

**DELINQUENT SUBCULTURES
AND THEIR ROLE IN THE SCHOOL CULTURE**

A case study of eighth grade students

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to find out about the delinquent subcultures that exist in secondary schools and their effect on the culture of learning and teaching.

By means of intensive investigation conducted through observation, questionnaire and interviews, qualitative data about the existence of three delinquent subcultures at Setjhaba-sohle secondary school was gathered. From the data collected it was evident that there are delinquent subcultures whose beliefs, norms, values and activities are working against the school culture. Their existence is a result of a reaction to the frustrating situation caused by the home, the school, the society and peer group during the process of socialisation. The findings revealed that there are background factors which force youths into delinquent subcultures. This suggests that if the socialising stimuli to which a developing child is exposed could be corrected, then the disorganisation caused by these subcultures could be kept to its minimum level.

The interviews, observation, and questionnaire conducted at Setjhaba-sohle secondary school revealed the existence of three delinquent subcultures, namely, *Makoloane*, *Matariana*, and *Mapantsola*. Under pressure from their peer groups, together with background factors, these groups had formulated their own values, norms and actions which are different from the school culture.

The conclusion reached is that the type of delinquent subcultures at school is determined by the type of community that the school serves. The existence of these subcultures result as a reaction to malfunctioning and disintegration of the community. If the community can re-integrate, unite and help one another, the circular causality of contributing factors to delinquency can be kept to a minimum.

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DEDICATION

TO MY HUSBAND, DANIEL.



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SECTION ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Delinquent subcultures in secondary schools emerge as a result of both the street gang cultures that is being brought into the school grounds and the home culture of the township learners. According to Cross (1993) subcultures exist where there is some form of organized and recognized constellation of values, behavior and actions which are responded to as being different from the prevailing sets of norms and value system. These values, behavior and actions are the distinguishing characteristics of subcultures.

According to this approach, an attempt is made to take into consideration not only the child, but his environment in its interactive relationship with him (Kapp, 1991: 13). The macro- and micro-environments in which children find themselves have an impact on their development. The change in the macro-environment determines how the children interact with the micro-environment, which includes home, church and school.

A century ago, South Africa was an agricultural country, with its black population living mainly in rural areas. With the discovery of gold and diamonds, large towns were turned into cities where people from rural areas moved to urban areas in search of jobs in the gold and diamond mines. The mining industries gave birth to the development of more cities, thus creating more and a larger variety of job opportunities. The transformation resulted in urbanization and technological development. The movement of people from rural areas to urban areas has resulted in townships that surround the industrial areas.

Overcrowding was one of the social problems experienced by people in Sebokeng township. Most of the industries found in and around Vereeniging have

erected hostels in zone 14 for their employees. These employees invited their family members from rural areas to come and seek jobs in industries around Sebokeng. When these people discovered that it was not easy to find jobs, they started alternative ways of survival such as forming subcultures at the community level. Some of them engaged in criminal activities that were based in hostels and hostel members were alienated from the neighbouring zones because of that. When hostel members were seen in the township, they were attacked and when community members were seen near hostels, they were also attacked. The hostels became a 'no go area' for Sebokeng residents and the township became a 'no go area' for hostel dwellers. These acts of revenge, faction fights and shooting were mostly done nocturnally and anonymously.

A further development to this state of affairs was that the youths took over from their parents and formed vigilante groups. They urged the community to form their own court, known as the Kangaroo court, where community justice was practiced. The court was run by youths who indiscriminately punished community members. Adults were being punished by youths young enough to be their children. When the parents lost control as authority figures, the township became totally chaotic.

When the community is robbed of its essentials, it experiences a state of disorganization. According to Allen and Martin (1994), the essential of the community consists of a sense of security, a sense of significance and a sense of solidarity. With the activities of the vigilante groups in place, community members lost their sense of security. Residents were terrorized by both hostel dwellers and members of the vigilante groups. Out of insecurity and fear, some community members started paying money to members of vigilante groups for protection.

These groups urged the community members to go on strike and to take part in stay aways and rent boycotts. These activities eventually contributed to the high rate of unemployment in the area. The said state of affairs further resulted in poverty, disrupted family relationships and total disorganization of this community. Many children of Sebokeng were exposed to subcultures that were necessary for their existence and survival, and which was part of their daily interaction.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Sebokeng township is situated about 10km from Vereeniging and 50km from Johannesburg. The name Sebokeng originates from the noun *Seboka* meaning 'a crowd' which literally means 'many people grouped together'. The township is dominated by people who speak Zulu, Sepedi, Sesotho and Xhosa.

The representation of these ethnic groups in Sebokeng is the result of migration from the rural areas of Kwazulu Natal, Lesotho, Transkei and *Lebowa*. The township is divided into ten zones. The township was once declared an unrest stricken area due to the activities of vigilante groups and the senseless killings by the hostel dwellers. The community perception of order, discipline and education is shaped and defined by the ongoing violence. This community's behavior is also reflected in the schools. So, for example, the schools constantly experience inter-group fights in the schoolyard, as well as inter-school group fights. On the school premises there are areas which are accessible to some of the pupils only. For example, certain groups are not allowed access to a particular toilet. The schools also experience fights amongst their pupils or with pupils from other neighbouring schools. The fight may be started by two students, branched out to a group affiliated to one student and later extend to inter-group fights which could lead to inter-school fights and eventually killings. The school principals are sometimes forced to call in the assistance of the police when they fear that total chaos might result.

Members of the school community have lost their sense of security. Teachers and principals, as well as pupils, are being killed while in the school yard. Instead of schools serving as institutions for learning, they have been turned into battlefields. All types of delinquent subcultures are found in most township secondary schools. These groups can be identified from one another according to their activities, dress codes and behavior. As people have a tendency to act out their beliefs, the activities of these subcultures reflect their values and beliefs. According to Allen and Martin (1994), education and community are inseparable. There can be no education without community and no community without education. This means that the activities of the community affect the school and the community is affected by the problems found in the school.

The study addresses the problem of the youths in a previously violent township known as Sebokeng. The focus is on youths who have just graduated from primary school and who are in their first year at secondary school. Their first year experiences as influenced by the delinquent subcultures, is the researcher's point of departure.



It is assumed that grade eight learners, after graduating from primary school, are excited to be admitted to the secondary school of their choice. At these institutions their role as senior pupils changes to that of most junior members. As a result, they are likely to experience pressure from their schoolmates and the new school culture. Some of these pupils were captains in various sporting activities and some were prefects at their former schools. These sudden changes require them to adjust to the rules and regulations of the new school. The stage in which grade eight pupils find themselves is regarded by Bronfenbrenner (1979) as ecological transition. That is a stage that occurs whenever a person's position in the ecological environment is altered as a result of a change in role or setting. Grade eight learners experience a change in the settings in that their school environment has changed. As young adolescents, grade eight pupils are

engaged in the process of self-evaluation within the context of their peer- group. Their peers often become their reference group, due to them being pre-occupied with peer acceptance. Conformity and compliance to one's peer group are norms which grade eight learners would adhere to because of their lack of confidence and their quest for a sense of belonging to their new school environment.

1.3 THE RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study is to find out the reasons why some pupils affiliate to delinquent subcultures. Secondly, it is to find out how grade eight pupils experience the subcultures as found in secondary schools. With regard to this statement, the general aims of the research are to:

- Find out the types of delinquent subcultures that are present at Setjhaba-sohle school.
- The perception of grade eight pupils about the subcultures at their school.
- Determine the background factors that are likely to encourage pupils to be members of the subcultures.
- To guide grade eight pupils into making informed choices about subcultures they would like to be affiliated to.
- Suggest intervention strategies to members of the delinquent subculture with the aim of rehabilitating them.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions will guide the data collection process.

- What are the reasons for delinquent subcultures' existence in secondary schools?
- What are the distinguishing characteristics of the delinquent subcultures at secondary schools?
- What are the effects of subcultures on the ethos of the school?
- How can grade eight learners be assisted in making informed choices about affiliation to these groups?

1.5 RESEARCH STRATEGY AND METHODS

In this qualitative research design, the gathered data was provided by the subjects of the study. The relevant methods were an in-depth interview, focus group interview, questionnaire, as well as observation by the researcher. The purpose of methodology triangulation is to overcome the weakness or biases of one method. Henning (1997) suggests that the qualitative method, if used correctly, can outweigh any weakness or biases.

Individual in-depth interviews were conducted with a sample of nine grade eight pupils. The participants were selected randomly. The same subjects also participated in the focus group interview. In both types of interviews, a structured interview guide was prepared before hand. The researcher was free to explore, probe and ask follow up questions that would elucidate and illuminate the subject in question (Patton, 1987). According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994) the focus group interview is an opportunity to observe a selected group of people discussing the topic that the researcher is investigating. In this approach, I hoped to bring to the fore the general perception of the focus group about the subcultures and the effect it has on their daily interaction with teachers and their schoolmates. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) stated that a questionnaire is a written set of questions or statements that assesses attitudes, opinions, beliefs and biographic information. The data that the questionnaire harnessed, was used to build on the demographic and biographic profile of the research population. Ten pupils from each of the three grade eight classes were asked to complete the questionnaire. The pupils were selected randomly. As one of the educators at Setjhaba-sohle secondary school, I wore the mask of an observer. The data gathered from the observation consisted of a detailed description of the population's behavior, staff actions and a full range of human interaction (Patton:1987).

The researcher conducted unstructured interviews with members of the school community who served as key informants to the study. This included teachers, the principal, and pupils in higher grades who are knowledgeable about the subject in question. In this research inquiry the researcher used methodology triangulation, that is, according to Leedy (1993), the use of two or more methods of data collection procedures within a single study. The purpose is to cross-validate the collected data so as to endorse the outcomes of the study. In addition, the researcher studied literature related to the topic in question in order to have a broader view on it.

