily but consistently over a time period was best left alone undisclosed. Consultation with those individuals who could indeed assist the ‘aggressed’ female educators to
assist themselves was side-stepped in favour of them making the choice to cope on their own. Many female educators did realise however, that it was imperative to be assertive in one’s behaviour both verbally and non-verbally in supporting themselves. Burton and Dimbleby (1995:20) profess that one’s view of Self is strengthened when one believes that one has the power to influence what happens to one and as being able to work things out for oneself. Assertiveness is an effective communication skill which enables one to express one’s view in an honest, open, appropriate and direct manner without putting down the other person. While some educators professed to be assertive, others were found to reflect passive communication styles and hence submitted to the needs of others whilst neglecting their own needs. A range of verbatim quotes support this claim:

‘As a female in the teaching profession you do actually need to, to fight ... fight is a horrid word with negative connotations, but stand up for females within the teaching profession...there is an imbalance between management and staff members and gender so it’s something that does interest me.’

‘Again, I just do my own thing. You know it’s pointless having an argument, because that person is not necessarily going to change... You know that’s something I’ve got to live with.’ She further added: ‘And again, I’ve just got to accept that because that’s their choice. I’ve come to live with that, I have to cope.’

‘I think one has to learn to actually stand up for oneself and to actually make demands because otherwise one will get ridden rough-shod
over, you know. She continued: ‘But you’ve got to learn to actually stand up and be assertive and, and fight for what you want.’

‘You have to learn...I found in teaching that you have to learn to cope with a situation, whatever the situation is you’ve got to learn to cope with it. And if you cannot cope with it, and only if you cannot—that means that you can’t...I don’t like ‘can’t’, I really don’t like can’t.’

‘And they were all here, but I was the only one to do the invigilation then. But that was okay; that was fine. You know you don’t get stressed about things like that.’

Dr Judy Jayes of The Stress Clinic reiterates that stress, when positively managed can be a good thing—giving us the drive to be productive and to strive for greater heights. But if people don’t have the coping skills to harness stress effectively, it can lead to depression and eventual burnout (National Union of Educators, NUE Comment, August 2006: Volume 9, Issue 2).

Avoidance of conflict in some instances was the option taken by some female educators who sacrificed their own needs, wants or wishes in favour of satisfying another educator’s needs, wants or wishes. People who behave passively have suppressed their own feelings to avoid conflict or rejection, or are afraid to let others know how they are feeling, even when they are being treated unfairly. Subsequently they force themselves to keep their real feelings inside and frequently suffer negative consequences (Steinberg, 2005:112). The consequences of the choices of behavioural styles as described by some female educators may prove to be detrimental to their mental health.

.151.
One final participant declared how her mental health has been adversely compromised as a result of trying to cope with her daily challenges on her own:

'How you handle frustration and I think that...I know that I internalize a lot and um...I think because of that...I have a skin problem and I can see that when I am uptight it is a lot worse.'

- Support to others: upliftment, empowerment

One of the multiple roles expected of a competent educator as outlined in the Policy Handbook for Educators (2003) includes the community, citizenship and pastoral role. The educator is expected to practise and promote a critical, committed and ethical attitude towards developing a sense of respect and responsibility towards others. This role has been fulfilled by some of the female educators who described their acts of service towards the upliftment or empowering of others in the workplace. The following statements bear testimony to this claim:

'We really brought in a very strong profile of responsible citizenship into assemblies.'

'I also know that I am a voice for many people on the campus and I do a lot of counselling for staff members in that I can support them and help them deal with situations that they find themselves in ... I get a lot of job satisfaction.'

'And then I'm also connected to the whole service staff here and I feel I make a difference to the women in the service cleaning company and
they come to me for a lot of assistance and direction and empowerment as to their work situation and so ... and the people in administration who work at the front desk, I know I support them as well.’

- Family: husband

Some participants expressed that their husbands gave them tremendous support when ‘the wheels came off’ during which time they felt that they could not confide in any one member of staff to share their sentiment. They turned to their partners in marriage, their husbands. The institution of marriage has over recent years has assumed three models: patriarchal; partnership and the egalitarian model. Both these participants’ relationships assumed the partnership model as the husband and wife relate to one another as companions, as friends with the clear understanding that the husband is rational, objective but also approachable and sufficiently emotional in order to empathise with his wife’s emotional well being (Grieve & Van Deventer, 2005:150). Their experiences of support as shown by the female educators’ spouses are related:

‘I will unpack at home with my husband all the time and then eventually get to the point where I think, “Okay, I need to go and see someone-one of the deputies or Headmaster.” My husband is very objective so often that it is a frustration for me because I want him to take my side and he doesn’t.’
'My husband actually told me that I had lost my compassion for teaching. And he was actually right. He also reminded of a specific time when he had noticed it!

A third participant who lives alone had this to say about her support from home:

'Ja, I'm very pleased I don't have anybody-my dog doesn't care, he's just so pleased when I get home.'

- Department of Education: acknowledgement of skills

A final measure of support as demonstrated by the Department of Education is deemed as a rarity amongst most educators in the teaching profession. However, reference was made by some female educators as to the support they personally received from the Department of Education in recognition and acknowledgement of their skills:

'The RNCS (Revised National Curriculum Statement) is very exciting! I think there are things that we are going to have to grapple with. I've joined a Maths Interest Group with a whole group of other schools and we develop worksheets.'

'I have been a team leader for four years. This year I was recognized by the department for leadership. I oversee at this present moment, fourteen other schools and I have delivered papers at two NUE (National Union of Educators) Conferences. I've been invited by the Department to attend three conferences on empowering educators.'
An invitation to be part of a national team of educators; one's personal skills to be firstly recognized and then shared amongst all stakeholders within the greater community is indeed a great morale booster. The school indirectly too, is given due recognition for producing competent educators who have excelled in their learning areas. The support mustered by the Department of Education in investing in excellence adds value to the self-worth or self-esteem of the female educators under discussion.

Category 2: School support

The purpose of a support system is honest feedback, help and above all, support and encouragement (Noer, 1997: 203). Whilst some female educators found that measures of support from the school viz. resources; workshops and innovative ideas benefited them handsomely, others found their focus somewhat amiss.

- **Resources**: Head Office

The schools division is a subsidiary company of a larger enterprise which the researcher will refer to as Head Office. Each school is given an operational budget from which to ensure the smooth governance and maintenance of the entire school's day to day functioning. At times, Head Office will be called upon to provide ‘big ticket items’ known as Capital Expenditure. These requests will only be delivered once motivated by the Headmaster who has itemised the need/purchase in the Annual Budget. Some female educators referred to having received resources or tangibles as having made a profound difference in their day to day teaching. The resources or assets as
defined by Ellen (1990:1025) are the means available to achieve an end, to fulfil a function. The availability of resources indeed gave them the necessary support where human resources failed. The mental health of the female educators in some cases was influenced most positively as extricated by the following statements:

'I think that...I mean...for instance one teacher suddenly got an aircon (air conditioner) in her classroom and she said, "Oh my goodness! I discussed this in my appraisal. I didn't think that they listened and now I've got my aircon." I think that people...It's not perceived as negative but I don't know. People actually think that it's going to be beneficial to them until they see something concrete out of it.'

'I find that there is support—but none from Head Office...perhaps there is support. Look I've been very fortunate in that I was given a Smart Board, that's absolutely—it changed my life completely—so maybe that is support from Head Office.'

The lack of collaborative human resources as opposed to easily acquired tangible, concrete items is a cause for frustration for one participant who believed the school’s focus was misplaced or misguided. Whilst the tangible resources were deemed to be necessary and appreciated in the teaching environment she still expressed the need to rather hone in on developing educators to meet the educational demands of tomorrow. She clearly stated her point of view:

'I've got everything here, which is one of the reasons why I don't want to move on. I have an idyllic classroom situation; I get any resource I
could possibly ask for, but at the same time I feel that the vision of the College in terms of bringing Technology is too separate from a concern with the advancement of teacher methodology. So I feel that the focus is in the wrong place and that’s giving rise to increasing frustration on my part as well.’

Advocating from a humanistic perspective, Carl Rogers, professed that three essential ingredients were needed for the development of a supportive relationship: warmth, empathy and genuineness (Newell, 2002:75). These perhaps are the vital ingredients for which female educators yearn.

- **Workshops: outside school**

Educational workshops form a vital part of delivering continuous professional and personal development for educators who need to keep abreast of new methodologies and technological advancements in our fast paced global milieu. At times these are presented nationally but mostly locally and all educators are encouraged to attend seminars, conferences or workshops from time to time. Some female educators expressed that educational support came mainly from outside networks although at times, workshops at school did take place:

‘I love going to conferences where you hear more about your subject and other people, their priorities are very different.’

‘I find it sad then that...when say worksheets and that are done you get nothing. If you want anything that is new and original, you’ll have
to do it yourself or go outside the school. I find that frustrating, I find that very frustrating. ‘

‘You see, we do nothing here...there’s no new staff being developed. It’s just, I mean I can pick up a textbook and photostat so there’s no going to look for new ideas. So I love that at his workshop we meet once per month and we come with stuff that is interesting and different. Sometimes it’s the same, but I think the new syllabus is very exciting. It’ll take us some time to get to grips with it.’

‘We have had workshops within our school which have been fantastic.’

One educator who is frequently requested to deliver papers and present workshops at conferences expressed that her services were not being acknowledged by her own school’s management team. Newell (2002: 73) supports Carl Rogers’ approach that the basic motivating force of human behaviour is the actualising tendency whereby a person experiences a tendency towards fulfillment of all her capacities. This approach supports her claim to being ousted by her own employ in favour of other educationalists is indicated:

‘And in fact the paper, amounted to once again, a model of a 1985 exam and when I told him what the problems were and what needed to be changed, he changed nothing. He has had no training of OBE (Outcomes-Based Education) whatsoever. He had never even seen the OBE documentation. And so for me, it is an emotional issue and also tells me that at management level value is not attached to professional competencies. We are committed to schooling and not education. I think of concern to me is there is an increasing trend that just go for
the result process—we are moving away from a holistic vision of education.'

High levels of frustration are captured in these statements which impact negatively on the mental health of some female educators. Their efforts as educationalists to facilitate a shared learning environment and experience appear to have fallen on deaf ears.

- **Innovations: outside school**

In an ever changing world one is encouraged to adapt and change with the innovations that develop around us. A new idea becomes an innovation only when it can be replicated reliably on a meaningful scale at practical costs (Senge, 1990:6). Although one has the power of choice to exercise those changes which one chooses to endorse personally, at times one's choices are limited. In practice, in the workplace one needs to embrace the ever increasing changes and trends in order to share the vision within the organisation. At times, personal choice does not come into the equation. As previously discussed, innovative ideas appear to surface mainly from outside sources. Some educators at the said school were initially head hunted and pride themselves on academic excellence. However, the outstanding pool of expertise: skills; knowledge; experience; insight; wisdom; attitude to mention a few is sadly not shared generally amongst some of the staff members within their range of learning areas nor overall as a team of educators. This sentiment is shared by these participants:
'I think creativity is important in our subject but some people just copy directly from textbooks. Sure, take something, this is a nice idea, how can I develop it? But I just wish that there was more creativity. Maybe it doesn’t come to everybody.'

'So maybe in dealing with frustrations, it would be better to say so when it happens. So why am I getting so uptight about it? Is there something I can change and if it is, what can I change and if I can’t fob it off!'

'I mean, I actually think there’s a bit of a hidden agenda there that then the pressures are brought to bear that don’t encourage growth, participation and a co-operative sort of atmosphere. That, in fact, are some of the tactics which are...um...sometimes overtly authoritarian and...um...at other times they are terribly subtle.'

'This campus has not embraced the new teaching methodology so they have not concerned themselves with sending all the educators through to receive formal training in methodology for the FET (Further Education Training) and they pay lip service to the process of training.'

Although there is increasingly a market demand to be more innovative (Bolwijn & Kumpe, 1990: 44), a general lack of innovative ideas and methods appear to come to the fore in what is described by some of the participants at the school. Some individual members of staff have chosen not to contribute to novel ideas or stimulate creative thought; whilst at times, the organisation itself appears to distance itself from striking up or encouraging some new introspections or ideas from their pool of talented educators.
3.3.4 Theme D: Coping Strategies employed by Female Educators

Noer (1997:217) relates that the new glue is human spirit, and applied human spirit is the currency of the realm in the new reality. He has succinctly encapsulated the vital ingredient in the promotion of mental health. The coping strategies viz. communication; work experience; personal development; sense of humour; passivity and time management all embrace the human spirit in one way or another. Together, a spark in the reservoir of human spirit can be ignited by both the organisation and the educators towards the healthy self-management of aggression.

Category 1: Coping strategies employed to facilitate the self-management of aggression

Those female educators who experienced aggression or frustration within the organisation facilitated a range of coping strategies as a means of self-managing their issues of conflict as identified in the phenomenological interviews. Conflict can be defined as the interaction of interdependent people who perceive an opposition of their goals, aims and values and find that other individuals or groups as potentially interfering with their realisation thereof (Putnam & Poole, 1987 cited in Barker and Angelopulo, 2006:81). The basis of conflict as described by Miller (2003:43) extrapolates three variables: Incompatibility; interdependence of individuals and the expression of incompatibility. He advocates that conflict takes place between interdependent individuals whose behaviours are perceived to be incompatible and involves the expression of interaction or incompatibility.
Communication is therefore one of many coping strategies whereby conflict is addressed and dealt with in a constructive manner.

- **Communication**

Some participants overtly expressed their experience of aggression or frustration. They described their choice of approach in the self-management of the ensuing issues as confirmed in these claims:

'Some parents are very supportive...you can phone them and tell them that their child is not working hard enough and they do something about it.'

'You know that works quite well. Communicating on paper and put it in their pigeon holes. I think that's how I have learnt to adapt.'

The female educators clearly operated in an open, supportive communication climate by giving feedback which is positive and essential to maintaining performance and relationships (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004:207). This choice of strategy assisted them in coping with their channels of communication positively.

- **Work experience**

One female educator expressly believed that work experience in terms of age assisted her in her coping with issues of conflict or areas of frustration in the work place:
'Age has a lot to do with it. I know that I internalise a lot. So I think instead of maybe verbalising, I internalise a lot. As I said age has a lot to do with it and sometimes I say, "Does it really matter? So why am I getting so uptight about it? Is there something I can change and if it is, what can I change and if I can't fob it off!"'

'I have found in my many years of teaching that you have to learn to cope with a situation, whatever the situation is you've got to learn to cope with it.'

The willingness to accept personal responsibility is closely related to an internal locus of control which is indicative of an individual as recognising and meeting her obligations (Grieve & Deventer, 2005:347). Operating from an internal locus of control, the female educator coped with her daily challenges.

- **Personal development**

Educators are expected to develop the knowledge, skills and attitudes of learners as a basic requirement or need to be facilitated within the teaching profession. However, some educators at times neglected to attend to their own personal development which is tantamount to the facilitation of healthy self-management of their experience of aggression. Yet other female educators expressed how they had attended to the needs of their personal development as part of their teaching process or experience:
'The principal called it shortcomings, I like to think of them as personal areas of development that I need to work on and then I'll also go and see our boss about what I need to do.'

'But it's giving options. They then make the decision and we then go with it. It's taken three years to get to this point. It hasn't happened overnight.'

Personal development is vital in ensuring healthy coping skills amongst staff members at school. This is verified by Pérusse and Goodnough (2004: 332) who ascertain that positive self-care seminars for staff can enhance morale and reduce stress. An emotionally healthy staff is a positive role model for learners and families.

- **Sense of humour**

Using humour as a coping strategy often assists in the deployment of a serious situation becoming a lighthearted and amusing one. The focus of the mood is at times, diverted, lifted or hidden and subsequently helps individuals to review the situation. Templar (2005: 16) describes how humour can lighten the mood by being flexible in allowing others to do things differently. This particular participant used her sense of humour as a mask to hide her true intentions which were colourfully illustrated throughout the interview citing many examples:

'If something irritates other people about me I actually expect them to come and say listen you haven't done this and then I feel very bad and then I want to and work in a pharmacy.'

.164.
'I try and diffuse it by cracking a joke.'

Noer (1997: 101) adds that the ability to laugh at the situation and use humour is a way to relieve stress and provide perspective. Those female educators, using humour as a coping strategy are indeed self-managing their experience of aggression and/or frustration.

- **Passivity**

People who behave passively suppress their feelings to avoid conflict or rejection, or are afraid to let others know how they are feeling, even when they are being treated unfairly (Steinberg, 2005: 112). As a result they submit to the demands of others which inevitably results in a lose-win situation where they are the loser or victim. They accept blame needlessly and demonstrate a lack of confidence. Passivity as a coping strategy appeared to be the most favoured or employed means of female educators dealing with their levels of frustration or experiences of aggression. In some instances the participants admitted that they have had to change their behavioural style from being initially passive to that of adopting an assertive style as a means of coping in their school environment as the quotes will testify:

'One of the reasons I decided to participate in this is because as a female in the teaching profession you do actually need to, to fight... fight is a horrid word with negative connotations.'

'You have got to pick up and run with it, otherwise, you know, you are going to be left behind, or ousted, or whatever. Whatever it is that you have to defend yourself then you'd better be blooming good at it and
you’d better make sure that you’ve got enough um... to show for it, you know. So it could even be motivating as long as you’ve got enough to work with... but you’ve got to learn to actually stand up and be assertive and fight for what you want.’

‘So I don’t stress myself. And they (the learners) were all here, but I was the only one to do the invigilation then. But that was okay; that was fine. You know you don’t get stressed about things like that.’

‘I just decided cost-to-company is cost-to-company, you know. I didn’t want any conflict.’

‘But not really. Last year was an extremely good year with kids that were very committed and if I don’t have it, I don’t have it. I will eat humble pie, not nicely, but I will eat... well I have to.’

‘I cannot change anything ... there’s no way that I could operate in their framework. It would kill me because I would do battle twenty four hours per day.’

‘So it’s terrible tension and it’s a total breakdown of my esteem as an educator. It’s really bad.’

‘Well, this year’s one they do know, but there was nothing that I could do. I was quite shattered. I almost... don’t know... almost felt betrayed, but there’s nothing you can do about it and the other one was never discussed.’

.166.
Adopting an assertive behavioural style will benefit female educators in that they will honour their own needs, wants, and values whilst seeking appropriate forms of their expression in reality (Brown, 1998: 118). Surrendering to timidity in order to avoid confrontation will impede the healthy self-management of aggression as expressed by some of the female educators.

- **Time management**

Chronemics is the field of study that is concerned with the use of time. Time influences one’s interpretation of messages and forms of behaviour and is often a reflection of status (Steinberg, 2005: 57). Time is personified by Kahlil Gibran (1975: 894) a poet and philosopher who poetically muses the effect time has on one. He describes time as walking one step forward, unveiling its face, first alarming and then elating mankind. One female educator expressed that she had to guard her personal time closely as a coping strategy otherwise it would be usurped by the demands of other individuals or matters relating to the work place:

‘I do define what is my time, is my time and what is school time is school time. I give of my best to school during the week and then I determine specific time as family time and so to go away for a Friday and Saturday for me is eroding what is my quality time and professional time and I have kept that balance and I just have never had a problem.’

Another participant found that by putting in extra hours her stress levels would be minimised and subsequently her mental health would
not be compromised by the demands of a heavy workload and learner expectation:

'We've fitted in at least twelve afternoon lessons and about five Saturday lessons, so you know, if you work at it, it lessens the pressure.'

Newell (2002: 9) recounts that employees are more varied in managing diversity in the twenty-first century than they were in earlier periods. There is a need to give employees scope and freedom by working flexi-time in order to fit in family commitments. Time frames regarding work commitments at school however, are somewhat limited. Educators need to manage their academic and extra-mural commitments within a prescribed time frame so as to accommodate the needs of learners. This leaves them with very little choice with regard to flexi-time.

3.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter the findings of the research study were discussed and a literature control was applied to confirm the results.

The analysis of the phenomenological interviews with the female educators revealed four major themes outlined as follows:

- Theme 1: Experiences of aggression and/or frustration
- Theme 2: Associated emotions during experiences of aggression
- Theme 3: Measures of support during experiences of aggression
- Theme 4: Coping strategies employed by female educators

.168.
Results of this research indicated that the female educators could be meaningfully assisted in addressing their experience of aggression and/or frustration. Female educators will come to realise that they themselves have to work towards addressing their feelings of aggression in a constructive, positive and mutually conducive manner thus facilitating the healthy self-management of aggression. Female educators to date have chosen the path of responding in a passive-aggressive manner and have subsequently succumbed to authorities within their work environment to ‘dictate’ to them.

In Chapter Four a conceptual framework for the development of a programme for the facilitation of healthy self-management of female educators’ experience of their aggression will be described.
CHAPTER 4

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF A PROGRAMME FOR THE FACILITATION OF HEALTHY SELF-MANAGEMENT OF FEMALE EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCE OF THEIR AGGRESSION WITHIN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provided the findings of the research that was discussed in light of relevant literature. Chapter Four will focus on the description of a conceptual framework in the development of a programme for the facilitation of healthy self-management of female educators' experience of their aggression within a secondary school context.

In this chapter a conceptual framework of a programme to facilitate the constructive self-management of female educators is presented. A reasoning map (Figure 4.1) will serve as a visual presentation of the programme which is derived from data obtained from the phenomenological interviews of female educators. The psycho-educational programme facilitator will serve as the agent of change in the presentation of the programme whilst the female educators will be the recipients.
4.2 REASONING MAP

The researcher's map in Figure 4.1 facilitates the identification and categorisation of major and associated concepts for further refinement. The central and associated concepts have been classified according to the survey guide of Dickoff et al (1986:423).

Figure 4.1 Reasoning Map
4.2.1 Context

The context of the research study is not restricted exclusively to the confines of the workplace which in this study constitutes the secondary school. Although the workplace is the rendezvous where the female educators, the learners, other staff members, the management team and Head Office interact continuously and meet daily in their quest for education, it constitutes only one area in which the facilitative interaction occurs. The context is therefore described as an area without specifically demarcated, clearly defined boundaries. It is an area which is penetrable and thus allows freedom of movement by all individuals who interact continuously, sharing holistic space.

4.2.2 Agent

Once the situation analysis was established, the researcher as the agent of change, sought to develop a psycho-educational programme in facilitating the constructive self-management of experiences of aggression by female educators in a secondary school. The agent may be identified as the individual who executes or facilitates the activity based on the needs of the female educators. In this case the agent is the researcher who herself is a female educator. It is imperative that the agent exercises effective communication skills such as empathic listening (Covey, 1992:240), dialogue (Hendrix, 1997:185), paraphrasing, reflection, eye contact, body posture, questioning and general appearance which all contribute towards the process (Gillis, 1994:54). The agent is to also cultivate an attitude of exceptional openness to these communication skills and allow them due weight in the formulation of creating an impression (Danzinger, 1977:107).
Whilst focusing on a positive outcome in guiding each female educator towards managing her own experience of aggression and/or frustration, the agent’s prime focus is on the recipient herself too, who will in effect bring about change in her own choice of behaviour.

During the process of facilitating interactive communication between the agent and the recipients, the agent of change needs to portray certain roles (Walters, 1997: 14 – 117):

- a supportive role offering respect, acceptance and empathy would create a safe place which would encourage growth and change
- a focusing role which would allow the agent to focus on and deal with core issues amidst many other happenings
- a clarifying role which would assist female educators to gain insight into the effect of the past on their present behaviour
- an interaction and information role whereby the female educators through self-knowledge and self-awareness are able to create a new future perspective for themselves
- a challenging role to confront female educators with choices to enhance their future lives positively and ultimately gain a new perspective on life

The agent of change in the facilitation of these roles needs to be an
educator with a specific approach, knowledge and appropriate skills. The facilitator will also guide the female educators to a greater degree of self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-responsibility in order to promote wholeness.

4.2.3 Recipients

The recipients are the female educators who participated voluntarily in the research study. As educators they play the role of classroom managers, they constitute the link between home and school and function as the support structure for learners in their care too. The multiple roles they portray were described in Chapter One.

In the mobilisation of the facilitative healthy self-management of their experience of aggression and/or frustration, the recipients need to explore renewed relationships with their inner, dynamic selves, and with others in order to gain an awareness of developing coping strategies in directing their future lives in the quest for improved mental health and wholeness. This newfound relationship with self will directly influence the internal environment of the educators. Their external environment is influenced by the relationships with others (educators, learners, Management, Head Office) within their future directedness. The researcher will be a part of the facilitative process wherein the recipients will realise that they themselves are agents of change. Choosing to operate from an inner locus of control in managing their own emotions, the recipients will become increasingly confident and empowered to interact with others in their environment in a more positive and mutually conducive manner. This heightened awareness of self, acceptance of self and responsibility of self will
springboard further enhanced positive interactions in future liaisons. The female educators will soon come to realise that they are held responsible for their own choice of behaviour and are to be held accountable for their actions.

4.2.4 Procedure

The researcher as the agent of change realises the need to mobilise the female educators in facilitating the healthy self-management of their aggression and/or frustration. The aim would be to motivate the female educators to constructively self-manage their experiences of aggression and/or frustration in their daily interaction with others. A relationship of trust between the facilitator or agent and that of the female educators or recipients is necessary in order to facilitate the process. The recipients will be assisted in gaining self-awareness and self-acceptance in the process of realising self-responsibility for their choice of behaviour and subsequent responses. The goal of self-management will ultimately be the promotion of their mental health as an integral aspect of their wholeness.

4.2.5 Dynamics

The female educators' experience of aggression resulted in negative effects on their mental health as a result of poor interpersonal relations. They expressed that organizational change was stifled as a result of a lack of vision, a lack of solidarity amongst their colleagues, an apparent incongruent management style and Head Office being too business oriented. Owing to a lack of communication between stakeholders and an imbalance in their priorities the female educators
further expressed associated emotions of anger, fear, sadness and happiness. Although measures of Interpersonal and school support was offered to the participants and coping strategies were facilitated by the female educators themselves as a means of self-managing their experience of aggression, an apparent need for alternative strategies in implementing constructive healthy self-management was sought by the female educators.

The motivation for participating in facilitative interaction would be to promote an internal locus of control through self-discipline in taking self-responsibility for the constructive management of aggression. The female educators’ lifestyle and promotion of mental health would be positively cultivated to future directedness.

As the facilitator in the process of mobilisation, the agent will have the opportunity of facilitating the female educators or recipients towards self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-responsibility in adopting constructive self-management of their experience of aggression. In effect the female educators themselves will become their own agents of change and in doing so will promote their mental health as an integral aspect of their own wholeness.