1.6 THEORETICAL POPULATION

The theoretical population of this study was all grade eight pupils at secondary schools in Sebokeng zone 14. I decided on this group as they were likely to undergo developmental and ecological transition because of their newness in secondary schools. Their experience and perception of subcultures and the school culture in a new situation was explored in this research. The sample frame was grade eight pupils at Setjhaba-sohle secondary school.

The school has three grade eight classes with the teacher pupil ratio being 1: 35. The subjects participated in an in-depth interview, focus group interview and some of them also complete questionnaires. The youths who participated in both the in-depth and the focus group interviews were from the sample population. This helped to permit generalization of the findings at Setjhaba-sohle secondary school.

1.7 THE MAIN THEORETICAL VIEW

The research is framed by the theory of community from Sergiovanni (1994). His discussion of Toñnie's theory of *gemeinschaft* and *gesellschaft* and its application in schools, forms the baseline of the theoretical framework. Also Glanz's theory (1994) of forming attachments between family, school and the community supported by Kindred et. al, (1984) about the essentials of the community and Townsend's theory (1994) of effective schools for community core-plus education are pillars of this study.

1.8 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

For the purpose of this study, the following concepts need explanation.

1.8.1 Delinquent subcultures

According to Wilson (1994), the concept applies specifically to the beliefs, values and the practices of a particular social group or division. It is often class or age, based within a larger stratified society. Delinquent subculture is seen to be the product of social disorganization and competing values." Delinquent subculture is made up of students who rejected their school's academic and social value." Popenoe (1983: 410).

1.8.2 Secondary school

Alexander and Saylor (1966) defined a secondary school as an agency which is formerly organized by society to provide a systematic program of education for an adolescent member of the group, after they have completed the elementary level of schooling. This means that this agency provides formal education beyond the primary phase.

Each and every secondary school is unique as it is governed by its own culture. There is a reciprocal influence between a school culture and the delinquent subculture. Wilson (1994) stated that the schools contribute in the production of youth culture, and the significance of the youth cultures is shaping the education of the youths.

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE RESEARCH ESSAY

This essay is divided into four sections. Section one provides an overview of the study. Section two deals with the conceptual and theoretical framework. Section three provides a description of the methodology, how the data was collected and analyzed. Section four is the report on the research findings. This process engages interpretation of information, validation, forming the conclusion and then making recommendations.

1.10 CONCLUSION

Having justified the need for the study, given an overview, and the background thereof, it will be necessary for me to conduct the relevant literature review, the purpose being to acquire a wider view of the study. If this study can effectively make use of the collected data, categorized efficiently and assessed in order to make correct findings, this may be of value to Setjhaba-sohle secondary school's teaching personnel, management, learners in general and grade eight in particular. It is assumed that the community around the school will also benefit from the outcomes of this study.



SECTION TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The Gauteng MEC for education, Mary Metcalf established the Committee on Culture of Learning and Teaching (CCOLT) in early 1995. This was in response to the claim that in schools, schooling appeared to be broken down. This report pronounced the collapse of the culture of learning and teaching in secondary schools according to Chisholm and Vally (1996). The purpose of the committee was to assist the new education department in developing an understanding of the factors that contribute to or prevent the successful climate of teaching and learning and to come up with recommendations on what could be done to remedy the situation.

One of the factors that was assumed to be the contributing factor to the collapse of the culture of teaching and learning, and teaching in secondary schools, is the presence of delinquent subcultures in these institutions. These subcultures arose as countercultures to the school culture; thus adding detrimental factors to the school community and the educational community. As the school culture of individual schools differs from one another, the subcultures found in them are also different. As we cannot separate education from community, the achievement of democracy by the school also calls for democracy in the community. Gunter (1985) indicates that a democratic society is characterized by a feeling of belonging together, a sharing of a common bond among its members. It is also characterized by an interest on the part of every member in the welfare of the other and the society as a whole. In this context, the effects of subcultures in existence at secondary school do not affect the school only, but the society too.

Members of a school community who are at high risk of being affected by these subcultures are the grade eight pupils. The fact that they are new at these institutions, and lacking experience on how the institution is run, makes them the soft target for members of these subcultures. Another thing that makes them vulnerable to these subcultures is their age and their developmental stages. The age of grade eight pupils is between fourteen and sixteen years. They are in the early stage of adolescence, and are therefore experiencing extreme developmental and environmental changes. They are pre-occupied with their formation of identity. According to Macionis (1995), young people display anxious conformity to their peers because of the new identity and sense of belonging which eases the apprehensions provoked by breaking away from the family. They are constantly exposed to two incompatible pressures: their parents and teachers as authority figures and their peer group as their reference group. This is the cross-pressure according to Ambert (1998), which is a term used in child development to refer to an adolescent who is subjected to influences that oppose each other. For instance, parents teach and emphasize the value of hard work while peers put pressure on the youngster to "party" rather than study.

The same cross-pressure is experienced by the grade eighths at secondary schools. These students are likely to be pressurized by different sources in the school environment. The two contradicting cultures, namely, the school culture and the delinquent subculture, will be influential in their adjustment to the new situation. This is reflected in the response of a secondary school pupil in the March edition of the *Yizo-Yizo* magazine (1999). "I am here to rule grade eights." These were the words of a student who demands a protection fee at the toilets from grade eight pupils. Others say that they also force grade eights to buy cigarettes and to smoke against their will. They are made to keep quiet about the ill-treatment or otherwise risk the chances of being physically assaulted in and outside the school yards. These grade eights are overpowered by subcultures and end up joining them. Members of these subcultures deliberately put pressure

on pupils in grade eight to recruit them; thus increasing their membership. These subcultures become a circular causality of breaking the culture of learning and teaching in secondary schools. Delinquent subcultures have their loyal members in all the grades and continue to lure others in lower grades. Members take advantage of the fact that grade eight pupils are the novices of their institutions.

The focus of this study is to identify and interpret different types of delinquent subcultures that are in existence at the secondary schools in zone 14 of Sebokeng. The purpose is to deduce the contributory factors that are likely to force youths into joining these subcultures from the ecosystems' point of view. It is also to suggest possible reasons why grade eight pupils affiliate to the delinquent subcultures rather than the school culture.

2.2 ECOSYSTEMATICAL VIEW OF THE DELINQUENT SUBCULTURES

In order to understand the concept and the context of delinquent subcultures, one has to consider the circular causal factors that lead to these subcultures being formed, and how their members are kept loyal to them. As an educator, one has to find a way of breaking the continuous interruption of these subcultures to the school culture. According to Van Niekerk and Meier (1995) South Africa is not the first country in the history of the world that has had to deal with social and political crises affecting its youths. The difference between the subculture youth movements in South Africa and those in the rest of the world is that locally, the number of individuals conforming to subcultures constitutes not merely hundreds or even thousands, but millions of social "outsiders" or peripheral figures. The question is, what could be the cause of this conformity? What pushes youngsters into these subcultures? In trying to break into this web of attraction the researcher had to assume a system's theory. According to Dowling and Osborne (1995) the reality is, behavior is intimately dependent on the context in which it occurs. They further stated that when educational problems

arise, it is useful to examine the problem in the dual context of the family and the school. In support to the said view, Gunter (1985) indicates that the success of the school depends to a large extent on the foundation laid in the home as well as the support and co-operation of the parents of these children. According to the ecosystem view, one has to take into consideration not only the developing child, but the environment and the people who interactively relate to the child. This indicates how the developing children interact with other human beings. This interaction of human beings is called socialization. According to Meintjies (1992) socialization is a process in which children acquire the values, beliefs and behavior that are expected in their culture. These norms and values are transferred by the agents of socialization along the developmental stages of the child. The following are agents of socialization according to Meintjies (1992): micro-educational (the family), meso-educational (the school), macro-educational (the society) and the peer group. The four milieus are interdependent and interrelated. If the process of socialization in one milieu happens to deviate from its role, that deviation will be reflected in the milieu that follows. The delinquent subculture is the culture within a parent culture that emerges as a reaction to the deviance that different milieus have created as the child is socialized from one milieu to the other.

For the purpose of this study, deviance of the four social settings that are likely to lead the youths to delinquent subcultures will be discussed. The reason for discussing these settings and their influences is that both the grade eight learners and members of delinquent subcultures have used these environments and are also reflecting their effects. The behavior they display is the product of the said setting.

2.2.1 THE HOME ENVIRONMENT

Modern families are formed by a legal union of a man and woman who happen to love each other. After marriage the couple will cohabit and later bear children.

Such a family is called a nuclear family. A family unit consisting of one or more nuclear families plus other relatives is called an extended family. Popenoe (1983) further indicated that human love and affection are as important to the infant and child as food and shelter are, and they remain important throughout life. However, if the family cannot provide love, which is one of the most needed human needs, it deviates in its role as a socializing environment.

2.2.1.1 Affective neglect as a cause of juvenile delinquency

In the rural areas before industrialization, the upbringing of the child was not the responsibility of the biological parents only, it was the task of both parents and kin. However, the bond between the nuclear family and the extended family was broken during the process of urbanization. The upbringing of the child is entrusted to the nuclear family only. Due to the economical demand of the urban areas, the upbringing of the children is being shared with other agents of society such as schools, day-care centres and the next door neighbours. According to Cloete and Conradie (1983) affective neglect is a form of neglect that prevents the child's emotional life from developing. This happens when a child receives too little parental love. If in infancy or early childhood, the child suffers from lack of maternal love, the remainder of his/her further development will be affected by it. In most cases illegitimate children are born in a relationship where one partner, usually the biological father, shows less affectionate love to the child. The mother has to work in order to survive. Such mothers usually work far away from home where they cannot have daily contact with their children. Many children from Sebokeng township experience affective neglect due to them being raised by their grandparents or being left alone, as parents are working far from home. According to Meintjies (1992:11) a family should be an oasis of love, security, trust and care in the bizarre human desert. He further indicated that a child who is emotionally rejected or neglected and does not experience love and support in his family, will often turn away from his home to outside groups that are frequently deviant in character. Most children who are victims of affective neglect in

Sebokeng area are those born out of wedlock. According to *Basotho* culture a child born in this way deprives his/her mother the possibility of getting married. If she happens to get married, she has to start a new family that excludes her illegitimate children. Grandparents are entrusted with the upbringing of that child, regardless of whether they are too old to raise another child. There is the possibility of constant conflict between them and the child because of the generation gap. Although most grandparents do love their grandchildren, some of them tend to abuse them. In such situations, a child experiences rejection from his/her biological parents. If death happens to separate the illegitimate child from the grandparents, his/her uncle takes over. That is why illegitimate children are called *mosalahae* meaning remaining home. The child thus faces an uncertain future and is therefore insecure. Lack of protection, according to Popenoe (1983), may harm the physical, intellectual and emotional growth as well as the social development of the child. These youths are the ones likely to become loyal members of the delinquency subcultures or are at risk of affiliation to youth subcultures.