4.2.6 Outcome

The outcome of the conceptual framework of the Psycho-Educational Programme refers to the aim of the researcher. The aim is defined as the constructive, healthy self-management of aggression in the promotion of female educators’ mental health as an integral aspect of holistic mental health. The short-term aim would be to enhance self-
4.4 DISCUSSION OF CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF A PSYCHO-EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE FACILITATION OF HEALTHY SELF-MANAGEMENT OF FEMALE EDUCATORS’ EXPERIENCE OF THEIR AGGRESSION WITHIN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

We sleep, but the loom of life never stops
And the pattern which was weaving when the sun went down
Is weaving when it comes up in the morning
~ Henry Ward Beecher ~

Life is a challenge. Living is a daily challenge. Each day man is faced with new challenges. Some challenges levitate man’s belief in his/her ability to succeed and to feel empowered to seek and welcome the next challenge. Other challenges stifle man’s belief in her/himself as s/he lacks the necessary coping skills, knowledge and most importantly the attitude to taste the sweet success of life and living.

The facilitation of the psycho-educational programme will, through cooperative and collaborative interaction allow each female educator to explore her inner self; gain an honest awareness of her self, learn to accept her self and embrace change within her self in a safe space. Creating a relationship of trust and hope amongst all participants will establish a conducive environment in which the promotion of self-exploration and self-expression devoid of judgment will mobilise the process constructively and effectively. In view of these factors, the operationalisation of the programme will take the uniqueness of each individual female educator into account.
4.4.1 Facilitative Process

Three progressive, interrelated phases which operate simultaneously and continuously within a safe space and which will transcend to a boundless, holistic space will be instrumental in the facilitation of the healthy self-management of female educators' experience of their aggression and/or frustration. In order to facilitate the recipient's growth, Boy and Pine (1983:83) verifies that it is necessary for the agent of change to believe in the recipient's potential for growth and to create conditions in which growth can take place freely.

These phases include: **Illumination; Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth and Mobilisation.** Healthy and constructive self-management of their experience of aggression is a life-long, continuous process hence the progression of the phases has no terminus.

The different phases and interrelated aspects which constitute the conceptual framework for the psycho-educational programme are reflected in different colours. The developmental process of intra- and interpersonal growth operating within each recipient from an internal locus of control will manifest simultaneously within the facilitative process of which the agent or facilitator is the driving force. Together, the facilitator and the recipients will embark on a life-long journey towards holistic mental health.

Colour is an essential part of our lives. Hence the inclusion of colour is implemented in the graphic representation of the conceptual framework of the psycho-educational programme which has been
proposed in Figure 4.2 overleaf. The intrapersonal and interpersonal facilitative processes are at first represented as two separate processes which overlap to form one simultaneous process.
Figure 4.2: Graphic Representation of the Conceptual Framework of the Psycho-Educational Programme
Each colour followed by a keyword denotes a particular characteristic, nuance or vibration of energy which the recipients may choose to adopt as a means of mobilising and enhancing their lives towards wholeness.

- **Keyword: Intuition**  
  **Colour: Silver**

The colour silver as used in this representation is a symbol of hope in the midst of darkness. To echo the expression, *every cloud has a silver lining* denotes that even during a thunderstorm when clouds are black and bulky one's hope is restored when they resume to their former glory; one of gentle light and friendly countenance. This draws a parallel with the context within which the female educators find themselves. As referred to in Chapter One, even when the recipients feel completely and unavoidably influenced by their surroundings they need to intuitively discover by consciously reasoning that they still have the freedom to choose their attitude in a given set of circumstances and transcend above their reality. The safe space created during the facilitative process is one free of prejudice, is non-judgmental and encourages truth and honesty in the flow of communication. The female educators are to be encouraged to rise above their daily routine; set new standards; listen to their own inner voice of wisdom and find meaning in their lives. The silver 'lining' will hopefully propel the recipients to intuitively shape and discover their true potential in being human.

- **Keyword: Illumination**  
  **Colour: Yellow**

The colour yellow is used to depict new beginnings, arousing a sense

.181.
of self-awareness, a ‘light bulb moment’, an illuminating experience which radiates new horizons heralding newfound happiness and joy as the way forward is one of enlightenment and energy devoid of obstructions. Just as the yellow sun generates a life-giving energy source so does the energy within each individual determine life in the deepest recesses of one’s being. In reawakening a newfound sense of self-awareness, the female educators are to become conscious of who they indeed are, where they are in life, where they are hoping to go and how they are going to aspire to revitalise a new genesis. Through gaining self-awareness, which is the foundation for intrapersonal and interpersonal growth; the recipients will explore new strategies in expressing themselves creatively. They will become aware of their innate ability to assert their power of choice in taking risks through the development of skills, insights and their competencies.

**Keyword: Faith and Peace**

The colour purple signifies the discovery of newfound faith and peace in exploring the depths of unconditional self-acceptance. Self-acceptance points to the fact that the female educator acknowledges that she is a fallible human being, other people are fallible human beings and the world is a complex place with positive, negative and neutral aspects (Dryden, 1998: 8). Through the reawakening of a sense of self-awareness, female educators will come to realise that their weaknesses go hand in hand with their strengths. A newfound belief in themselves will ameliorate feelings of self-acceptance and evolve in personal harmony, inner faith and peace. Through introspection and reflection, female educators will be given the opportunity to self-analyse their thoughts and actions. The Inner quest
of self will metamorphose constructively and positively towards healthy self-management.

- **Keyword: Responsibility**  
  **Colour: Indigo**

The colour indigo emerges as symbolic of self-responsibility which is required once the personal rhythm and harmony attained from the realisation of self-awareness and self-acceptance in the facilitative process of intra- and interpersonal growth has taken place. Female educators need to take cognisance of the fact that they are vehicles of power, not its points of application as discussed in Chapter One according to Foucauldian thought. Finding meaning in their lives, accepting duties willingly, taking a proactive stance and analysing contingencies so that they may move beyond the ways in which they may have previously limited themselves will assist the recipients to accept self-responsibility. When engaging in responsible duties they need to take ownership of their ability to achieve without doubting their performance. Achieving self-responsibility is a further vital progression towards reaching healthy self-management.

- **Keyword: Achievement**  
  **Colour: Pink**

The colour pink is used to celebrate success: the human achievement by female educators in self-managing their experience of aggression and/or frustration. Like a flowering pink bud the female educators are expected to emerge as competent beings, ready to harvest the benefits of their earnest quest in seeking to bring about change within the coping strategies of their daily lives. With effort comes accomplishment: unraveling both intricate intra- and interpersonal
relationships; balancing priorities; fostering improved communication skills; expressing of emotions openly and confidently; taking risks; making informed decisions and employing coping strategies to facilitate the self-management of aggression and/or frustration which spells prosperity. Self-management is based on self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-responsibility. In exercising self-management, the female educators take ownership in creating their own unique life purpose and in doing so manage themselves in the achievement and promotion of mental health.

• **Keyword: Change**

The colour blue alludes to a sense of expanse, free from boundaries; a place of serenity and harmony. Chopra (2004: 234) advocates that the easiest way to change anything is to first go to the subtest level of it, which is awareness. The progressive developmental journey along which the female educators has travelled: foremostly gaining self-awareness; achieving self-acceptance and accepting self-responsibility through the process of self-exploration; self-expression and decision-making; the female educators’ achievement of healthy self-management of their experience of aggression and/or frustration has enabled them to realise that they themselves have brought about change within themselves. A sense of calmness imbues a sense of eternity. The recipients have chosen to empower themselves to be in charge of themselves and the ‘sky right now is the limit’ or is it? Wholeness has been restored and is to be maintained by those who sought to make this lifelong choice.
The colour light green is used to signify emerging growth; the budding of new opportunities; a time of renewal. The facilitative process which emanated from the initial phase of Illumination embraced new beginnings. This then progressed to the productive phase of growth: Intra- and Interpersonal growth which signifies renewal, a time for casting away the 'old' and replenishing with the 'new'. The emergent newfound belief in self, revival of acceptance of self and choice of responsibility of self will cultivate a newfound lifestyle towards wholeness. As part of the inter-actical process, Intra- and Interpersonal growth and the imminent changes is an ongoing developmental process which is concomitant with the facilitative process.

The hues of the colour light green have progressively developed or matured into the colour emerald green, a richer shade of green which denotes ongoing activity, mobility and productivity. Newly acquired insights and skills need to be mobilised through practical displays of commitment, concerted effort and the will to change in order to achieve wholeness. Having discovered new dimensions of intra- and interpersonal growth, fertile, constructive and meaningful strategies towards wholeness can be achieved.

The colour red signifies vitality; the Latin term, *vita* denoting life. The
facilitative process is an ongoing life process which pioneers through new terrain, breaks new ground whilst accommodating both recipients and a facilitator. Along the journey, formidable challenges will be met and overcome as informed decisions are made; relationships revitalised; communication skills revived as the promotion of mental health will be positively cultivated to future directedness.

4.4.2 Interrelated Phases of the Facilitative Process

The facilitative process comprises of three phases viz. *Illumination* which embraces the Initial phase; *Intra- and Interpersonal Growth* and *Mobilisation*. These phases facilitate the development of self-awareness; self-acceptance and self-responsibility through the committed participation of each recipient as a group member together with the agent of change. The final phase, *Mobilisation* endeavours to transfer newly acquired skills to a broader context.

4.4.2.1 Illumination

Before launching a project or programme, Hart and Bond (1995: 125) profess that an initial meeting needs to take place. The participant role players need to clarify those aspects at the meeting which need to be addressed. The necessary duties, roles, expectations, wishes and choices as well as ethical aspects such as privacy and anonymity need to be explained and discussed amongst all participants (Hart & Bond, 1995: 70). The role players also need to be informed of the number of sessions required; the time frame and suitable venue for each session to take place (Hart & Bond, 1995: 193).
The psycho-educational programme will be facilitated over a series of four sessions; the duration of each session will be approximately ninety minutes. Each participant or recipient as referred to in the programme will be given a *Life Sketchbook* wherein she will be encouraged to self-reflect; capture moments of the intervention process which she believes will mobilise her to bring about effective change; create an opportunity for her to analyse her past thoughts and replace those with personal positives; express inspirational nuances; explore new dimensions of her self; or enjoy the freedom to ‘just be’.

The programme facilitator and developer will have previously informed the recipients of the impending meeting wherein the necessary information will have been communicated. This communiqué would serve as an invitation to *all* female educators at the specified secondary school. In this way privacy and anonymity would safeguard the identity of the participants who initially had volunteered to participate in the research study.

The illumination or ‘light bulb moment’ will in effect launch the programme with a message of hope: hope for constructive and meaningful change within themselves as the recipients.

### 4.4.2.2 Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth

Each stage of the developmental process will commence with the reassurance for each recipient that a safe space has been specifically created for her to exercise the freedom of self-expression and self-exploration. The ensuing process of positive relationship building of
trust amongst all recipients will eventuate in intrapersonal and interpersonal growth. A holistic perspective of each female educator’s identity through self-awareness and the acceptance of such a reality will be realised as each recipient in her own individual way and time frame, will cultivate a newfound lifestyle towards wholeness. The objective of this phase is to facilitate a process of intrapersonal growth by gaining self-awareness; achieving self-acceptance and accepting self-responsibility through committed participation.

The recipients, who as the ultimate responsible agents of change, will still require the skills of the facilitator as the agent of change to assist them in the developmental process of intrapersonal and interpersonal growth.

By ensuring that a safe space is created between agent and recipient a relationship of trust and hope is built. An environment of acceptance, integrity and confidentiality will promote a bond of security whereby the empathic facilitator and vulnerable recipient are able to travel along a road together paved with unconditional acceptance. The creation of a ‘safe place’ is paramount to successful intrapersonal and interpersonal growth. Empathy as defined by Cook (1979:19) states that the perceiver, which in this case is the facilitator knows exactly what the other is feeling because she imagines herself in similar circumstances, or has had the same experience herself which embraces a tone of understanding and warmth in the facilitative process.

The female educators will be encouraged to discover that there are many more facets to their being other than just being educators.
Through **self-exploration** the female educators will come to realise that although their profession defines their identity to a degree, they need to explore further dimensions of self as they have so much more to offer. Identity relates to the understanding an individual holds about who s/he is and what is meaningful to her/him (Giddens, 2001: 29). In the process of self-exploration, the female educator will formulate a unique sense of her self by constantly negotiating with the outside world exploring those aspects which differentiate her from others and by defining those common attributes which are to be shared with others. This process of interaction between self and society will shape her sense of self in her daily routines and shifting patterns of friendship and social networks.

In a relationship of trust, female educators will experience a sense of safety which is conducive to **self-expression**. A safe place will allow the recipients to be honest with themselves and those with whom they have forged a relationship. Although many associated emotions of fear, anger, sadness and happiness were divulged during the phenomenological interviews, these experiences of aggression and/or frustration were in some cases not shared with Head Office which many participants noted as being dominated by males; or Management or other stakeholders within the secondary school context. This sentiment is confirmed by the South African Democratic Teachers’ Union’s (SADTU) chief negotiator, Shireen Pardesi (The Sunday Times, 28 January 2007) who in her world of educational experience described men around a table as assuming that she as a woman is the weakest link. She states that she has to work twice as hard to be taken seriously.
By encouraging self-expression amongst all female educators, the facilitator will invite a vocabulary of feeling words to be explored and expressed by the recipients which will in turn assist them in both internal and external dialogue. Self-expression in a non-judgmental and accepting forum will further enhance their ability to express themselves comfortably and thus allow them to get in touch with their feelings, openly express and articulate how they feel about their lives and their current situation within any context with the relevant individuals.

Communication is a crucial bridge between people. People can only be known through their communication (Burton & Dimbleby, 1995: 5). Both Intrapersonal and Interpersonal growth hinges on communication within the self, and of the self to the self and with others. Decision-making is part and parcel of the process of communication which Gerrig and Zimbardo (2005: 274) define as the process of choosing between alternatives, selecting and rejecting available options. Each waking day, man is faced with a multitude of choices and is required to make decisions based on his/her free will which is pivotal to the process of change.

Even though some female educators feel completely and unavoidably influenced by their surroundings and intimidated by others, they need to realise that they have the freedom to choose their attitude in a given set of circumstances. Frankl (1985:16) posits that life holds a potential meaning under any conditions even the most miserable ones. The recipients through the process of self-exploration and self-expression will come to realise that they exercise the freedom to choose their own attitude by shaping their own fate through action in
the face of such circumstances. Adopting an internal locus of control, the recipients will need to develop a conscious effort to pro-actively develop and express newfound coping strategies by claiming self-responsibility for their meaningful choices and actions.

Through the developmental process of personal growth and promotion of change, the female educators will be better equipped to deal with the previously described negative effects on their mental health: poor interpersonal relations, lack of communication, an Imbalance of priorities amongst the relevant stakeholders and their associated emotions which emerged from the research study (refer to Chapter Three).

Measures of interpersonal support emerged as another theme from the research study. Some female educators acknowledged that although support was indeed forthcoming (refer to Chapter Three); they still expressed emotions of anger, fear, sadness and happiness which they believed all contributed in some measure towards their feelings of aggression and/or frustration. The facilitator, through positive intervention will prompt the recipients to address their experiences and resultant emotions during each session following the seven prerequisites as stipulated by Hart and Bond (1995: 37):

- The intervention is a developmental process during which time self-awareness is made possible through self-reflection and the visualisation of different, positive and productive outcomes.

- The programme although consisting of a closed group of recipients allowed the added benefit for each individual recipient
to be personally 'reached' within the context. The closed group consisted of five female educators; each individual's developmental progress however, was evaluated.

- The overriding aim is to overcome existing challenges and to stimulate personal growth and development. Challenges are identified and addressed in the appropriate forum.

- A goal-directed approach is aimed at empowering the incumbents in achieving the research aims. In this research study the researcher sought to facilitate the female educators' affective domain of developmental growth.

- Active participation within a cohesive group dynamic leads to individual and personal development. The researcher reassured the recipients that thorough preparation and commitment to the set programme would ensure positive growth within the forum of group activities, discussions and in a subtle personal manner too.

- A cyclical process is engaged whereby research is completed, an action plan follows and evaluation is finally completed. Each role player participates together as a whole within a clearly defined time schedule in order to achieve the set goals. In this research study, the recipients attended four sessions of ninety minutes each whilst positively developing their own individual sense of self. Evaluation was completed whereby the recipients reflected on their own behaviour, thoughts and emotions.
Healthy, positive relationships between female educators were continuously being enhanced throughout the duration of the programme. Working in close proximity, sharing experiences allowed for bonding between members to transpire as an improved understanding of one another was made possible during the programme developmental process.

Working together as a cohesive group, the female educators will come to realise that they are not alone in their experience of aggression and/or frustration. Gaining self-awareness; achieving self-acceptance and accepting self-responsibility through the process of self-exploration; self-expression and decision-making; the female educators will embark on a journey towards the achievement of healthy self-management of their experience of aggression and/or frustration which will contribute most positively to lifelong mental health. Each recipient will gain a conscious knowledge of her own identity, feelings, attitudes and values. Intrapersonal and interpersonal growth will enhance each female educator's path to wholeness.

4.4.2.3 Mobilisation

This phase opens the door to newfound discoveries. The creation of ample opportunities exists for the female educators to in effect, operationalise their insights through self-awareness; self-acceptance and self-responsibility which culminated in the healthy self-management of their aggression and/or frustration.

Intrapersonal and interpersonal skills were honed through measures of encouraging self-exploration; self-expression and decision-making in a
specifically created safe space. The challenge for the female educators now lies in the mobilising of these newly acquired skills to a broader context. Concerted effort; commitment and the will to change on the part of the recipients are tantamount to the successful transition of securing wholeness. Discovering new dimensions of self will boost the recipients' confidence to address realities and face daily challenges in constructive and meaningful ways. Their former passive and/or aggressive behavioural styles will be replaced by assertiveness skills.

The effectiveness of this phase hinges on the agent to subtly assist the recipients in making the transition through the process of motivation, intervention and empowerment. The agent will seek to motivate the recipients by gaining insight into the effect of their past on their present behaviour by ensuring that each individual is personally involved in the process. The process of intervention will challenge the recipients to consider choices that will bring about alternative outcomes to their lives. Empowerment will follow by allowing them 'space' to make informed decisions, to think and act in constructive and meaningful ways and to unleash their human potential.

The agent will 'walk alongside' the recipients on this new path of discovery by mentoring or coaching them in any further requirements viz. communication, time management, relationship building or simply just being available to 'bounce ideas on'! The agent will be available during this phase for the vitally important aspect of feedback: thoughts, attitudes, concerns, fears, feelings and choices. The agent will frequently remind the recipients that they are in effect their own agents of change and at times, confrontational strategies viz. clarifying; questioning and querying may be applied for therapeutic
reasons. Blanchard (1981, cited in Frase, 1995:8) reinforces that teaching as one of the autotelic occupations, requires feedback on performance to keep the existing motivation vital.

In the healthy self-management of their experience of aggression the female educators will come to enjoy renewed relationships; enhanced communication skills and wholeness. The agent will once again subtly praise and encourage the changes made by the recipients and will continue to inspire and provoke ongoing changes. The female educators will hopefully encourage and share their life-long journey towards holistic mental health with other educators.

4.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter covered the discussion of the conceptual framework of the programme for the facilitation of the healthy self-management of female educators’ experience of aggression and/or frustration. A reasoning map outlining the context, agent, recipients, procedure, dynamics and the outcome of the programme was discussed. A process description of the facilitative programme was included. In the next chapter the implementation and evaluation of the research study will be further discussed.
CHAPTER 5
IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF PROGRAMME FOR THE HEALTHY SELF-MANAGEMENT OF FEMALE EDUCATORS' EXPERIENCE OF THEIR AGGRESSION WITHIN A SECONDARY SCHOOL

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter a conceptual framework of the psycho-educational programme for the facilitation of healthy self-management of female educators' experience of their aggression was described. This chapter describes the implementation of the psycho-educational programme which will employ an experiential learning approach which Kolb (1993: 38) defines as a human adaptation approach whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. The programme will be evaluated after each session which will become part of the process which the recipients together with the agent of change will direct.

The facilitator or agent, whilst focusing on a positive outcome in guiding each female educator towards managing her own experience of aggression and/or frustration; each recipient will be responsible for effecting change in her own choice of behaviour through the process of interaction with self and others. According to Hepworth and Larsen...
(1990:53) facilitators need to retain their own values without imposing them on others. A climate of unconditional positive regard therefore needs to prevail whereby the facilitator accepts the recipients even when they themselves are not yet ready to accept themselves.

5.2 IMPLEMENTATION AND EVALUATION OF FACILITATIVE PROCESS

According to Jarvis (1987: 164) there is no meaning in a given situation until we relate our own experiences to it. Carl Rogers (1951: 15) believes that no one learns anything of significance from someone else. Instead learning takes place when a learner is intrinsically motivated to learn and undertakes to learn something on his/her own which involves the maintenance of, or enhancement of the structure of self. This sentiment is echoed by Albert Einstein who stated that he never taught his pupils; he only attempted to provide the conditions in which they could learn (cited in Walter & Marks, 1981: 1). The researcher or agent of change will facilitate the experiential learning process wherein the recipients will realise that they themselves are the agents of change.

5.2.1 Aim of Facilitative Process

Whilst the overarching aim of the facilitative process is one of constructive and healthy self-management in order to promote holistic mental health, the short-term aim would be to enhance self-awareness, self-acceptance and the ability to make a conscious effort and decision to exercise self-responsibility in order to self-manage experiences of aggression and/or frustration. The female educator’s
self-management of their aggression and/or frustration is a lifelong process based on self-awareness, self-acceptance and self-responsibility. It entails a process which will assist them discover who they are in order to gain a new perspective of their future and exercise self-management to promote wholeness.

The Implementation of the psycho-educational programme is facilitated over a series of four sessions of which the shared objective is the facilitation of the healthy self-management of female educators' experience of their aggression in order to promote wholeness. According to Van Der Westhuizen (1996:150) implementation means that new structures are created, rules and regulations change, objectives are set and training is provided. Noer (1997: 214) succinctly encapsulated the implementation of the psycho-educational programme. He states that the employee must choose to break free and claim the new freedom and the organisation must accommodate and facilitate that choice. Pérusse and Goodnough (2004:333) in their research found that teachers who participate in health promotion programmes have an overall heightened sense of personal health and well-being; less absenteeism and more effective teaching methods. An emotionally healthy faculty and staff are positive role models for children and families. These descriptions typify the recipients who volunteered to participate in the psycho-educational programme. Each sought positive change and expressly committed herself to the weekly sessions.

At the conclusion to each session the recipients were requested to complete a sheet reflecting their personal experiences during the collaborative ensuing session which formed a constituent part of the
programme. For collaborative evaluation to be effective in enabling the mutual illumination of various parties' perceptions, world views, contexts and histories it is essential that a strong interpretive or phenomenological base is needed (Wadsworth, 1997:82). The recipients and the facilitator or the critical reference group did indeed form that base by participating collaboratively with the expectation that change would evolve: intrapersonal and interpersonal growth would summon the mobilisation of the healthy self-management of their experience of frustration and/or aggression. Some recipients succeeded whilst others required further intervention in developing coping strategies to facilitate the healthy self-management of their experience of frustration and/or aggression.

5.2.2 Implementation of Illumination Phase

This initial phase represents the cornerstone for the interactive process of self-management to promote wholeness.

- **Objective:** The objective is to create a safe space as a mutually conducive environment to facilitate the process.

- **Strategy:** Establish a relationship of trust and hope where recipients are able to express themselves without being judged; and to explore new dimensions of *self* embracing an optimistic future.

- **Activities:** Female educators will be given an opportunity to express their feelings; their hopes and their dreams in a positive climate where all present will unconditionally accept utterances.

.199.
without judgment. They will self-reflect upon the journeys they have travelled thus far and share moments they have captured, the negative together with the positive. The re-evaluation of self will be made possible if the recipient is allowed the opportunity to think through solutions for herself within a supportive relationship embracing warmth, empathy and genuineness (Newell, 2002: 75). In this spirit of newfound hope, the female educators will be able to take responsibility for realising future, achievable goals.

The agent of change as facilitator should therefore:

- demonstrate genuine care and concern for the recipients during the facilitative process. The facilitator must be able to connect authentically with the recipients’ emotions as well as her own. Goleman (1995: 34) describes this increasing awareness of a new cluster of abilities as emotional intelligence. He argues that emotional intelligence is not really new. It's just been in the closet for along time. Individuals with a high emotional quotient are able to connect authentically with their own emotions and with others' emotions and maintain and establish empathic relationships. Within this empathic relationship, a message of hope for constructive and meaningful change will be imminent.

5.2.3 Evaluation of Illumination Phase

Evaluation is a process of discovery through which an understanding of reality is attained or enhanced (Swanepoel, 1997:190). The collective collaboration of recipients together with the agent formed a critical
reference group (Wadsworth, 1997: 16). Some private thoughts were validated and a clearer idea of where and how each recipient differed from the rest was an illuminating experience.

The initial phase allowed the recipients to reflect on their varied journeys and connect with each other in a common, safe space. The facilitator or agent of change created a safe space for communication to flow freely and undirected between the educators themselves. One female educator or recipient captured her moment of truth or experience as follows:

My reflections left me with considerable direction...the afternoon pulled me into a process of heightened consciousness. We were pulled into an arena where we acknowledged we have histories and these experiences define us. I was also amazed that we shared thoughts collectively. The intimacy and frankness of the session touched me and I had a great sense of sharing with others about each other and myself. I enjoyed the way in which you facilitated the process of connecting each one of us to ourselves and each other.

Another educator reiterated that the experience of sharing her feelings and thoughts in amongst other females invited her to explore within herself, choosing to reveal only those episodes with which she felt comfortable:

The experience was quite an eye-opener as I did see that there were many hidden areas which I am sublimating.
A relationship of trust was evidently established as another recipient connected with her own emotions and with the emotions of others in the session:

*I never actually knew that some members of staff craved the 'togetherness' of the staff and I find it sad that our lives are so insulated and we live at such a pace that we see 'past' the needs of others. I love the fact that we always discover what/who we are through being with others and I personally believe that these sessions will prove most valuable in terms of getting to a 'more comfortable place' personally.*

A greater sense of shared purpose left each recipient feeling less alone. Through acts of empathetic and active understanding of the groups’ interests, values, situations, ideas and perceptions a collaborative relationship of trust and hope was forged which paved the way for further sessions.

5.2.4 Implementation of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth Phase

- **Objective:** The objective is to facilitate a process of intrapersonal and interpersonal growth by gaining self-awareness; achieving self-acceptance and taking self-responsibility through committed participation. The recipients need to adopt a pro-active stance in exploring and expressing newfound coping strategies in the promotion of wholeness.
• **Strategy:** Through introspection and reflection the female educators will be given the opportunity to self-analyse their thoughts, actions and resultant choices. Heightened self-awareness followed by unconditional self-acceptance will allow each female educator to realise that as a fallible human being, exposure to the positive, neutral and negative aspects evident in a complex world; daily challenges will cross their path. The intrapersonal process may be a painful one exposing the recipients to both their evident weaknesses and strengths. Facing and dealing with debilitating negative aspects or personal weaknesses will in fact open the way for them to cope with life’s many challenges with gusto and hope.