2.2.1.2 Single parenting

The possibility of single parenting may be due to the death of one parent, teen parenthood, never married mothers, or due to separation. Whatever the case might be, the result is that usually this becomes a female headed household. Such families may be good for girls but not for boys. This situation may create a role frustration for boys, especially if they are in the adolescent stage. According to Craig (1992:360) the boy who is living with his mother may take on the role of "man of the house". This role confusion state is aggravated by boys who come from circumcision schools known as *Makoloane*. These boys are pre-occupied by the perception that since they have graduated from the initiation schools they are "men" who have the know-how to practice their manhood. Society's expectations of them to solve their problems and their constant view of women as inferior, encourage the boys from the initiation schools to undermine orders from females.

A boy with such a perception could make it difficult for his mother to be engaged in a new relationship. Cronjé et. al. (1987) indicated that the identification with his father is very important for a boy, but if identification is made impossible by the disturbed relationship with the father, the boy can seek masculine identification outside the family and perhaps find it in the street groups where he can try to prove his manliness through illicit violence. Sergiovanni (1994) regards this type of belonging as artificial because the family failed to provide it. This type of belonging will be distorted, as lack of attachment will be altered to being as loyalty to the gang while lack of trust could result in a member becoming excessively dependent on gang members. Because of the problems of single parenting, children have no stable place to stay. The child frequently changes residence. As families use different parenting styles, the child constantly becomes frustrated as these parental styles send different messages to him/ her. In Sebokeng township, the frequent change of residence by most of the pupils is reflected by the transfers of children from one school to another, citing reasons such as staying with another relative as the cause for movement.

2.2.1.3 Parental styles

Parenting styles depend on how the parents apply the dimensions of control and caring. Ideally, parents limit the child's autonomy and instill values and self-control, while taking care not to undermine the child's curiosity, initiative, or competence Craig (1992). An emphasis on one or both of the dimensions is likely to produce a child who is not socialized adequately. Authoritarian parents are controlling and adhere rigidly to rules. To them a rule remains a rule and it needs to be followed. They issue commands and expect their children to follow them without questioning. The effect this parental style has on a child is that it tends to produce a child who is withdrawn, fearful and who exhibits little independence. These children are sometimes moody, unassertive and irritable. During adolescence boys, in particular, may overreact to the restrictive, pushing environment of the schools. They may respond in a rebellious and aggressive

way. This kind of behavior puts him at high risk of affiliating to the delinquent subcultures at the school and in the community. Another parental style that could have an effect on children is the permissive style. This literally means that parents permit their children to do as they wish. These are parents who place few or no restrictions on their children and who tend to be high on warmth (Craig :1992). Such parents are likely to use indulgent and overprotective discipline. Indulgent discipline is the type of discipline in which the child is spoiled. This type of spoiling is sometimes evident in well-off families and a family with an only child. If the child's material desires are satisfied and he is given everything, he wants more and more. He is likely to develop a sense of boredom and lead an aimless life. These spoiled children grow up selfish with an inadequate sense of responsibility. This impedes their socialization and their ultimate integration into the community where they have to accept a specific responsibility. Children can also be self-indulgent, impulsive and socially inept.

Lerner and Villarret (1994) indicated that, if parents do not monitor or supervise, guide or communicate with their children effectively, there is a strong likelihood that 'at risk' status will be actualized. They further stated that a home environment that involves rejection, neglect, disinterest, hostile control, parent-child conflict and lack of family organization is associated with adolescents running away from home. However, Abrahamsen, in Meintjies (1992) postulates that unfavorable social conditions or poor environment cannot offer any conclusive explanation to criminal behavior because many law-abiding people have grown up and lived in such conditions. These law-abiding people are what Craig (1992) calls resilient children. According to her, resilient children are children who overcome difficult environments to lead socially competent lives. Meintjies (1992) indicated that the society must be organized so that even in a family where the parents have neglected their educational tasks, the child and juvenile can find his/her place in the community.

2.2.2 NEIGHBOURHOOD INFLUENCE TO DELINQUENT SUBCULTURE

Of the four milieus that are necessary for the education and socialization of the developing child, the macro-educational milieu is the most important one as the micro-milieu is embedded in it. The meso-milieu serves as a bridge between the two while the three milieus determine the types of peer groups the society should have Meintjies (1992). Societal organization may vary from rural to urban areas. The process of urbanization gave birth to the establishment of townships in and around industrial areas. Sebokeng is one of the townships situated about fifty kilometers from Johannesburg. According to Cronjé et.al. (1987) delinquency is at its highest in the areas near the city center and is also common in commercial and industrial areas. The number of offenses decreases as the distance of the home from the city center increases. Given the geographic statistics of how far Sebokeng township is from the city center, it is the type of the township where delinquency is likely to be high. Cloete and Conradie (1983) stated that urbanization requires that the individual be able to maintain himself in a sophisticated life-network that is knotted by a variety of people in vaguely defined and shifting social patterns.

2.2.2.1 The socio-pedagogic implication of urbanization

Urbanization, according to Sergiovanni's (1994) theory of community describes the shifting values and the orientation that occurred as Sebokeng residents moved from the agricultural to the industrial society. He further stated that each of the societal transformations resulted in a shift away from a *gemeinschaft* towards *gesellschaft*. This transformation had an impact in the upbringing of children. In an agricultural society the rearing of children was the responsibility of the nuclear family as well as the extended family members. In the industrial society, the upbringing of the child becomes the responsibility of the nuclear

family, the schools and day care centers. The process of urbanization caused the break down of family life. According to Van Niekerk and Meier (1995) the immigrant labor systems further eroded family life by keeping black male workers in immigrant labor compounds where women and children were not allowed access. In the absence of the father the mothers became the authority figure. A family in which a mother becomes the head, the children are affected differently according to their sex. For a girl, her mother serves as a sense of security whereas a boy may feel insecure by the role model displayed by his mother. He may perceive it as a failure on the part of the father and this deprives him of his role model if his father is not available.

After the abolition of the influx control acts of 1985, people moved as families from rural areas to urban areas in search of better job opportunities and improved lifestyles. With hostels being turned into family units, more and more people moved to the cities. Urban areas became overcrowded. Sebokeng experienced overcrowding and depletion of its neighbourhood resources. The four-roomed match-box houses were overcrowded, resulting in children sharing a room with their parents and thus creating a lack of privacy. To counteract this lack of privacy families started erecting separate houses on a single plot. The individual plots became overcrowded and the general appearance of the township deteriorated. The job opportunities decreased as more people moved to the city-center. With a lack of job opportunities people started alternative ways of survival by engaging in unconventional means of financial success such as theft, house breaking and vandalizing public places such as schools. In reaction to the said criminal activities, Sebokeng residents formed vigilante groups. Members of the vigilante groups consisted of the so called "marginalised youths" who were at the forefront of the struggle. Most of them were school drop-outs who were misled by slogans such as 'liberation first and education last'. In their activities as members of the vigilante groups, they formed Kangaroo courts where community problems were solved and the suspects were convicted and punished.

The activities of vigilante groups made youths adherent to a subculture that adopted a code of conduct of sanctioning violence and crime as a normal pursuit. Such a social environment was demoralizing. Van Niekerk and Meier (1995) further indicated that life in an environment where murder, assaults, rape, arson and beating flourishes, violence had become a means of survival for many children. The degree of lawlessness in Sebokeng in 1984 was so bad, that the township was declared a violence stricken area.

2.2.2.2 Unemployment as a sociological implication of urbanization

Members of the vigilante group became a delinquent subculture group that operated at community level. Such a culture, according to Cloete and Conradie (1983) created authority structures and meeting places and allowed social boundaries to be distinctive. They urged community to go on strikes and stay away. Most members of the community lost their jobs and it became difficult for them to find new jobs as they were unskilled. Vacancies were for people with special skills. The rate of unemployment went high which led to the exclusion and frustration of its victims. Unemployed people became demoralized as chances of getting new jobs gradually became slimmer. They used to hang around on the street corners, became regular customers at the shebeens. These areas encouraged them to be involved in criminal activities. If unemployed fathers are socially excluded, they set a bad example to boys, who might think that their father's stigma will affect them as they will be associated with them. In most cases, if the father is unemployed the mother tries several ways of generating money. She can either secure a job which will, in most cases, take most of her time or she can go away from the children and expose them to the affective neglect discussed earlier. If she opts to open up a shebeen in the house, this will degrade the family morals as children will constantly be exposed to adults who are drunk. As children copy what they see in their surroundings such children run the risk of becoming future drunkards. The consequences of unemployment can push family members into criminal activities because when

conventional means of accumulating financial success do not flourish, community members have no choice but to engage in any unconventional means available. Van Niekerk and Meier (1995) indicated that there is a direct correlation between unemployment, poor education, poor housing, poverty and crime.

2.2.2.3 Poor social environment and its effect on juvenile delinquency

"A poverty area is so defined when at least one of every five households are classified as poor" (Ambert 1998: 59). He further indicated that as joblessness rises in the neighbourhood, so does poverty. Poverty and social disorganization are singled out as the contributory factors that push teenagers into the streets where they are likely to be exposed to all sorts of crime. Signals such as street kids, prostitution, public drinking by children, abuse of both children and women and open gambling are present in Sebokeng. Most of the youths in this township are involved in street bashes where drinking alcohol is done in public coupled with loud *Kwaito* music with group dance by members of *Mapantsola*. These types of parties are organized by youths with the aim of accumulating money. Under-age youngsters are allowed to buy liquor and drink in public. While youngsters go to organized parties, adults spend much of their time in shebeens. These shebeens are also visited by youngsters at any time and especially during school hours. There is no age restriction. The aim of the shebeen queen is to accumulate money. According to Van Niekerk and Meier (1995) activities habitually engaged in by many young urban blacks are vagrancy, playing soccer, organizing political meetings, smoking dagga, participating in street fights and visiting shebeens. Young people start using alcohol at an early age, thus double their chances of being alcoholics in their adult stage. Although they are attending school, education is not among the activities that take much of their time. They are absenting themselves on a regular basis, especially on Mondays and Fridays. According to Ambert (1998) there are four risks that confront children in areas of poverty. She stated that children who live in impoverished

neighbourhoods are disadvantaged at the educational level. This is expressed by the value they place on education when they absent themselves from school on a regular basis. Secondly, they are not socialized in terms of development of the social skills needed in the workplace or in work ethics. Those children who work hard and pass matric, are frustrated as financial hardships prevent them from furthering their studies. Out of boredom, they join their ex-classmates, who dropped out of school prematurely, at the street corners. The frustrated youths start to question the need to get a matric as they see a young man, who had not been to school, doing well by selling drugs and stealing cars. He then becomes their hero. They ultimately join him as he provides a shortcut towards financial success. Thirdly, children in impoverish environments are generally not receiving adequate supervision from adults. In these environments parents usually work long hours away from home.

In the absence of their parents, young children affiliate with gangs that rule the area. They go out and steal and when they come home with stolen goods, some of the parents, due to poverty, cherish them. Others may not even be aware that there are stolen goods in their houses as they spend much of their time away from their homes. The last risk that confronts children in areas of poverty, is that they are unprotected. Lack of supervision leaves children roaming the streets, which are dangerous. They are exposed to peers who may not resist the lure of deviant activities. Ambert (1998) indicated that even when parents can monitor the youths, the neighbourhood violence they witness still affects them, creating stress against which there is no protection.

2.2.2.4 Unemployment and the youth

The effects of unemployment do not only concern young people without qualifications, it also affects graduates with professional training. The existing perception is that education is the key to financial success. People worked hard in matric and at colleges of education, to graduate as secondary or primary

schools teachers. To their dismay, the education system is unable to employ them. Even those who are in the system, are threatened with redeployment and are encouraged to opt for severance package. This state of affair frustrates both the employed and the unemployed young teachers. According to Van Niekerk and Meier (1995), these youths try to express their sense of outrage at perceived betrayal by the education system, by becoming involved in subculture activities directed at disrupting teaching.

When pupils are still struggling to pass matric, they see their friends and siblings who have passed matric with exemptions and other who have just graduated as professionals adding to the unemployment statistics. They stop trying to pursue education as a means of accumulating financial success. To them education has become ineffective in enhancing the social achievement of the youths. People who drop out of the school and adopt alternative ways of living become their role models (Van Niekerk and Meier, 1995). Even students who opt to pursue with their studies, fail in large numbers. Financial constraints on those who pass, deprives them from entering tertiary institutions. Youth unemployment is high in Sebokeng. Most of the youths do not see any reason to get matric and therefore come to school to pass the time. They do not bother to work hard at school because they do not see the value of being educated. Youths who have a negative view about education, are the ones who are used by drug lords as agents of drug trafficking. They constantly create problems for the school community and force youngsters in lower grades to join them in abusing drugs. That is why the activities of delinquent subcultures continuously disturb the school culture.

2.2.3 THE SCHOOL AS A SOCIALIZING AGENT

The school as a meso-educational milieu serves as a bridge between the family and the society. According to Townsend (1994), for the school to be effective, all goals, both mandatory and locally, would need to be achieved by all or most of

the students. He further indicated that every school has a unique mix of people, consisting of the teaching personnel, students and the community in which the school is situated. It is the wish of the Gauteng Department of Education to instill a culture of learning and teaching, hence the establishment of CCOLT, which is the acronym for Committee on the Culture of Learning and Teaching. The purpose was to come up with strategies that will help in transforming bad schools into good schools and good schools into excellent schools. Townsend (1994) indicated that if the concept of the effective school was expanded to include the whole community, instead of just students as the client group for the school, then the core-plus school might emerge. According to him, to re-establish what the core should be, government would need to be involved in the need assessment of the community they serve, to clearly establish what they see as necessary knowledge for the next generation of learning students. In working towards the core-plus school, there is a need to improve the quality and effectiveness of the decision-making that occurs at the school level and to ensure that the 'plus' component of the curriculum fits in. The fact that South Africa is a democratic country calls for the adoption of the core-plus schooling where the school facilities are open to the community it serves.

In explaining what the school culture is, Townsend (1994) stated that it comprises all the tangible, intangible and symbolic elements of organizational life. Some of the tangible features include the school vision or philosophy, the school goals as the way in which the vision can be accomplished and the school policy. While the intangible feature includes values held by people at the school that underpin the policies of the school, the quality of the process used by the school and the quality of the relationship brought about by those processes. Symbolic features include the policy of inclusion, the way the school honours and rewards its people for their services and the way in which the school experience is shared. As every school strives towards effectiveness, each differs in its school culture.

2.2.3.1 Classroom management system that creates frustration

According to Bruner (1996), educational practices in the classroom are premised on a set of folk beliefs about the learner's mind. If a teacher believes that children are empty vessels that are to be filled with knowledge that only the adult provides, his/her didactic teaching will be based on the notion of presenting pupils with facts, principles and rules of action that are to be learned, remembered and then applied. In the process of fanatical cramming of knowledge into children's heads he/she destroys many vulnerable young minds. He/she creates an unbearable situation and tension in the classroom that makes learning painful. Children will react to these frustrating situations in different ways. Some will stop studying and rather fail while others may play truant, become rebellious, absent themselves during that period and in its extreme, such children may drop out of school.

Freire and Shor (1987) termed the teaching practice that emphasizes rote learning a "banking method." The term is used as a metaphor to explain the said traditional teaching method. If a teacher uses the banking method, his/her subject matter becomes an act of depositing, in which students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues a communiqué and makes the deposits that the students patiently receive, memorize and repeat. In that particular classroom, pupils are given a lot of notes to transcribe and memorize without understanding. Such a teacher believes that his/her success is determined by the measure of scholastic success achieved by their pupils. If they fail to reach the standard, pupils become frustrated and express this by playing truant or by questioning the value of education which is reflected by lack of purpose in school work. They then start to share the same value as the delinquent subcultures and end up joining them. According to Daniel and Safer (1982) one of the distinctive features of the

secondary school is that the learners receive instructions from many teachers who hold different beliefs about them. They further indicated that when different teachers are involved in the education of students, disruptiveness increases as the educational climates become more impersonal. The impersonality of the education is aggravated by teachers who prefer the banking method of teaching as explained before. The structural pattern and the area of the school contribute to delinquent behavior. Nearly two thirds of violent acts in secondary schools occur as students move from their classes to areas such as libraries, laboratories and home economics centers. By decreasing the use of and controlling the access to these places the student violence may lessen (Daniel and Safer, 1982). At the school in focus there are two blocks of double storey buildings. The second block has a laboratory, library and a home economics classroom. These areas are frequently used by pupils from all grades. On their way to and from these areas some pupils fight while others get a chance of bunking classes that are held in the said areas. Others enter lower classes and when they find no teacher, they boss pupils around.

2.2.3. 2 Teacher pupil relations and emphasis on scholastic achievement

Teachers in the school situations are parents' substitutes and authority figures. However, they cannot issue commands that they themselves cannot practice. They should lead exemplary lives. Cronjé et. al. (1987) and Chisholm and Vally (1996) shared the same view that education and instruction are impossible unless there is a sound mutual trust and respect between teachers and pupils. According to Chisholm and Vally (1996), a school that identified a positive and co-operative relationship between teachers and pupils as their strength, singled out the fact that students had respect for teachers and teachers have respect for the principal and that there is unity in the school. Even when unity in schools can be achieved, if the social environment is violent, the school also will have violent elements in it. As Sebokeng was once declared a violence stricken area,

the community is still practicing mob justice as they have little confidence in the justice system. Pupils who are in grade eight now, have experienced a lot of violence and humiliation caused by vigilante groups in their areas. In the classroom situation every pupil should be regarded as a totality. Not only one part of an individual should be excessively stimulated at the expense of the other. Cronjé et. al. (1987) indicated that teachers and schools often tend to overemphasize scholastic and intellectual achievement instead of educating the whole child, and preparing him/her for the future. The schools which stress of academic achievement emphasize what Kanpol (1994) terms negative competition. It is negative because it gives an impression that only the best can and will succeed, and that the only way to succeed is at the expense of another person. This type of competition erodes the right of individuals to be treated for who they are. At the school in focus, negative competition is practiced as pupils are given merit certificates for being amongst the top ten in every grade and getting higher marks in particular subjects. This can be a problem for pupils who will keep on trying their best without any success. This stage of continuous trial and constant failure is what Hamachek (1995) calls learned helplessness. Pupils experiencing the learned helplessness are likely to engage in attention seeking activities such as being violent with other pupils, becoming rebellious or affiliating to delinquent subcultures in order to get a sense of belonging and recognition.

2.2.4 PEER GROUP AS A CAUSE OF JUVENILE DELINQUENCY IN SCHOOLS

The educational milieu of a developing child change as he/she grows. For an infant, the family is the only educational and social milieu, followed by the school and the society. At adolescent stage, the peer group milieu takes over. According to Foster-Clark and Blyth (1991) the vital role of the adolescent peer group is the transition from parental dependency to autonomous selfhood. Peer relations

become more intense and carry a psychological importance during the adolescent period, especially during early adolescence. At the early stage of adolescence, an individual feels the need to belong to a peer group of his/her choice. Coleman and Hendry (1995) indicated that the desire to identify with one's peer group requires adherence to particular norms, behavior and role performance that impose conformity. The type of neighbourhood has an influence on peer group activities. "Young people living in a high delinquency area or attending a high delinquency school are more likely to become delinquent" (Coleman and Hendry, 1995:133).