• **Activities:** Female educators will canvass their lifelines practically. Using pieces of string as representing their lifelines they will tie knots at intervals which will demarcate the profound events that have occurred in the paths they have travelled. Quiet reflection will follow: reminiscing positive and negative experiences; which choices were instigated in these events, if any; and what would they change if they could. This activity will be followed by a process of self-disclosure whereby female educators will be required to reflect on their public and private self. Johari’s Window (Steinberg, 2005: 87) will be used as a tool for the process of self-disclosure whereby growth in knowledge of themselves and others may develop into newfound understanding and resultant bonding relationships in the workplace.

The agent of change as facilitator should therefore:
• demonstrate and embrace emotional intelligence which Noer (1997: 212) refers to as the new glue. He advocates that the first ingredient of the new glue is human spirit and applied human spirit is the currency of the realm of the new reality. Power, excitement and amazing productivity will prevail when work is congruent with our personal mission and values. In the facilitation of the session, Interpersonal variables viz. values; attitudes; beliefs; opinions and prejudices will be communicated whilst Individual preferences will be differentiated. Once a degree of congruency between Intrapersonal and Interpersonal growth is established the promotion of wholeness and an understanding of one another will be realised.

5.2.5 Evaluation of Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Growth Phase

Since a sense of shared purpose within a supportive environment had collaboratively been established in the previous session, the recipients committed themselves positively to the next two sessions of the facilitative process. The essence of committed participation was captured by the following statements:

*I realised how little I know about the emotional state and origins of the people in the group. I also realised that we all have our own maps of experiences that have either scarred or spurred us on. We evidently are all survivors...but when I have previously engaged I have not thought about the highs and the lows of the experiences of others.*
This was personally a very interesting session in terms of the highs and the lows of my life. The positives most definitely outweigh the negatives although as I reflect, the feeling I have is quite negative. The interesting thing for me was that none of the positives/negatives had anything to do with work. I love the children consistently, but am increasingly frustrated by the paperwork, flux and specific difficulties of my subject and its teaching.

I have started to doubt my own skills of perception and will try to be more succinct in ‘sussing out’ the right one! I do feel more empathy for two members of the group now that I know more about them. Their personalities were in pastels but now they are in luminous colours – and I ENJOY that!

Referring to Johari’s window was also fascinating as it forced us to reflect on areas which we do not wish to share with anyone in general.

It has been a wonderful quiet time just for me, I find that I am indulging myself with fascinating, intelligent women...it was the best one and a half hours I have spent all week. I was curious to find that the latter twenty years of my life had the most positives, yet it has left me the most restless. I know that the past ten years have left me unsettled; restless...not sure if that is to do with:

- job related issues
- children; responsibilities; getting it right
- husband; children; loving; parents
- where I should be living
- feel I should be pushing; forcing; chasing some of these
The one and a half hours on the couch with Bev left me feeling even more unsettled; it was intense...but I am eager for more of it next Monday. I am keen to explore 'unknown' of Johari's.

The collective responses describe a group of female educators who in one way or another have demonstrated intrapersonal and interpersonal growth. Some recipients, upon introspection and reflection analysed their 'lifelines': thoughts, actions and resultant choices. Tapping into the realm of self which for some recipients proved to be a daunting experience, enticed them to further explore within themselves and many a sensitive chord was touched. Wheelan (2005: 185) maintains that self-disclosure and the reactions of others to those disclosures are considered essential to increasing individual awareness. Duck (1999: 52) affirms that the process of self-disclosure is circular as it does not necessarily move from non-disclosure to disclosure in a linear fashion. Self-disclosure is contextual and is in fact embedded in the larger processes of self-identity and awareness. Lifestyle adjustments; subtle changes and the ongoing questioning of future directedness penetrated the minds of the recipients who described restlessness within themselves. The response of uneasiness was elicited as an outcome of the programme that would hopefully action them to adopt a pro-active stance in exploring newfound strategies in the promotion of their wholeness.

5.2.6 Implementation of Mobilisation Phase

- **Objective:** The objective is to operationalise female educators' newly gained insights of self-awareness; self-acceptance and self-responsibility in achieving the healthy self-management of...
their aggression and/or frustration. The effectiveness of this phase hinges on the transitory processes of motivation, intervention and empowerment.

- **Strategy:** Gaining insight into the effect of their past on their present behaviour will motivate female educators to take self-responsibility for choices made. The process of intervention will further challenge them to consider choices that will result in alternative outcomes. Realising positive change within themselves, they will feel empowered to make informed decisions; to think and act in constructive and meaningful ways.

- **Activities:** The recipients will be invited to choose an item from a range of items presented to them and describe their selected object as an extended metaphor of themselves. They will communicate the reasons for their choice and share their description with the group. This decision-making exercise will allow female educators to not only discover new dimensions of self but realise that they are able to apply their newfound skills to a range of different contexts. Awareness and acceptance of self gives one an anchor from which to operate in the discovery of self-responsibility using innate self-worth; strengths and talents. The recipients will then consider the many responsibilities that at times, cloud their daily lives. They will then be asked to divide a simple shape of a circle into their range of responsibilities. Each size of segment will represent the weight or significance of that responsibility. Self-reflection will follow; the agent of change will encourage the recipients to find their ‘inner voice’: vision; passion; conscience and inspire others.
to find theirs. Their ‘Inner voice of wisdom’ needs to be expressed in presenting their gifts and talents as they enter the ‘Age of Wisdom’ as professed by Covey (2006: 270). Each area of responsibility will be assessed and recipients will be required to reflect on which changes they can make in embracing the healthy self-management of their aggression and/or frustration.

The agent of change as facilitator should therefore:

- offer emotional support to the female educators during this phase by acknowledging and recognising them as self-responsible, effective individuals who have the coping strategies and attitudes to mobilise their insights. One cannot solve life’s problems except by solving them. This statement is self-evident - but seemingly beyond the comprehension of much of the human race. This is because one must accept responsibility as the recipients need to, for a problem before one can solve it (Peck, 1978: 20). The facilitator will also provide feedback to the recipients and offer further encouragement and praise for the changes they have chosen to make in sharing their life-long journey towards wholeness.

5.2.7 Evaluation of Mobilisation Phase

Having spurred on and stirred their emotions and thoughts in the previous sessions, the recipients operationalised their newly gained insights through the realisation of positive change. Many recipients indicated that central to the success of their growth process was
acknowledging the choice to change. One female educator communicated her impassioned changes as follows:

*I realise I need to do more for myself – personally, but I am not sure when/how to build it in to my 'hamsterish' day! By the end of the session I was re-evaluating my job and its demands versus the responsibility of my family. Perhaps I need to work less next year. Life’s too short for the kind of stress and the frenzied pace at which most of us are operating. I haven’t smelled a rose in a while or really laughed till I ached. I need to do these things!!*

Another female educator indicated the necessity to re-evaluate her family commitment, time spent with her family members and a need to find time for her personally too. A direct quotation supports her sentiment:

*I enjoyed the activities and felt more comfortable with the conversation. The discussion about the sometimes 'thanklessness' of a teacher’s job worried me a bit. It might be the twenty first century and a consumer culture but I don’t want to forget about morals and the important values in life. I fully understand a member of the group’s standpoint and her suggestion of my changing from within to make it better for me, but I’m not sure I want to change this facet of my life. My question: Am I different at home from school. My husband and I do not find me that positive at home! I think it’s because I feel that I am never doing enough, I always feel I could be doing more; doing better; more careful; more accurate; more caring. I realise that my family is definitely my biggest responsibility then the school. Then myself – although I do realise that I must take care of myself to be able to take.*

.209.
care of my family. I would like to learn how to relax and enjoy life more and be more constant with all the wonderful things I do have.

Most of the recipients reported definite positive results that occurred due to their exposure of the programme. Further quotations captured the mood of the final session which includes the following:

School is an excellent place where women are at least there to listen to each other. I really enjoyed having these 'on the couch' afternoons with Bev, they forced me to slow down in a week that is jam-packed full of doing everything for everyone else. In a way it was forcing 'me time' and making me think about issues usually brushed aside.

I enjoyed the 'open' talking, and what I have realised is that I tend to talk and think aloud quite a lot amongst my friends. It was also quite interesting to witness that others do not always talk so openly; but did find that your room an 'easier' place to open up. I have got a lot closer to two members of our group. I find we share a lot more since the sessions.

The effectiveness of this phase hinged on the transitory processes of motivation, intervention and empowerment. Motivation is defined by Robbins (1996:168) as the willingness to exert high levels of effort toward the goals of the enterprise conditioned by the effort’s ability to satisfy some individual need. Some female educators have expressed that they are equipped to mobilise their newfound coping strategies and take responsibility for the incumbent choices and resultant outcomes. Several positive, definite actions were adopted by some female educators due to their experiencing of change initiated by the
programme. These included: addressing personal goals; formulating new life plans and acknowledging the incumbent responsibilities. Others expressed that although they had learnt certain skills and realised that positive change was an absolute necessity in order to achieve the healthy self-management of their aggression and/or frustration, further intervention was needed. They expressed that they required further coping strategies and one-on-one counselling in order to achieve the desired outcome in overcoming their existing challenges.

5.3 CONCLUSION

This chapter concludes this phase of the research study which entailed the implementation and evaluation of the programme for the facilitation of healthy self-management of female educators' experience of aggression and/or frustration. The facilitative process encapsulating the implementation of the programme which included the objectives, strategies, activities and the role of the facilitator or agent for each session was discussed followed by a collaborative evaluation process after each session. The next chapter will discuss the conclusions, its limitations and recommendations for the study.
6.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the implementation and evaluation of a psycho-educational programme for the healthy self-management of female educators' experience of their aggression within a secondary school was described. In this chapter the conclusions will be presented as well as the limitations of the study. Recommendations regarding its operationalisation in education, management and research will be reviewed.

6.2 CONCLUSIONS

The overall objective of the research has been stated as to develop and describe a psycho-educational programme to be used as a framework of reference to facilitate the mental health of secondary school female educators. The purpose is therefore the facilitation of female educators to mobilise the necessary strategies in order to express their feelings of aggression in a constructive and mutually conducive manner.
Attempts to meet this broad objective were accomplished by employing an explorative, descriptive and contextual research design. A structured framework consisting of four phases was adhered to by the researcher for the purpose of conducting the research. In Phase One field notes were used in the data analysis, in conjunction with the information collected from the in-depth phenomenological interviews. The results obtained were analysed and categorised. The findings from all data were contextualised and a literature control followed. Findings were subsequently validated. In Phase Two a conceptual framework was developed; in Phase Three the programme was implemented and in Phase Four the programme was evaluated. A full description of the research of the applied research methodology is included in Chapter Two of this thesis.

In Chapter Three the results obtained from the analysed data reflected a positive and strong belief and hope that female educators who experience aggression may choose to rise above and grow beyond their unavoidable circumstances and in doing so bring effective and positive change within themselves. During the course of the research, a strong conviction was borne that the female educators, as deemed professional and academic leaders have the potential to facilitate and mobilise the available resources to promote their own mental health and grow towards wholeness.

Female educators within the secondary school context are expected to perform multiple roles within a limited time frame and keep abreast of cutting edge technological advancements and educational dogma. Heavily burdened by tides of overwhelming demands, the female educators realised that finding a delicate balance between priorities in
maintaining a healthy equilibrium proved to be a daunting task. Results of the fieldwork in this research study revealed that resultant poor interpersonal relations and a lack of communication between the stakeholders often followed which impacted negatively on the mental health of female educators.

It further became clear that a range of associated emotions as experienced by some female educators needed to be expressed since precipitated feelings of frustration and/or aggression were evoked. At times, measures of interpersonal and organisational support offered practical or emotional appeasement. However, it became apparent that female educators needed ongoing, consistent support and the necessary coping strategies as a means of self-managing their experience of aggression and/or frustrations. Hence, constructive self-management and claiming self-responsibility for their own choices was necessary in facilitating the promotion of their mental health.

In Chapter Four a psycho-educational programme, as a conceptual framework was presented in order to facilitate the constructive self-management of female educators' experience of their aggression. A reasoning map served as a visual presentation of the programme which was derived from data obtained from the phenomenological interviews of female educators. The researcher as agent of change aimed to mobilise the recipients or female educators to constructively self-manage their experience of aggression through a facilitative process. Three progressive, interrelated phases viz. Illumination; Intrapersonal and Interpersonal and Mobilisation guided the process within a safe space. A developmental process of personal growth and the promotion of change were structurally formulated empowering
female educators to cope more positively and appropriately with the previously described negative effects on their mental health. A unique factor about the programme was that each individual female educator within her unique situation and capabilities was equipped to mobilise the available resources. The mobilisation of the female educators' resources was based on their acquiring attitudes, beliefs, behaviours, thoughts and values that promoted the forging of relationships with themselves, others and their environment.

Chapter Five described the implementation of the psycho-educational programme which incorporated an experiential learning approach. Accordingly, some female educators participated voluntarily in the research study. During each session they were encouraged to explore renewed relationships within their inner, dynamic selves and with others. The short-term aim was to enhance self-awareness, self-acceptance and the ability to make a conscious effort and decision to exercise self-responsibility in order to self-manage their experience of aggression and/or frustration.