Cloete and Conradie (1983) suggested models to explain juvenile delinquency. These models will be cited as the reasons for youth misconduct in secondary schools. For the purpose of this discussion, it will be hypothesized that all human beings within a particular delinquent subculture pursue the same goal. The three theories that will be discussed, are the Merton's strain theory, the labeling theory and the delinquent subculture's theory.

According to Macionis (1995) Merton's strain theory is based on the concept of societal ambivalence. It is concerned with the cultural goal such as wealth and the means such as hard work or schooling to achieve it. The essence of conformity to the cultural goal is to pursue conventional goals by approved means. But young people raised in poor neighbourhoods may see little hope of becoming successful if they play by the rules. As a result, they seek wealth through crime. This type of crime is what Merton calls deviance innovation, which means, the attempt to achieve a culturally approved goal (wealth), using unconventional means (drug sale). This kind of deviance results from a "strain" between society's emphasis on material success and the limited opportunity it provides in becoming successful. "Delinquent activities have a social meaning which is rewarded in some way by the social groups in which it occurs"(Coleman and Hendry, 1995: 134). For a delinquent child, wearing expensive clothes means he/she will be regarded as successful by the community. In the school

situation, pupils who take recourse to deviance innovation are easily recognized with regard to the way in which they deal with fundamental relations. They will still pursue academical success as a cultural goal, but no longer by way of conscientious studying, as is socially prescribed, but by way of dishonest practices in tests and examinations. Pupils who resort to copying, bunking classes and playing truant, and emphasizing the slogan of "Pass one pass all" may fall into this category. Pupils who promote themselves to higher grades by producing false reports and transfer letters as official documents, is another example of pupils in this category.

The labeling theory is based on the fact that people are categorized negatively because they behaved wrongly, and it transfers a negative symbolic and stigmatized label onto them. When there is an infringement of the law in a community, members tend to suspect a person who once was guilty of the same offense. They may hurt that person on the pretext that they are doing mob justice without taking other factors into consideration, such as concrete evidence. For instance if a learner was previously found guilty of using drugs, rape, alcohol abuse or rioting, it is likely that when such negative activities reoccur, that learner might be taken in for questioning as he/she is regarded as the potential culprit. In the dark years of apartheid in South Africa, some students were labelled ringleaders or *voorbokke*. This was an indication that they are at the forefront of student riots. They were the first to be held for questioning whenever the school was experiencing any form of disruption.

The delinquent subculture theory represents a reaction against a low-class stigma by those who cannot achieve the middle-class standards of the dominant culture but who attempt to enhance their status by defiance of these standards. As a reactionary group this subculture therefore inverts the norms and values of the dominant culture. What is regarded as wrong from the parent cultural point of view is regarded as correct from their point of view. To be able to maintain the inversion of conventional values, a particular sense of group cohesion must be

amongst members of the delinquent subculture. Members of this delinquent subculture have the tendency to be deliberately malicious. To gang members crime is a means to an end. Juvenile gangs, however, often steal without regard for personal gain or profit. The irrational, malicious actions of juvenile gangs are clearly perceptible in the school. Reid, in Cloete and Conradie (1983:71) forwards the rude pranks played on teachers, theft of laboratory equipment which is useless outside the laboratory as evidence of them committing crimes simply "for the hell of it". Another example of an activity of delinquent subcultures is their tendency to gather at the street corner without any activity in mind. They will hang around in the corridors of shopping complexes keeping themselves occupied. Typical impulsive behavior that pupils in this category exhibit, are that small groups of gang members play truant during school hours. When one member does not feel like staying at school for the day, he can influence other members to also stay away.

2.2.4.1 THE INFLUENCE OF PEER GROUP PRESSURE

According to Foster-Clark and Blyth (1991) among the most fundamental changes during adolescence, is the restructuring of social relationships including the increased importance of peer relations and their influence over the adolescent's behavior and development. They further stated that one's peer group increasingly becomes a reference point for behavior during adolescence, by providing a standard by which adolescents measure their own behavior. "Reference group is a social group that serves as a point of reference in making evaluation and decisions," states Macionis (1995:184). Peers also take a more active role in shaping behavior by exerting explicit pressure for conformity, which peaks in adolescence.

Peer pressure and peer conformity are different in influencing youngsters. Peer conformity is a voluntary action from juveniles whereas peer pressure is an external pressure exerted by members of the delinquent subcultures in order to

force their members to comply with their rules and regulations. According to Coleman and Hendry (1995) the key influences to membership of delinquent subcultures are delinquent association, delinquent values, school experiences and parent-child relationships. Foster-Clark and Blyth (1991) indicated that the influence peers exert on youngsters differs between boys and girls. Boys tend to be more susceptible to the influence of their peers, but the difference only holds for antisocial behavior. The reason for less peer influence on girls is, according to Ambert (1998) that they are more restricted to the home and its immediate context. The absence of a role model, especially for boys could also increase the influence of peer groups. Coleman and Hendry (1995) indicated that simultaneous parent and peer influence are not necessarily contradictory. In support of the above statement Foster-Clark and Blyth (1991) indicated that peer versus parental influence varies by issue, with peers more influential on lifestyle consideration and certain aspects of behavior while parents remain more influential in more difficult and value-laden concerns such as education.

2.3 CONCLUSION

In order that secondary schools should be effective in their duties, a greater knowledge and understanding of the delinquent subcultures is needed to assist in counteracting the derailment of the school. The activities of delinquent subcultures result because of both the circumstantial and background factors. Learners' truancy, wandering, dropping out of school and joining delinquent subcultures at secondary schools, disturb the effectiveness of these institutions.

When investigating juvenile delinquency, with the aim of finding the motive behind the action, the circumstantial factors are considered first, but when efforts are made to try and remedy the situation, the reasons behind the actions that forced juveniles into delinquent acts, that is the background factors, should be considered. The circumstantial factors may not be properly understood if they are not seen in the light of or as a result of background factors. According to Meintjies

(1992) in today's juvenile criminology more and more attention is given to background factors because it is here where the explanation of delinquent acts can be found. With the background factors in mind authorities can identify contributory factors to delinquent subcultures. This will help them in identifying relevant intervention strategies that will help to treat not only the symptoms of the problems, but also its roots. The contents of this study is based on the background factors of delinquents and learners at secondary schools.

According to Gunter (1985) the quality and welfare of the community depends on the contribution of each of its members in the society and his/her ability to carry out his specific function with competence and enthusiasm. As the activities of the delinquent subcultures in and outside the schools do not honour the dignity of the society, it reduces the quality and the welfare of the society. If the community is disorganized, the schools will experience the same.



SECTION 3

DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Data collection in qualitative research is mainly provided by recording the participants' words. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993) qualitative research is distinguished by using a case study design in which a single "case" is studied in depth. In this study a group of grade eight pupils at Setjhaba-sohle secondary school are to be studied in depth. Different qualitative research strategies will be used to collect data from participants. In this section, I will focus on the following aspects: the research design, data sources and processes, data analysis and processing and strategies for data collection.

3.2 THE RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design can be described as conditions and procedures for collecting information. According to Creswell (1994) qualitative research is an emergent design in its negotiated outcomes. Meanings and interpretations are negotiated with human data sources because the subject's realities are being reconstructed by the researcher. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) stated that an emergent research design means that you will begin with an initial focus of inquiry and initial sampling strategy and refine your focus of inquiry and sampling strategy as you engage in an ongoing process of data collection and analysis.

3.3 DATA SOURCES AND PROCESSING

The main data sources in this research essay were interviews, observations and artifacts. The following three forms of interviews were used, namely, an in-depth interview, the focus group interview and the unstructured interview.

The researcher was an observer. As reviewed literature had already indicated possible factors that led pupils to engage themselves in subculture activities, the

effect of this subculture on grade eight pupils was brought to the fore by the raw data. By explaining how the raw data was collected, it is necessary to explain how the participants were selected and how the researcher gained entry to the setting, as well as to give details of the setting's possible influence on the participants.

The entry point to the setting was not a problem as I am one of the educators in the chosen setting. I negotiated entry verbally with the principal of the school. I explained the purpose of the study as well as the proposed population. I indicated that I will present the findings of the research to the school community before publication and reinforced that the outcomes of the research will be beneficial to the entire school population. He was initially concerned about how the activities of the research was going to affect the daily activities of the school. I promised that most of the research activities would be done during lunch break and after school. He consented that the research be conducted. I then approached the three grade eight class teachers and explained to them, the purpose of the study and the fact that their pupils were my proposed participants. I also appealed to them that I would constantly come to them for any assistance that I deemed necessary for data collection. They agreed to be of assistance to me. I further explained to them how the participants were to be selected. The main method of selecting participants was random sampling. According to McMillan and Schumacher (1993) random sampling is the selection of the population of the study in such a way that every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. Instead of assigning numbers to the participants so that they be selected numerically, the following process was used by the researcher : from the class registers, I gained access to all enrolled eighth graders at the school. I wrote the surnames of each pupil in one class on a separate tag and put them in a salad bowl marked A, for grade eight A. From the bowl, three names were randomly selected. The same method was used for the other two classes. I found this method to be most convenient. I asked teachers

to accompany me to their respective classrooms. Although the pupils already knew me, I asked the class teacher to introduce me and inform the pupils that I had something to tell them. They laughed when their teacher was doing the introduction. This served as an ice-breaker. I further introduced myself as a master's student at RAU university and that I told them that I was going to conduct qualitative research with them. I explained that the content of the study would address issues that affected them. I did not explain in detail the purpose of the study to the research population as that could have jeopardized the content of the study. However, I explained to them what I had done and what the bowls contained. I further explained how their names were selected and that everyone was a possible participant. I then read out the names of the selected sample population. The same procedure was followed for selecting participants in the other two classes. I ended up with nine participants, three from each class. After that, I called all the selected participants to the needlework center during lunch time. We held a meeting, where I explained the data collection processes. I explained that I was going to do the face-to-face interview with each individual participant and appealed for honest response to the interview questions. Besides the selected participants, other pupils in higher grades were targeted as key informants. I was also given the freedom of access to any school document that I wanted to add to the research data.