An evaluation process followed directly after each session requiring the female educators to reflect upon their personal experiences in a supportive and empathetic environment. Illuminating perceptions, shared purpose; congruent interests; conflicting ideas and values; shades of uneasiness and honest reprisals were communicated. These revelations revealed disquietude. Some female educators explicitly expressed that they were equipped to mobilise their newfound coping strategies and take responsibility for the incumbent choices and resultant outcomes in self-managing their experience of aggression. Others expressed that although they realised that positive change was .215.
an absolute necessity in order to achieve the healthy self-management of their aggression and/or frustration, further intervention was needed. They expressed that they required further coping strategies and one-on-one counselling in order to achieve the desired outcome in overcoming their existing challenges.

My unique contribution to this study engendered the connecting of people by listening to their heartbeats. Whilst listening was critical to initiating a connection between female educators, the development of a programme which was an opportunity for them to engage and collaborate with fellow colleagues in a safe space, was a rarity. The shared experience of trust and the freedom to express their innermost thoughts, feelings and opinions without being judged allowed the female educators to realise that they were not alone in experiencing aggression and/or frustration in their personal and professional relationships. These insights further empowered some educators to recognise and accept their many responsibilities, make informed decisions and to adopt a pro-active stance in managing their daily challenges.

Many minds and one heartbeat pulsed in unison. Sharma (2004: 74) relates that people who study others are wise but those who study themselves are enlightened. Like a phoenix rising from the ashes, some educators made personal commitments to resurrect themselves and adopt personal, effective and meaningful change in promoting wholeness; others are on their way...to being enlightened.

A final quotation encapsulated my message to each female educator:
Trust yourself.
Create the kind of life you will be happy to live with all your life.
Make the most of yourself by fanning the tiny, inner sparks of possibility into the flames of achievement.

~ Foster C. McClellan ~

6.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

My request to conduct a research study at the Independent secondary school was initially met with some interesting and thought provoking questions by some curious participants. Subsequently some participants were reluctant to participate in the phenomenological interviews as they thought they would be compelled to speak ill about their colleagues, members of management and the organisation as such. They questioned the confidentiality clause in depth wishing to remain loyal to the school yet at the same time wanting to take the rare opportunity to verbalise some personal experiences of aggression in the school.

Positive responses to my request arrived sporadically. Some educators telephoned me at home at night to maintain privacy; others sent the driver of the school to deliver a note of acceptance to my office and others left messages with my Personal Assistant expressing their wish to participate in the study. Once the interviews commenced, obvious communication ensued amongst interested participants and a flood of participants came to the fore. The process was finally given the green light! This initially unnerved me as the researcher as I was unsure if the required number of participants would volunteer to be part of my

.217.
research study. I eventually had to turn away participants and mentioned that I would contact them should a participant fail to keep an appointment.

Once the interviews proceeded, each and every participant questioned the previously discussed ethical principles. Of particular concern were the audio-taped conversations: who typed them; who read them; when would they be destroyed. I responded by repeating the information which was clearly conveyed in my correspondence to them: Request for Consent from Prospective Participants. I reassured each one that I would adhere to the ethical principles as stated in my letter of request and revisited the confidentiality clause and referred to them as 'numbers' and not personally by name.

Another limiting factor was the wording of my central question:

**Tell me about your experience of aggression at school?**

Most of the participants expressed that the word, *aggression* was too harsh a term and requested to replace it with the word, *frustration*. Baron, Byrne and Branscombe (2006:454) stipulate that all aggression does not stem from frustration, and frustration does not always lead to aggression. Once the change of word for personal reasons was mutually agreed upon the participants were keen to participate. However, some participants rationalised and measured their every word and even when probed, selected appropriate wording so as to not compromise their relationship with the organisation.
Some interviews maintained a professional yet friendly distance whilst others were business-like and to the point. The other extremity was a participant who reflected quizzically after statements were conveyed and then visibly internalized each one and questioningly looked at the researcher – ‘why hadn’t I thought of that?’ She became extremely emotional during the interview which left the researcher emotionally drained.

Some participants had anticipated that a written questionnaire was the required format and displayed great surprise when the researcher clarified, as in the said request, that the interview would be audiotaped. Another assumed that a series of specific questions would be asked and was totally shocked that one central question was posed.

A final limitation was a question of poor time-keeping and change of arranged venues by some participants. Appointments had to be re-scheduled and venues changed, some participants requesting interviews in the privacy of their homes and some appointments as early as 07:00 in my office was requested. It became evident that some participants were clearly uncomfortable about volunteering to be part of the research study and maintained a cloak of surveillance in their private arrangements.

6.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are proposed for the application of the psycho-educational programme in education, management and research at any institution where people gather to execute responsibilities bestowed upon them by the organisation to which they are affiliated.
6.4.1 Education

The future of South Africa is in the hands of today's young people. Young people today, not only in South Africa but world-wide, are exposed to a wide range of educational, family, employment, political and health experiences that depart in major ways from those of young people one or two generations ago (Strategy Insights, March 2007). The educational challenge lies squarely on the shoulders of female educators who outnumber males significantly. They are under pressure to assist young people to cope effectively not only with educational demands but with further emotional and social challenges too. These educators, in trying to balance their previous roles as homemakers and primary caregivers now have to respond to their roles as career women and some educators find these transitory changes daunting.

Educational authorities need to take cognisance of the fact that in effecting the many educational changes within policies with regard to curriculum changes and methodologies, and the resultant expectations in terms of hugely increased workloads of its educators within a short period of time, has in some cases eroded the passion of teaching for some employees. Educators are denied the opportunity of being included or heard in policy-making which in effect curbs their systemic view of their profession that informs practice and facilitates knowledge. Ornstein and Behar (1995:294) advocate that staff need to be developed in order to improve their job-related knowledge, skills and attitudes. Rebore (2001:171) supports Ornstein and Behar by reiterating that staff development is not only desirable but an activity to which each learning organisation must commit and involve human and fiscal resources if a knowledgeable and skilled staff is to be
maintained. A substantive group of female educators need to become involved in developing strategies which addresses educational reform by offering suggestions, proposals and programmes and become instrumental in driving the culture of the learning organisation. This may in effect have the potential to facilitate an understanding of change and empower female educators to realise that they too are instrumental in developing change which will in effect mobilise a culture of growth and improved mental health.

The ability of our education system to compete in an increasingly global economy depends on our ability to prepare learners and educators for new and changing environments. To this end, competitive salaries and incentives need to be considered as a means of attracting competent, committed and intelligent educators. Pardesi, South African Democratic Teachers’ Union’s (SADTU) chief negotiator, firmly believes that the majority of the teaching corps chooses teaching as a career because they’re not good enough for other professions (Sunday Times, January 2007). Competitive, market related salaries and working environments may encourage high calibre educators to join the profession and commit themselves to lifelong learning, education and training.

6.4.2 Management

The term, management is twofold referring to both the Executive Management Team at the learning organisation and the schools division of the subsidiary company referred to as Head Office. Basson, Van Der Westhuizen and Niemann (1990:618) postulate that the term organisation refers to a formal structure with two clearly identifiable
dimensions, namely a human dimension referring to the Interpersonal relationships within the organisation, and also a task dimension, which implies the task related activities of the people in the organisation collectively directed towards obtaining a common goal of the organisation. According to Sergiovanni and Corbally (1986:8) the object of leadership is the stirring of human consciousness, the interpretation and enhancement of meanings, the articulation of key cultural strands and the linking of organisational members to them. A successful learning organisation requires commitment from each staff member to work on her/himself while s/he is working on the system. Hence, the executive team needs to encourage the active participation of each stakeholder in the organisation to collaboratively construct a shared vision for the common good of the organisation whilst encompassing his/her own personal vision.

The idea of improvement as part of the vision building process needs to be embraced. The quest for improvement must however, be entrenched in the rhetoric of the leadership - in speeches, in vision statements, in organisational goals and most importantly be given meaning through actions (Learning, 2003:47). Mabey et al. (1999:169) maintain that a learning climate will be increased in the organisation if training and development is a strategic priority. The emphasis is on the improvement of individuals guided by organisational goals.

Management needs to appeal to their people's hearts, by not only hearing what their employees are verbalising but also by listening more importantly to their heart beat. Michell (2007:28) purports that
while listening is critical to creating a connection, business success requires the discovery of each individual’s needs and situation.

Management needs to also engage everyone’s mind. A good starting place may be to inspire trust by building the universal principles of fair play, honesty, integrity, respect, kindness and trust itself upon which values or social norms are based. Covey (2006: 10) claims that trust truly does change everything. Once genuine character and competence-based trust is established, he maintains that almost everything else falls into place. Whilst principles control the consequences of behaviour, values control behaviour. Educators need to be involved and continually be given positive affirmation which in effect communicates to them their personal worth and potential clearly so that it eventually becomes apparent to themselves. When female educators identify and are involved in the strategic decisions particularly values and goals; they connect emotionally, feel empowered and the locus of management and motivation goes from the outside to the inside. To nurture empowerment at schools and enhance personal and organisational growth, Davis and Wilson (2000:349) state that positive collaborative relationships and facilitative decision-making processes are imperative. Human potential will be unleashed only once personal and organisational trust is envisioned through a learning organisation which is constantly prepared to be involved in ‘study and practice’.

Female educators need to believe that they are valued and wholeheartedly supported as individuals within an organisation; that their competencies are recognised and acknowledged and that their worth, be it positive or negative; is communicated to them by
management. According to Caunt (1999:26) acknowledgement of one’s work is fundamental to job satisfaction and a vital factor in enhancing performance. Templar (2005: 29) further advocates that praise is free. He reinforces that the management of an organisation needs to praise people in advance by giving them responsibility and by encouraging them that they are going to do well before they have actually accomplished it. Doidge, Hardwick and Wilkinson (1998:82) reiterate that the only way to develop responsibility is to give educators responsibility. The chances of them doing well are much greater if you have praised them in advance as they will not want to let management down.

An Incentive-based performance strategy or scheme may be used as a tool to acknowledge those female educators who have achieved over and above the expected outcomes. Long service within the organisation is one example which management may acknowledge and elect to reward those female educators with a period of paid long leave which they have in effect earned. This period of ‘time out’ will hopefully restore the mental health viz. physical, emotional, social and spiritual state of those female educators. Every human being is precious in his/her own right, endowed with enormous, almost infinite potential and capacity which needs to be unleashed in order to lead a balanced, integrated and fulfilled life.

To remain credible in today’s changing economy, the organisation together with its many employees need to constantly ‘reinvent themselves’ by upgrading their skill-set and knowledge significantly so that they can remain relevant and make a positive contribution in a world of constant change (Covey, 2006: 93).
6.4.3 Research

A great deal of research remains to be completed in order to advance the understanding of the many and varied experiences shared by female educators with issues of aggression and/or frustration. There is a need to:

- conduct further research with female educators in schools that epitomize disparate socio-economic backgrounds; levels of education viz. pre-primary and primary and schools in a global context.

- implement the psycho-educational programme in the sister schools of the independent secondary school used in the research study and further afield viz. educational institutions which are microcosms of society and perhaps in corporate organisations too.

6.5 SUMMARY

This chapter has assisted in the review of the objectives and the purpose of the research, the conclusions of this research, the limitations and the recommendations for application in education, management and research. Through this research, a psycho-educational programme as a framework of reference was developed, implemented and evaluated to facilitate the healthy self-management of female educators’ experience of their aggression and/or frustration within a secondary school context.
REFERENCES


.228.


.242.


.243.


245.


Annexure A

Application for Request to Conduct Research:
Managing Director
I am Beverly Jean Evangelides, a DEd (Psycho-Education Programme Development) student at the University of Johannesburg. I wish to conduct a research study entitled 'Facilitation of Healthy Management of Female Educators' Aggression within a Secondary School Context'. My supervisors are Prof. CPH Myburgh and Prof. M. Poggenpoel in the Faculty of Nursing and Education. The purpose of my study is to explore and describe secondary school female educators' experiences of aggression in their school and to provide schools, management and educators with a Psycho-Educational Programme to facilitate healthy management of aggression.

Presently I am employed at Crawford Preparatory School, Lonehill. The research study is a thesis for my doctoral studies and I hope that the findings and recommendations through the data collected will assist me in the developing of a programme which will provide practical and ethical options for the prevention or addressing issues of aggression in the secondary school environment in which female educators find themselves.

Yours sincerely

B.J. Evangelides

Managing Director: Division *****

Approved/Not Approved
Comment:
Annexure B

Application for Request to Conduct Research:
Headmaster
Dear Mr *****

REQUEST TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY AT *****

I am Beverly Jean Evangelides, a DEd (Pycho-Education Programme Development) student at the University of Johannesburg. I wish to conduct a research study entitled 'Facilitation of Healthy Management of Female Educators' Aggression within a Secondary School Context'. My supervisors are Prof. CPH Myburgh and Prof. M. Poggenpoel in the Faculty of Nursing and Education. The purpose of my study is to explore and describe secondary school female educators' experiences of aggression in your school and to provide schools, management and educators with a Psycho-Educational Programme to facilitate healthy management of aggression.

Presently I am employed at Crawford Preparatory School, Lonehill. The research study is a thesis for my doctoral studies and I hope that the findings and recommendations through the data collected will assist me in the developing of a programme which will provide practical and ethical options for the prevention or addressing issues of aggression in the secondary school environment in which female educators find themselves.