3.4 THE COMMUNITY AS SETTING

Marshall and Rossman (1995) described observation as a systematic noting and recording of events, behavior and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study. In this context of the research essay, observation entails evaluating the physical setting where the research was conducted, as well as the surrounding within and outside the school yard. Geographically speaking, Setjhaba-sohle secondary school is located in the south western part of zone fourteen. It is situated in the eighteenth area, meaning that the house numbers in that area start with eighteen. This zone is further divided into two areas, the eighteenth area and

the twentieth area. The twentieth area is dominated by wealthy residents. Most of them are employed or self-employed and are the owners of shopping complexes in that zone or in another zones in Sebokeng. This area is a suburb in the township. Residents were initially staying in four roomed houses and later extended them into bigger houses. As the plots were small, they purchased double stands and erected big houses, of which some are double storey. In contrast to this area, most of the houses in the eighteenth area are still the old four- roomed houses. Most of its residents live below the bread line. Even if owners tried to make some alterations to the initial match-box houses, they mostly changed the size of the windows to improve the appearance of the houses. Between the eighteenth area and zone sixteen, there is a street called *Masoheng*, named after the post office which is near the male hostel along *Moshoeshoe* street. The name, *Masoheng*, means unmarried male people. *Masoheng* street runs from *Moshoeshoe* through zone sixteen and zone fourteen in the eighteenth area. On the opposite side, between zone fourteen in the eighteenth area there is a lounge bar selling *umxombothi* (sorghum beer). Situated next to the bar is a male hostel called *Kwa-Masiza*, meaning where people are helped. Next to the hostel the new government has erected the RDP houses. These houses are for underprivileged people. Most of the pupils of Setjhaba-sohle secondary school come from the impoverished areas explained above.

As you approach the school you will find that it has three gates and is surrounded by the four roomed houses. One gate is on the north side, the other on the south and the last one is on the western side. The gate on the western side is the one used mostly as it opens into a parking area. The gate at the north is opened for people from the north who are walking to school. All people who use transport to school are dropped at the western gate. The school was erected on a 36611 square meter plot. As you enter the western gate you go pass the parking area. After that you find a single storey building which is the

administration block, which houses the principal's office, the office of the deputy principal, the general office used by the administration clerk, a staff room, two sick bays, a duplicating room, a storeroom and male and female toilets. The second building is a triple storey block. On the first floor there are ten classrooms, of which three are allocated for the grade eight, and four allocated for the grade nine learners only. The second floor is allocated to the grade ten pupils only. They occupy six classes and the last four are not in use. The top floor is occupied by the grade eleven pupils. Of the ten classrooms, eight are allocated to the pupils, and one is used as a guidance classroom.

Setjhaba-sohle secondary school was established in 1989. It first started in Eveton, sharing classrooms with Phepane primary school. In 1995 it was moved to its own building. It is in its fourth year of existence. It initially had more pupils from Eveton who were using a bus to travel to school. At present most of its school population are youths who come from the neighbouring areas of the eighteenth in zone fourteen. The school has an enrollment of nine hundred and sixty-nine pupils, of which five hundred and twenty are girls and four hundred and forty-nine are boys. The teaching personnel together with the principal total thirty-two educators, of which eighteen are females and fourteen are males. At present there are five additional members, two typists, one factotum and two gardeners.

3.5. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHOOL POPULATION

In order to understand the possible causes and influences of the delinquent subcultures, one has to assume that there are background factors to both the activities of the delinquent subcultures as well as how they attract their new members. The researcher compiled a questionnaire in this regard. The following table reflects the profile of students entering this school as eighth graders.

Table 1: Profile of eight graders

SUBJECT	SEX	AGE	RESIDES	PLACE OF WORK	INTERACTION	REASON
ZODWA	Female	16	Father only	Self employed	Friends	Trust
LIFA	Male	16	Other members	Self employed	Brother	Believe in him
TEFO	Male	16	Mother only	Labourer	Mother	Believe in him
ZONDI	Male	16	Mother only	Professional	Mother	Trust him
SABELO	Male	16	Both parents	Labourer	Friends	Believe in him
KHADI	Male	16	Other members	Unemployed	Teachers	Believe in him
MAPULE	Female	18	Mother only	Labourer	Mother	Trust her
MOSIMA	Female	15	Other members	Labourer	Teacher	Believe in her
LUCY	Female	15	Both parents	Labourer	Friends	Trust her
JANE	Female	15	Both parents	Labourer	Mother	Believe in them

The questionnaire data pointed out that 60% of the respondents think that parental love is lacking at home, and that the lack of it causes them to have problems. The rest of the respondents indicated that they will only turn to people who trust and believing them, regardless of how close the relationship is. Hence pupils such as Zodwa, Lifa, Sabelo and the others turn to their friends, the teachers and brothers when they have personal problems for the very reason that those people trust and believe in them. The relationship of trust can only be achieved in mutual respect and love. The questionnaire also asked the respondents about their parents' employment history. Of those respondents, only 10% stated that their parents were unemployed, 20% self-employed and 60%, although their parents are employed, they earn little income indicated by the type of employment they are holding. The data collected, shows that 70% of the participants are staying in a disrupted family where the parent-child relationship is likely to be disturbed because of single

parenting. Zodwa, a sixteen year old girl has only her father as parent. She is likely to become insecure due to the lack of a female role model with whom to share her rite of passage such as menarche. The children from single parenting are more likely to suffer from lack of role models and could turn to other peers as social agents when they encounter personal problems.

3.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

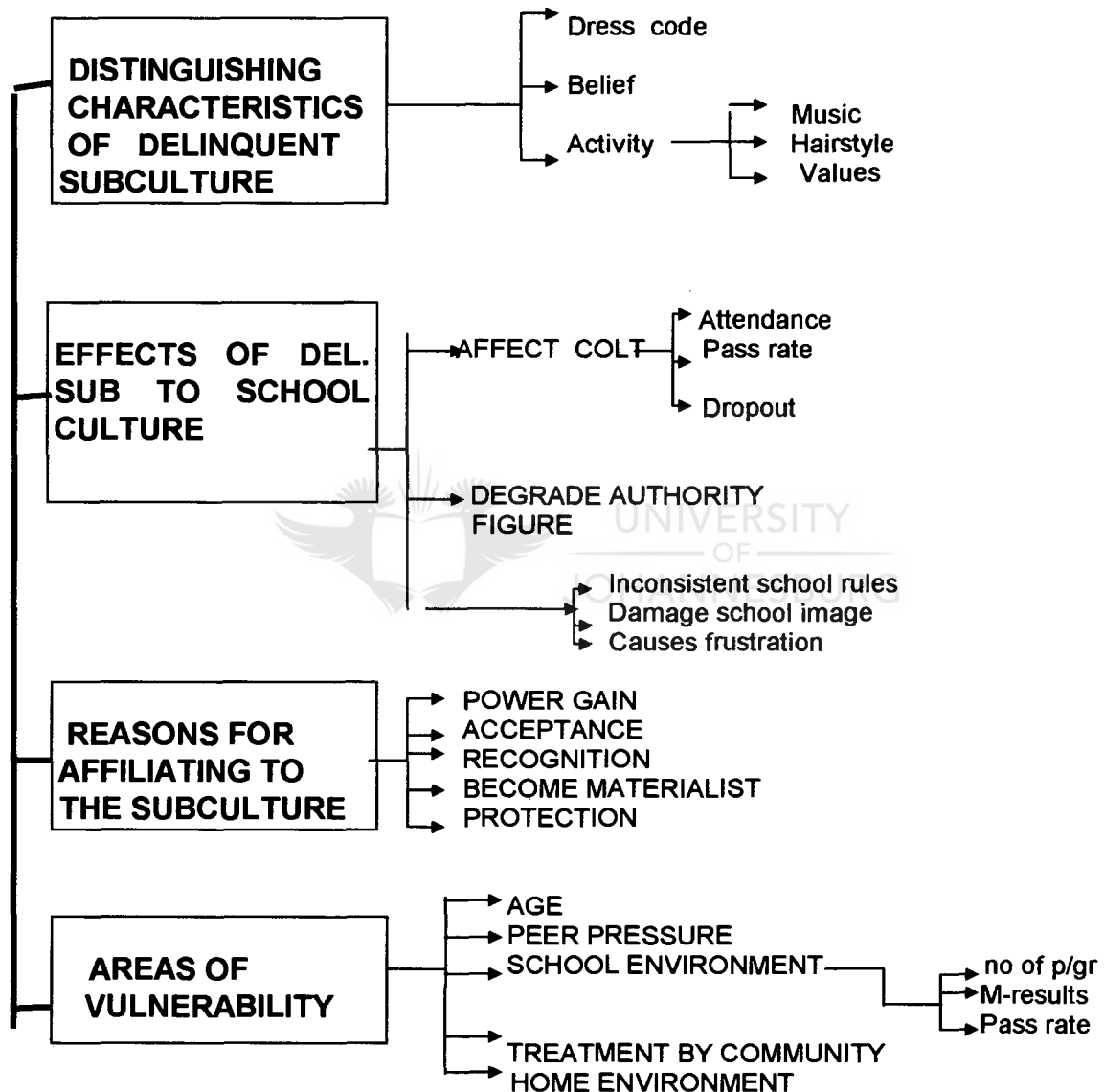


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

no of p/gr = number of pupils per grade
M- results = Matric results

The above figure 1 is the conceptual framework I used for the data analysis.

The main themes are reflected in the boxes. They are:

- ◆ Distinguishing characteristics of delinquent subculture
- ◆ Effects of delinquent subcultures
- ◆ Reasons for affiliating to these subcultures

Areas of vulnerability

3.7 DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

Patton (1987) refers to data analysis as the process of bringing order, organizing what is there in patterns, categories and descriptive units. Data analysis helps the researcher to test new knowledge and hypotheses. Through continuous analysis, a researcher is helped to collect data for filling gaps or tests new hypothesis that emerge during analysis. After I have transcribed all the data collected from the interviews, observations and questionnaire, I proceeded with coding. "Codes are tags or labels for assigning units of meaning to the descriptive or information" (Miles and Huberman, 1994:56). I coded the information by paragraphs, using coloured pens to identify the main sections of the research, in the transcribed notes. I then started with open coding in each section. According to Strauss and Corbin (1990: 61), "Open coding refers to the process of breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualizing and categorizing data." There are several ways of approaching open coding. Firstly, it is done by analyzing the first interview or observational data with a line-by-line analysis. Secondly, coding by sentences or paragraphs could be done and thirdly by taking an entire document, observation or interview. The researcher used these approaches interchangeably. The following are samples of codes that were used:

- D.S.A. = Delinquent subculture activities.
- L.O.R. = Lack of respect.
- D.S.C = Damage of school culture.
- P.D.S = Pressure from delinquent subcultures.

- B.S.R = Breaking the school rules.
 U. E = Unprotected environment.
 R. D S = Realizing delinquent subcultures.
 L.P.L= Lack of parental love
 L. P = Parental love

Miles and Huberman (1994) defined clustering as a tactic that can be applied at any level and can comprehend the phenomenon by putting together that seem to fall together. In the process of clustering, data which seem to fall together are selected, grouped, organized, condensed, paired and than synthesized.

3.8 STRATEGIES FOR DATA COLLECTION

The main objective of this inquiry is to identify the subcultures in the setting. The aim was to identify these subcultures so that the pupils who are likely to affiliate with them have an informed choice. The researcher has decided to use different types of interviews . In order to address the above objective, I found the in-depth interview to be the relevant method that is most likely to bring that information to the fore. According to Reber (1985), the in-depth interview is designed to probe beneath the superficial, to allow for exploration of the unknown variables and to provide insight into the nature of the factors discussed. The researcher has also used the interview guide approach. In this approach, topics and issues to be covered are specified in advance, with the interviewer also determining the sequence and wording of questions of the interview (Patton, 1987). Refer to appendix 1 in page 62.

While the interview took place the researcher took the place of an observer. The task of an observer is one of listening hard and keenly observing what is going on among the people in a given situation or organization or culture in an effort to more deeply understand it and them (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994). The interviewing took place in the needlework center during lunch time. The

interview sessions took between twenty and thirty minutes per participant. Lunch break is an hour long. The researcher used that hour for interviews and also the extra hour after school. This arrangement allowed the researcher to attend to four participants per day and the interviews were conducted over two consecutive days. The participants were allowed to express themselves in the language of their choice. The researcher asked the participants if she could use a tape recorder, explaining its importance and also assuring them that the content of all the interviews will be treated as confidential. After the interview, each participant was given a few minutes to listen to the play back of the recording. The participants were promised member check before any publication of the research contents can be made. Member check according to Maykut and Morehouse (1994) is the process of asking research participants to tell the researcher whether he/she had accurately described their experience, or to agreeing not to publish anything that the participants do not find to be truthful. I started out by asking the interviewees to share with me their first experiences as new students at the school. For the sake of anonymity, pseudonyms were used. Zodwa , a fourteen year old girl who stays in zone sixteen, Sebokeng, said the following:

On my first day while we were at the morning devotion, while the principal was making some announcements, I was shocked to learn that there are some boys who talk back to the principal. Although one could not see who was talking but there was a talk back from the direction of boys. I then looked at them and realized that most of them were not in proper school uniform. Some of them had multi coloured shirts, tekkies and trousers that were not part of the school uniform as stipulated on the school's code of conduct. Some of them had different hairstyles such as dreadlocks, S-curl and different haircuts. Some of the boys had earrings in one ear. Still all these were against the code of conduct given to us when we were admitted to the school. I was shocked and could not ask anyone about this. On my way home

I asked my cousin who is in grade ten, why boys behaved as they did in the morning devotion. While she was trying to explain to me two boys went pass us. She immediately kept quiet for a while. The two boys greeted my cousin and said to her : *Monywere wo ke mang?* Meaning, who is this newcomer you are with? I did not like the way they have addressed me but I was forced to keep quiet.

Papi, a 14 year old boy who stays in zone fourteen in the eighteenth area, responded as followed to the same question.

I was so excited to be admitted at Setjhaba-sohle secondary school. To my surprise, I realized that there are pupils who are smoking at the toilets during school hours. I once experienced this one day when I asked my subject teacher to go to the toilet. I found four boys smoking. I was not sure what they were smoking but I could smell dagga. One of them offered me a cigarette and I told them that I do not smoke. One of them said : *E sale ntwana mo tlohele.* Meaning, he is still young leave him. I then helped myself and went away. One of the boys said: you must never use this toilet if you are still mama's baby. I was shocked to realize that the toilets are used according to the type of groups and their activities. Besides the threat I experienced at the toilet, some boys from higher grades used to come to our classes. They wait for the teacher to go out and they immediately get into our classroom . When they are there we all keep quiet. That day they claimed that they were looking for a boy who robbed one of their group members in grade eleven of his money . While I was trying to figure out how possible that can be, they said to one boy in our class: *O re sheba bjang wena Barry .* Meaning, how do you look at us you stupid boy. Before the boy can even answer, one of the intruders immediately hit that boy with a bottle at the back of his head, there was blood all over. We ran out for help. Teachers were called in and

the injured boy was taken to the hospital. I later heard that those boys belong to the group called *Mapantsola*. They say they are one of the groups that are troublesome at school. They are always in and outside jails. They even boast about life in jail. They said that jail is *Ha malome* (Uncle's place).

Sam, a 15 year old boy who stays in zone 17, said the following:

Madam, I have realized that there are two groups of pupils in this school. One group listens to their teachers and is always in proper school uniform. The other group does not wear school uniform, roam around during school hours and carry dangerous weapons. Such pupils are the one's who steals our books. This is the reason why we always carry our book bags whenever it is lunch break. Madam, I have learned this the hard way. On my first day at this school, my class teacher gave me textbooks and stationery. I put them in my book bag and left them in the classroom. When I come back, all my belongings were stolen. There is no safety in this school. We have a lot of intruders in the school yard during break. The fact that most of pupils are not wearing school uniform especially boys, one cannot differentiate between an intruder and school mate. There are group of boys who specialize in jewelry. They wear rings on both hands, necklaces and some earrings. They call their jewelry "*Boqwebo*" meaning shining things. This is called *Matariana* group.

Unstructured interviews with boys in higher grades who served as key informants harnessed data on the subcultures that students are exposed to. This is reflected in Table 2.

Table 2: The three delinquent subcultures in Setjhaba-sohle

Characteristics	Mapantsola	Matariana	Makoloane
Value	They are materialistic and view schooling as a waste of time.	Too materialistic and obsessed with cars. Have less interest in schooling.	They are Ritualist. Enforce respect through violence. Less concerned about schooling.
View on school uniform	Schooling and its code of dress are burdensome.	View school uniform as inferior as they are obsessed with expensive clothes.	They find wearing uniform as sending an academic message which they do not stand for.
Their Dress code	They wear multi-colored shirts and trousers with fancy styles.	Obsessed with expensive Italian clothes. Wear labels such as KG and cavella shoes. Like gold jewelry.	Few weeks from the initiation school, they wear Khakhi suits and a red band, have a stick in hand.
Hairstyles	Like dreadlocks and sometimes plaited hair.	Frequently visit saloons to make S-curls and different hair cuts.	When they come from their school they have bald heads.
Music	They like to dance in groups to <i>kwaito</i> and reggae music.	They like jazz and blues music.	They like traditional songs and praise poems.
Activities	They are mostly the organizers of street parties known as bashes. They are known as dagga smokers and for public violence.	As materialists, they respect an individual according to the type of labelled clothes he/she wears. They are obsessed with beautiful cars.	Their behavior is based on adolescent claim to adult status. They are leaders in vigilante groups and at the forefront in mob justice.

A second method of data collection was the focus group interview. During the focus group interviews, the students were asked to reflect on the influence of these delinquent subcultures have on them. Maykut and Morehouse (1994) defined the focus group interview as a group conversation with a purpose that emphasizes dynamic group interaction, create the opportunity to observe a selected group of people discussing the topic that the researcher wishes to explore. In this type of interview, the participants have the opportunity to listen to each other's contributions. The focus group interview was conducted a week after the one-on-one interviews. The same participants were invited to the

needlework center for the group interview on one Wednesday afternoon. I chose that day because the lessons end at 13h00, an hour before the usual time. This hour is used for different sporting activities. I have arranged with the participants beforehand for this meeting with the permission of their teachers. Only eight participants turned up for the interview. The ninth participant was absent from school that day. The participants consisted of four boys and four girls. Participants were seated on chairs that were arranged in a semi-circle with the interviewer's chair at the center where she could see all the participants. The agreement was, when the question was asked, every participant would be allowed to respond to it. After that, the researcher will sum up the responses by taking out the main issues addressed and later ask participants to comment on the summed up responses. From there the summarized answer will be taken as the answer to the question. The researcher asked all members to keep the content of the focus group interview confidential. After the researcher had explained all the procedures to be followed and the purpose of the focus group interview, she appealed for honest responses to the questions. The researcher stated that every participant would be given a fair time to express his/her views, and that there were no right or wrong answers. After making sure that everyone knew what a subculture and school culture is, I asked them to reflect on how the delinquent subcultures at the school affect the school culture.