Yours sincerely

B.J. Evangelides

Headmaster:

Approved/Not Approved

Comment:
Annexure C

Application for Request to Conduct Research: Prospective Participants
Dear Prospective Participants

REQUEST FOR CONSENT FROM PROSPECTIVE PARTICIPANTS

I am Beverly Jean Evangelides, a DEd student at the University of Johannesburg, Auckland Park, Johannesburg. I am presently engaged in a research study entitled 'Facilitation of Healthy Self-Management of Female Educators’ Aggression within a Secondary School Context'.

The purpose of this study is to explore and describe secondary school female educators' experiences of aggression in their school. Professor CPH Myburgh and Professor Marie Poggenpoel in the Faculty of Nursing and Education will supervise the study.

To complete the research study, I invite you to participate as I need to conduct interviews with female educators in their secondary school. The interviews will be audio taped and then transcribed for verification with the supervisors and the independent coder. These will be the only people who will have access to the tapes and the transcriptions.

I undertake the following ethical principles throughout the research process:

- Your participation is voluntary and you have the freedom to participate and to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty
- I undertake to safeguard your anonymity by omitting your names when discussing information pertaining to this study to protect you, your dignity and that of your institution
- Confidentiality will be ensured by erasing the audio taped information and field notes on completion of transcribing the tapes and by keeping all raw data under lock and key, which will be destroyed on final completion of the
study
- Information related to the interviews will only be accessible to the researcher, the independent coder and the supervisors
- Informed consent will be sought from you to participate in this study
- The benefit for your participation in the research study is that you have an opportunity to verbalise your experiences of aggression in your school which will be applied in the development of a Psycho-Educational Programme for secondary school female educators. The mental health of female educators will be promoted through the addressing of experiences of aggression in a constructive, positive and mutually conducive manner which will facilitate healthy self-management of aggression.
- Feedback will be offered to those participants who request a summary of the findings of the research study.

For any further information regarding your participation in this study, contact the researcher at the following numbers:
(011) 465 1201 and 083 235 8826

Sincerely yours

......................................................

Beverly Jean Evangelides
HDE; B.A; B.A (Hons); MEd; DEd in Psychology of Education
Researcher

......................................................

Prof. CPH Myburgh
HED; B.Sc; B.Sc(Hons); M.Com; B.Ed; M.Ed; D.Ed; L.Akad.

......................................................

Prof. M Poggenpoel
RN; PhD; L.Akad.
Annexure D

Ethical Clearance from Research Institution
15 May 2006

Dear Professor Myburgh and Mrs Evangelides

Ethical Clearance Number: 099 05/05/06
Re: Ethical Approval for Doctoral Degree Study

Title: Facilitation of healthy self-management of female educators' experience of their aggression within a secondary school context

The FAEC has decided to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Options</th>
<th>Decision marked X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>approve the proposal</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>provisionally approve the proposal with recommended changes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recommend revision and resubmission of the proposal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sincerely

Professor H. Smit
Chair: FACULTY ACADEMIC ETHICS COMMITTEE
Annexure E

Approval of Proposed Title
Dear Mrs Evangelides

APPROVAL OF PROPOSED TITLE

I wish to inform you that the proposed title of your thesis has been approved and as follows:

Facilitation of healthy self-management of female educators' experience of their aggression within a secondary school context

Promoter : Prof CPH Myburgh
Co-promoter : Prof M Poggenpoel

Please ensure that the abovementioned title appears on the front page of your thesis.
Please remember that you may not change the title without the University's approval.

Yours sincerely
Annexure F

Transcription of Phenomenological Interview
R: Good afternoon. Tell me your experiences of aggression at this school.

P: I think I would like to start by asking you if you would like to define aggression in the context of this interview please.

R: Okay, aggression is possibly a very harsh term to use in this particular context so you’re most welcome to use any synonym ... frustration, irritation...um...any term that you find is relevant to you. Anything, it could be to do with human relationships, it could be within the school, it could be a balance between home and school. So, anything, it’s an absolute free conversation ...you direct me.

P: I think that if I have to analyze my frustrations at the moment...um...they are consistent with my experience here for almost 7 years, which is astounding that I’m still sane, but I actually see a deterioration in my level of frustration and I think it’s largely linked to change that in the 8 years that I’ve been here, so much has changed in the world, in the country and in our community and I feel that the vision of the organization is not changing. I feel that it is becoming increasingly conservative and I’m experiencing that management style is becoming increasingly conservative and I just feel that in many areas we are been left behind and I’m faced with the question of do I move on because of my frustration with management system or do I stay here and continue to make a difference in my classroom and impact my learners which I feel I am doing and put professional and integrity issues on hold and I think that’s the tension that I currently experience. I’ve got everything here, which is one of the reasons why I don’t want to move on. I have an idyllic classroom situation; I get any resource I could possible ask for, but at the same time I feel that the vision of the College in terms of bringing in technology is too separate from a concern with the advancement of teacher methodology so I feel the focus is in the wrong place and that’s giving rise to increasing frustration on my part as well.
R: Okay, could you give me some examples of what you’re saying here. Could you clarify these frustrations?

P: Yes, yes – very easily. I feel that...um...the organization with specific reference to this campus – I cannot speak about the other campuses – has not embraced the new teaching methodology so they have not concerned themselves with sending all the educators through to receive formal training in methodology for the GTC and the FET and they pay lip service to the process of training but in fact many of the educators in the classroom have not undergone the training process and it’s almost as though there isn’t serious intention given to this process of transformation and I almost feel it is a professional arrogance that, because we are an advantaged institution it’s just going to come together, and standing in the hall this June exam session I was absolutely appalled to see the lack of engagement with the methodology in the exam papers that I was invigilating. I know that in my subject that I teach, I experience great difficulty at Grade 9 level when I pick up my learners who I’ve taught in Grade 8 that when I picked up the Grade 9’s this year they had no idea what the outcomes were. They were being taught a history that was synonymous with history methodology in the late 1980’s and it creates a great tension for me because I have such strong vision for what I want to accomplish in the classroom in terms of what I want my learners to grow into and it’s as if though I’m starting from scratch. They have no idea how to work with resources; they have no idea as to why they are doing History and they actually tell me they hate History and associate History with parrot learning. And so my challenge is that I’ve got to swing that situation around in a very short space of time because it is my desire that I get every student to see History an option because I believe History students are the students that make a difference so I want as many matriculants as possible to go out into the world with History as part of their accomplishment and then it also becomes professionally embarrassing because at the first Parents Evening, I’m confronted with irate parents who want to know why is there this big drop in performance and why are their children no longer getting “A”s when it’s just a swatting subject and then I have to explain this is a
different methodology and then it’s further embarrassing when they want to know why hasn’t this methodology been in place from day one of their high school experience. I just find that I become accountable for a lack of delivery in areas that I have no responsibility for and so in my subject especially, it’s a very undermining process and it’s very demoralizing for me in that this...at present as I speak to you...I have a colleague who’s teaching Grade 8’s. He has no professional training – he only finished his degree last year. He came in to be mentored by another History teacher who has a JCE Diploma, whose had no OBE training whatsoever. The first time he came near me was last October and he had never even seen the OBE documentation. His exams are of the most appalling standard. He has not come near me again this year until two weeks ago when he showed me his Grade 8 Exam. He asked for my opinions. I said, “How detailed do you want them?” He said, “As detailed as you like, I’ll choose what I’m going to change and ignore the rest.” And in fact, his paper, amounted to once again, a model of a 1985 exam and when I told him what the problems were and what needed to be changed, he changed nothing with the exception of moving one source around and changing it’s position so it took on a chronological structure. So I, as a History educator had to witness this shocking exam paper but I had no power or authority to actually say this is really an abomination - you are wasting your time giving it to the children - it accomplishes nothing. And I have no one I can go to here and say this is the case because he is here with a stamp of approval of the management who believe he is doing the most wonderful job. Um, the same applies at senior level. Two years ago I wasn’t given option as to what I could teach, what I shouldn’t teach - I was told it was a management decision. That a person in management would be taking a group through to matric. When I expressed concern that this person didn’t have the necessary training and hadn’t gone through the new processes of training I was questioned are you doubting the person’s competency. The person is now taking the Grade 11’s through to matric. Already, students are coming to me saying they don’t know what’s going on; why is it that a teacher of my stature is not teaching the matrics and all I can say is that it’s a management decision. But I know that what is
happening in the classroom is not achieving the objectives of contemporary History educators as we see it. And so, for me, it is an emotional issue and also tells me that at management level, value is not attached to professional competencies and I don’t think that it impacts solely in History. I think it’s a message given across the board to all educators. If you are in the classroom and teaching it actually doesn’t matter as long as at the end of the day, we are getting the results, which means we are committed to schooling and not education. I think of concern to me is there is an increasing trend that just go for the result process – we are moving away from a holistic vision of education and I think this is of concern to me because we are an elite school and we should be raising up the leaders in society because we are so equipped to be in this realm where we can offer students opportunities in every area and we are moving away from education and the focus is on schooling and I think that’s the one thing I’m committed to – I don’t engage in exam education, I engage in holistic education. I never talk about marks or results and I assure students that by doing it this way, if we engage with these processes, we are going to have a good outcome regardless of the exam process.

R: You support the OBE methodology...

P: A 100 percent.

R: Ja, it creates opportunity for everyone to feel a level of accomplishment and success.

P: Absolutely. And because it really focuses on process education...

R: ...and not the end product...

P: Totally, totally – and I believe that it raises up people who are competent to go out into society and fulfill a role and they leave with skills and they leave as independent critical thinkers and I think it’s absolutely wonderful.
R: Have you ever thought of taking that 1985 model paper to one of management and showing what the ideal model should be at this point and why you express your concern as to why this person was given the task of teaching a group through to matric, with an outdated mode of approach to History teaching?

P: I think that my concern is that the person is in management and that on two occasions I have challenged it and in fact in the final occasion I brought it into the Head’s office during my assessment and I expressed concerns there and I expressed concerns about the way in which decisions were taken re: who would be teaching what and I was assured that there would be a follow-up meeting where the person involved who is in management, would be brought into a committee meeting with the other members of management who are in on my appraisal. But the meeting did not take place and in fact in the next instance when I did have a confrontation with the party involved, it ended as a meeting with the headmaster in which I was yelled at and shouted at by the person concerned in front of the headmaster who did not intervene and I was told that this person was tired of my creating waves and reporting on performance to management and this would not be tolerated and so management didn’t support me at all about my concerns and so that matter has never been addressed. It’s just allowed to happen, because it’s part of a management power strategy.

R: So you have tried and you feel that it’s never been taken forward and so you just continue teaching for your passion with your pupils. That’s what it’s about, in this environment.

P: In isolation.

R: In isolation.
P: Totally in isolation. I think (and I’m sorry if I get emotional about it) but I did
tell you that it was going to be therapy for me that in my 8 years here, and I’m
so grateful for this, I have grown in my capacity as an academic. I have been a
team leader for 4 years – this year I was recognized by the Department for ... leadership. I oversee at this present, fourteen other schools and I have
delivered papers at two NUE Conferences. I’ve been Invited by the Department
to attend three conferences on empowering educators. They have recognized
my skill capacity and at this conference I’ve just come back from I’ve been
asked to deliver a paper at the next conference In September on how to do It In
the classroom. And I think that this Is one of the undermining frustrations that
the colleague who is moving on to take the matrics has not approached me once
now in the two years for assistance but has now gone to the Sandton Campus to
dove-tail with another member of staff on the Sandton Campus. And in fact for
the July exams the students told me that they wrote the Sandton exam paper
and so it is a whole undermining process. There Is no compliancy, there Is no
willingness to actually work within the structures and acknowledge that I have
the capacity to help in empowerment. It is almost an arrogance that there Is no
need to use my prowess. I have written a book, Study Guidelines, which I use –
I wrote it for South Africa – and I used it for my matrics this year. He has used,
ordered the books, he’s using It for the matrics but he won’t consult with me so
he sends the Media Centre teacher to me to ask what books am I using because
he will not consult with me. So it’s a terrible tension and it’s a total breakdown
of my esteem as an educator. It’s really bad.

R: This is a difficult situation.

P: Ja, It’s terrible, it’s really terrible.

R: And you just continue to stay on.
P: I continue because I am so connected with the students that I'm working with and they just prioritize History - they love History and they all go out and make a difference and...ja...I’m increasingly questioning why I stay on.

R: And when you are invited to these conferences are you given recognition for stepping out of Crawford and going elsewhere?

P: Where, here?

R: Yes, are you giving recognition?

P: The headmaster delights in it but I have a history that whatever I do, it threatens other people so it’s generally played down because...um...it’s almost as if though there is a desire that we subscribe to mediocrity and it makes other people uncomfortable if certain people excel and so it is not delighted in. I could speak to you here for three days so I don’t know if it’s appropriate. Must I just carry on giving you examples..

R: Yes, just carry on.

P: Um, I had a wonderful vision the previous year. It was in fact (what are we in now), it was the end of 2004 that we must change our approach to assemblies, that we must use assemblies as a realm where we can educate students and uplift them and impress upon them that they have choices re: values and attitudes and I wrote a paper on assemblies which I gave to the headmaster and he got quite excited by it and he gave me the opportunity to put together a committee to launch this new assembly programme in 2005. And we were an autonomous body but we consulted with the headmaster and we came through with really challenging topics and all we demanded was that everyone who subscribed to the assembly programme had to work within our parameters and had to keep to our time structures and they would then work with our themes that we were unbundling and certain members of staff felt that this was not a
good thing – there was too much of a theme, we were creating too much structure and we were ill-distributing time between cultures, academics and sports and the programme was actually hijacked. None of the dissidents actually came to consult with me, but they made it impossible for the programme to continue running by hijacking it in the assemblies and in the end I said to the headmaster I cannot work with this much of...um...obstructionisms and I wished to withdraw from the programme. It was accepted, fine the programme now come to an end. In my appraisal I was then treated in a negative fashion for having pulled out of the assembly committee but at the same time I was told that certain members of staff felt that it was too rigid and too focused and it was making assemblies too serious. Now, when those criticisms came through he never called me in, to consult with me that there was a feeling that this was not the required tone but then was admonished for pulling out albeit that there was no consultation as to why some members of staff were unhappy with this serious tone.

R: Were you working with a body of students?

P: I was working with a big body of staff members who were totally, absolutely enthralled with the idea – it was a total success.

R: So it was with staff members?

P: With staff members.

R: What were there feelings with what happened?

P: A lot of them were angry with me that I pulled out but I really believe that whoever holds the platform in assembly has a very responsible position and so I'm very critical of avert sexuality and body flashing and this type of thing from the platform and we cleaned it up totally. We really brought in a very strong profile of responsible citizenship into assemblies and the group who desire more
frivolous, below-the-belt, on-going colloquialisms - they were unhappy with the way in which the trends, the tones of assemblies changed...

R: But wasn't it a point where management or headmaster could reach a point of compromise?

P: No...

R: Where you could have one of yours and one of those?

P: There was no consultation. It was just an apparent breaking down so that there would be people popping up and running onto the stage and doing something which wasn't part of our official agenda where it was made known that anything that goes onto the stage is vetoed by the committee so the whole process was undermined by what became an overt independent style that they would not submit to the programme put in place.

R: Anything else that you find frustrating?

P: Um...It's a totally chauvinist organization...the whole of head office is dominated by males. They use 1980's management style, there is no democratization whatsoever. There is, for instance, the individual who was put in the Grade 8 classroom and is now teaching Grade 9's as well. It was an issue of here is a male, we are bringing him in regardless. There is the notion that if I take a tour, take this individual with because he's a male. I then express, I am quite okay with a hundred kids, I don't need a male presence. I'm quite competent to actually carry this out. So there is decidedly a sentiment that male competency is very important. And again, even in a public realm, we're operating in a 1980's notion where women are seen as sex objects and we just...there's no concern with gender equity and gender dignity that the whole issue of total equity that you don't make sexual jokes about women and treat them as sex objects - it doesn't exist. We don't have that kind of gender consciousness...
whatevsoever so I just really find there's albeit that we've got this really minority male presence, there is a gender...there is not gender equity.

R: And in terms of promotion, how has gender equity worked in that respect?

P: Well currently the management team is made up of with the new promotion coming in, three males and one woman and...um...there were in the last...what do you call it...interview process for our new deputy, three females and one male and the male got the position.

R: And your feeling about that?

P: Well I really feel that we need...um...greater gender representation especially that we are sitting with a staff body of over fifty people and I think there are four males on the staff so, I really think it's a matter of grave urgency that we have greater gender representation. But I think that it's part of the whole failure to embrace democratization in our management skills so we are actually not in sync at all with our constitution - we really operating in an old South African framework – we haven't moved on at all.

R: And you feel when you voice your opinion about whatever it's...there's no consultation, there's, as you said, no follow-up.

P: No

R: No follow through

P: No, nothing

R: So you express your opinion...are you doing this all the time, as you find...something disgruntles you, you address it?
P: Well, I’ve actually become quite increasingly passive because if I voice my opinion it normally results in confrontation because I see things in such an alternative fashion that in many instances it is seen as if though I am challenging the existing structures and a lot that happens here is personalized. I often say that management runs this place as though they running a family business. That there is no concern for labour law consciousness whatsoever, that we even have people put into posts without going through an interview process or the post been advertised and it’s very bad for morale especially when I know I’ve come through with a proposal for someone who is exactly what we need, it would be someone who would fit in with the equity programme, someone with the right qualifications and the post wasn’t advertised, it was given to a white male without a degree, without a diploma and it came in as a mentoring status and he is now sitting in a post that was created for him and as far as I’m concerned that violates labour law and has not actually serviced the needs of our campus at all but it has advanced the interest of sports on our campus.

R: Ja, you sound like you really, you’re trying your utmost, but you not actually changing much, because you’re not empowered to make that change.

P: I cannot change anything because I read widely on management issues and if I tell you it would have been my greatest desire to apply for the post of management position and I was shut down here in that there is no ways that I could operate in their framework it would actually kill me because I would do battle 24 hours of the day, but I love management and I love leadership positions and I love empowering people.

R: Ja, It’s hugely frustrating. Just on another point - your relationship with Head Office, since you say it’s chauvinistic, Its...um...you just feel ordered or told to do things and the fact that this position that you just mentioned was not authorized. Surely, Head Office should be aware of what’s happening because that person is on the payroll. So they very much aware of this person has taken...
that position without the qualification, etc. What is your direct relationship with head office? Have you ever had to deal with them directly, have you taken this further because management has not met with your requirements?

P: I would never actually, from a professional point of view, I would never take a matter to Head Office without going through the Headmaster and because I just see, I refer to it as nepotism. I just believe that it will only do me great injury. Head office is very hostile. Two years ago at the end of 2004 I had very bad dealings with them, when they forced me to change my contract and go to cost-to-company and it was very aggressive conduct by the CEO. It was terrible, terrible bullying and in fact a number of us did battle with Head Office because we were so unhappy with our change of our contracts. With regards to our educational overlord, it’s a very unfavourable, unsuitable situation right now, in that, once again, with VCAA I came into conflict. I put in an application to serve as an examiner – I really wanted to be an examiner. I really expected as has been in the past that our appointment would come through at the end of last year so that I could spend my holidays researching for the paper – it’s a very demanding programme. We were not notified until March the 7th of this year that we’d received appointment. I received a letter that was dated 26 February on the 8th of March or the 7th of March and I was appointed to set a paper that I hadn’t applied to actually set. There was no breakdown of when our deadlines were, I’m preparing work for the Grade 10’s, I’m teaching matrices – I know they would have given me one month to set the paper and so I had to decline that appointment because time had actually run out. When I eventually got hold of the party involved, I said I am unable to set the paper which you appointed me to; I didn’t apply and the appointment has come through so late. I was told fine and the phone went down and there was no consultation, there was no concern – what are we going to do, who is going to set the paper...um...there was just no interest whatsoever, so even there I am just part of a process where I just feel we are involved in keeping a system going and window-dressing, but we do not have a vision for greater education and change in South Africa and so, again, you might say what are you doing here and I think that is the critical question.
I am facing. Um, I think as long as I feel I can make a difference here I must carry on. I also know that I am a voice for many people on the campus and I do a lot of counselling for staff members in that I can support them and help them deal with situations that they find themselves in that I am able to see things in another way and from a labour law perspective so in terms of that and in terms of my students and in terms of my parents who I have the most wonderful relationships with – there I get a lot of job satisfaction, but I have to weigh the one against the other. And then I’m also very connected to the whole service staff here and I feel I make a difference to the women in the service cleaning company and they come for a lot of assistance and direction and empowerment as to their work situation and so and the people in administration who work at the front desk, I know that I support them a lot in empowering them as well, so...

R: So those are your rewards?

P: Ja

R: Ja, it’s just amazing, well look you’re part of the system and I think you’re very effective in what you do personally. You offer tremendous support to people on this campus and obviously in your teaching capacity, but it’s not...you’re not getting the whole packaged deal where you get the support from the hierarchy above so you just feel you going along...um...any other frustrations? Do you have any...you’ve spoken about frustrations with management, with the teaching methodology of colleagues within your department, your frustrations with Head Office. Any with pupils?

P: No, my pupils are wonderful - they are absolutely wonderful and they just buy into the philosophy that I bring in to the classroom and they just so challenged by the responsibility that I grant them and they so challenged by an alternative system where we never talk about marks, we never talk about results, we just talk about performance and their personal growth and they just buy into it –
they are modern creatures of the 21st century and the Grade 10’s are so captivated by Africa; where we live it’s really one of my big visions to make the students connect with our continent and they’re starting to identify as Africans and they’re very into their human rights and they’re into globalization and they’ve come to understand that we are winning in terms of living in a multicultural society and I keep explaining to them that we are ahead of the rest of the world and have moved beyond xenophobia and we are delighting in our new cultural diversity and they love it. I just have now marked their exams, all these very positive traits which for me are so fundamental to the new curriculum in terms of values and attitudes. The critical and specific outcomes, they are all coming through, so I know that they’re new South Africans and they are just so positive. And the same thing is happening with the Grade 9’s and...um...that for me is what it is about, that I can bring them into an understanding of the reality of the world in which we live...ja...so it’s very positive.

R: And then, finally, personally...

P: Yes

R: Do you find you’re personally frustrated about the points you mentioned earlier, your balance between your lifestyle outside of school and what’s happening here – are there any frustrations?

P: Ja, no there are no frustrations in that I understand with the new curriculum there is this need to read more, we all have to be researchers, we have to be committed to life-long learning and so we have to keep on growing and I really believe that learning is a life experience. So I’m of the opinion that any educator in the classroom has to keep on working and yes with the OBE system there is more paperwork and it’s more demanding but I get around it and I love it and I delight in it. So, I feel in terms of my own personal expectations I can deliver, but I want to maybe make reference to two areas where I feel things are getting out of sync and in both instances, I have fought the system. I do
define that what is my time, is my time and what is school time is school time. I also have taken on quite a big extra-mural load in that I’ve committed totally to debating again and I’m also literally here every afternoon until four, either working with students who need support and working with the debaters. I also generally stay in my classroom at breaks because I service the students and so for me they are my priority and I do a lot of telephoning of parents at home. The introduction of the new classroom navigator system, I have not bought into...I argued that there was not adequate consultation and I also argued that it undermines my teaching philosophy – I don’t operate on fear, I don’t operate on going to the parent first. Everything is through consultation with the student and if I have a concern I will then tell the student we are going to have a triangle meeting and I call in the parent. I never phone parents with results of tests before the student has gone through them and then it’s the student’s responsibility – they own their results. With regard to putting homework and work on the Internet – I don’t believe that’s right. I believe that everyone must become responsible for finding out what their homework is and its part of the engagement in the classroom. So I know that right now I am scoring negative points with regard to that because I haven’t bought into the system. I also feel that if they want us to use that system then I need a classroom assistant because I do all my emailing at home, I never go into the boardroom, there aren’t adequate facilities and I don’t have the time. I didn’t go on the staff conference because as I explained to the Headmaster I give of my best to school during the week and then I determine specific time as family time and so to go away for a Friday and Saturday to a staff conference where there wasn’t an agenda until three weeks before the staff went away, for me is eroding what is my quality time with my family. So I have a very clear balance between family time and professional time and I have kept that balance and I just have never had a problem. I also come into conflict with things such as Lonehill Lunacy – it is in conflict with my professional vision; I also don’t have the time to pack into such a frivolity and so there I score negative points in assessment appraisal. Because I make this clear definition it undermines my professional status. Last year I was actually bullied and harassed by member of management because I
said to students who questioned me why don’t you participate and I said it undermines my professional standing and I was shouted at and told that I had no right to put myself on high moral ground and set myself up above others members of staff and so that created quite a conflict situation and I think my concern is that there is not enough understanding that we have a right to choice and we have a right to actually carry out our professionalism and I’ve actually come to an understanding and I’ve explained it to the headmaster that my professionalism is something that the organization does not own and they cannot define my professionalism and I avail myself of my professional expertise to them but they can’t define my professionalism and I think that is the frustration because I am very driven by the professional status attached to our status as educators, so...

R: And the respect that each one should have for each other... everybody’s choice and...

P: And that’s the issue of understanding democracy and understanding the constitution and respect me that I have made the right to choose that direction and...um... instead I’m undermined because of it.

R: You have used the word ‘undermine’ frequently in this interview and I hear what you are saying, it’s extremely frustrating. Fortunately it doesn’t happen here in your classroom because you’re in charge of what happens here, you dictate and decide and it’s your free choice and will as to what happens here.

P: I am sovereign in my classroom and in fact that’s what happened in last year’s appraisal where you know I was told that the parents and students think you walk on water but evidently management did not echo that sentiment and you know that was my question, why are we here? We are here to allow parents and students to think that we walk on water, that’s why I’m here - I’m here to service their needs and if I’m accomplishing that then I add value to the organization - that is my intention, that is why I’m here.
Annexure G

**Evaluation Form completed by Recipient**
EVALUATION: Monday, 26 February 2007

Reflect on our session today and tell me about your experiences:

In the session... I wasn't sure what we were going... I participated in each activity without making any connections... my reflective journey left me with considerable dissonance... the afternoon pulled me into... I perceivedartmentalization... I was forced to repress my colleagues... and I was glad to be with these people. The group... I have a connection to all of them from my daily experiences... I realized Anne & Little G learned about the professional role and outcome of the people in the group... I realized we all have our own maps of experiences that have either scared or transformed us... we ended as all winners... but when I have previously engaged... I have not thought about the highs and lows of the experiences of the others... we were brought into an arena where we acknowledged we have... and these experiences define us now, and in the future. We are presently forming a bond in the work place... I was also amazed that we shared thoughts collectively that have previously been walled off and set apart and seen together. The integrity and strength of the session touched me and I had a great sense of energy with others and with myself... I also had a sense of looking forward to the next session... I enjoyed the energy which you facilitated the process of connecting each one of us to ourselves and each other. Thank you.

Throughout the week I thought of 6) Bob... her engagement in the group warmed me... I have had to engage within a new way... she needs the support.