Lifa, a 14 year old boy, staying in zone thirteen, said the following:

With me madam I think that boys who are members of *Makoloane* are bullies. Immediately when they come from circumcision school they tend to terrorize pupils and they do not respect lady teachers. They do not mind to move from one school to another searching for pupils who did mischief things in the community. If they cannot find their culprit they rather burn his home. They are the ones who stir violence at school and in the community. During lunch time they gather at the back of grade twelve classes and start singing songs from the initiation school. Should you go pass the area in which they are, they will call

you names and might even beat you with their sticks. One of the group member approached me, tried to recruited me. He said that once I join them, my enemies will be their enemy, meaning that I will be fully protected. But I must first go to the initiation school so as to be a "man." Although I need the protection they provide to their members, but the problem is, most of them do not like education. I want education here and I do not like their behavior of being disrespectful to authority figures like teachers and our principal. As they talk back to the teachers and scolding them in their absence, these make me sick because they are our parents in the school yard.

Jane, a 16 years old girl who stays in the zone seventeen. She was so eager to air her views. In a very loud voice she said:

I feel like joining these guys, they are our heroes. When they come in our class we quickly keep quiet. I also like the fact that when you touch one member, you have touched every member of the group. I do not have a brother at this school who can protect me. The school also does little to protect us from this group. There is no way in which we as newcomers can change how these groups operated. They have been in this school for some years. Who do we think we are as ordinary eighth grade pupils to think that we can do something about these groups. After joining them I will be your heroine too. *Le tla ntlotla*. Meaning, you will respect me. I will have money which my parents cannot afford to give me. I think it will be nice to be powerful as members of these groups.

Malose, a 15 year old boy. Who resides in the eighteen area zone fourteen? He started by saying:

I am just worried about the time lost during the disruptions caused by these groups. I remember one day we were released very early at school after the principal heard that pupils from a secondary school in zone ten are coming to our school. It was rumoured that those boys

were dangerous and that they have been to another school a day before and they broke the windows of some of the teacher's cars. We went away in order to save the situation. We are having problems in Sebokeng specially in zone fourteen. The trouble might be started by our school mates or pupils from the neighbouring schools. They come to school in order to grow old enough to be employable. They are in school also to be exempted from the harsh sentences in jail under the pretext that they are school children. They are the reason for overcrowding in higher grades. They are also the reason for low matric pass rate in Sebokeng.

As one of the participants had already indicated that other pupils like to write on school property, sending irresponsible messages. The following slogan is an example.

"School is like twelve years in jail. So guys lets not waste time, lets do crime."

After some investigation, it was found that the person who wrote that was a girl in her twenties. When she was confronted to explain more about the statement, she said that this is how she feels about the school. Pupils understand the value of the school in different ways. Refer to table 2, the classification of delinquent subcultures.

After every participant had responded, the researcher summed up the responses as follows:

- The activities of the subcultures disrupt the culture of learning and teaching.
- These activities devalue the school objectives.
- They degrade the authority figures at school.
- They cause inconsistency to school rules.
- They damage the image of the school.
- They cause terror to the school population.
- They contribute to poor matric results.

3.9 CONCLUSION

The interviews conducted indicated that in Setjhaba-sohle secondary school, there are delinquent subcultures that degrades the image of the school and affects newcomers negatively. The most affected pupils are the ones who are susceptible to their influence. Pupils from disrupted family relationship are most vulnerable for influence. Lack of parental love and supervision of the adolescent child add to their vulnerability. Poverty also brings about the “strain” experienced by deviant innovative youths. During the in-depth interview, one boy emphasized how he missed motherly comment. “Madam I miss my mummy’s words like: ‘You look nice today my son.’ Now that my mother is away from me, and I stay with my grandparents, I feel like I am lost.” That feeling of affective neglect is experienced by about 70% of the respondents to the questionnaire.



SECTION 4

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS AND IMPLICATION OF THE STUDY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In section one, the general claim that in every secondary school, there are delinquent subcultures that work antagonistically with the school culture was laid. In the second section a literature review was done in order to gather more information regarding the research essay. Section three explained the collection and analysis of data. In this section, the research findings and implications of the study will be discussed and recommendations based on the finding of this research study, will be made. The collected data was first coded in section three and during this coding process, data which seemed to be related to each other, was given the same code. After coding, the codes were grouped into clusters, which were linked and grouped into the following four main categories:

- The distinguishing characteristics of delinquent subcultures as found at Setjaba-sohle secondary school.
- The effect these subcultures have on school culture and eighth grade pupils.
- Reasons why students affiliate to the delinquent subculture.
- Areas of vulnerability

4.2 DISCUSSION OF DATA

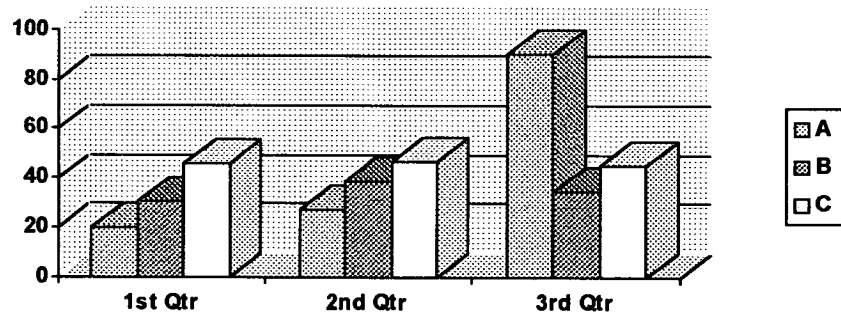
The general findings supported the main claim that in the secondary school, the culture of learning and teaching has collapsed because of the activities of the delinquent subcultures that are in existence. The assumption is held that, the type of subculture found in every secondary school is determined by the type of community members who access the school as learners. Therefore, the type of subculture present in a school, will in one way or another be the same in one geographical area. Setjhaba-sohle secondary school, in Sebokeng zone fourteen

was selected as the setting for this study. The assumption is, that the subcultures as identified at Setjhaba-sohle secondary school, are likely to be the same as the subcultures in the neighboring secondary schools that serve the same community. This is because of the general belief that the school is shaped by the type of community it serves, and vice versa.

4.2.1 THE DISTINGUISHING CHARACTERISTICS OF DELINQUENT SUBCULTURES IN THE SELECTED SETTING

One of the distinguishing characteristics of delinquent subcultures is that they find school with its rules of dress and conduct burdensome. They turn off the academic and social messages that the school reflects. This turn off starts gradually as dodging classes, followed by a regular pattern of absenteeism and at its extreme pupils dropout of school before graduating. During this study, I got access to the class registers of the grade eight pupils. I compiled a quarterly record of absenteeism in the three grade eight classes. The following graph emerged: See the graph 1 below.

THE RATES OF QUARTERLY ABSENTEEISM IN GRADE EIGHT



The rate of absenteeism seems to increase from the first quarter where in grade eight C, 40% of students absent themselves. The graph reached an alarming rate in September where 80% of grade eight A pupils was recorded as absent. This give an impression that grade eight pupils are gradually being infiltrated by

the activities of the subcultures. After checking on the class register I realized that a boy in grade eight B has a tendency of absenting himself for a week or two without reporting. The class teacher together with the researcher interviewed the boy in the presence of his mother. The boy claimed that there was a group of boys who threatened to kill him. So he often had to go into hiding for some days and then come back. How far the allegation was true, nobody knows. The unfortunate part of the interview was that the boy ended up dropping out of school.

The three delinquent subcultures identified at Setjaba-sohle, generally share the belief that educational activities should not take up much of their time. This is reflected by the general activities they engage in such as playing truant, and ultimately leaving the school prematurely. Their main interest lies in the accumulation of material resources. The activities of *Mapantsola* and *Matariana* matches the deviant innovative and *Makoloane* tally with ritualists. The tendency of members of delinquent subculture to drop out of the school matches with retreatists. A record compiled from class registers indicated that six pupils from the research sample dropped out of school.

Makoloane as ritualists, resolve their strain of limited success by abandoning cultural goals in favour of almost compulsive efforts to live "respectably". In essence, they embrace the rules of the circumcision school as the norm to the point that they lose sight of its entire goal. Initially, when boys were taken to initiation schools, it was a way of teaching them the cultural norms of their particular ethnic group. For an example, the *Sepedi* speaking boys would be taken to an initiation school that would offer them the cultural norms of *Bapedi*. This means that every boy should attend the circumcision school of his cultural group. The modern initiation schools do not care about the ethnic group of its pupils, as high enrollment is their goal to financial success. Most of the principals of initiation schools hire people to grab boys off the streets and bring

them to their schools. The criterion such as ethnicity group and age are not considered, as the more pupils one has the more money will be gained. The main goal of transmitting cultural norms and values is lost in favour of material gain.

While the researcher was explaining the setting, it was indicated that in zone 14 the twentieth area consists of residents who are wealthy whereas in the eighteenth area most of the residents are poor. This imbalance causes youths to resort to what Morton's strain theory as explained in section two. *Mapantsola* and *Matariana* reflect deviance innovation activities. During lunch breaks most of the participants complained that some members of the delinquent subculture groups rob them of their earrings, watches and Reebok or Nike caps. There was an incident where a grade eight pupil was stabbed in the back for the mere fact that the culprits wanted his Nike cap. This is an indication that members of the two groups are yearning for material success by using unconventional means such as theft and violence to reach their goals.

4.2.2 THE EFFECT OF DELINQUENT SUBCULTURES TO SCHOOL CULTURE AND EIGHTH GRADE PUPILS

According to the delinquent subcultures, if one member fights, with an individual, the fight can be extended to other members of the group and sometimes a group from one school can fight with a group from another school. It is during inter-school group fights, that police, teachers and principals experience problems. That is the time when the teaching and learning come to a standstill. According to Lifa, one of the participants in the research, a boy at their school fought with another boy from a neighbouring school and stabbed him in the shoulder. The following day at about 9hoo, a group of boys from neighbouring school came to their school to search for the culprit. The principal had to call for police assistance. The culprit from their school was taken to the police station for protection from the mob. This indicates that delinquent subcultures can interrupt teaching at anytime they like when they want to revenge their members.

Most members of this group possess dangerous weapons such as guns and knives. As they get to grade eight classes, they talk to them while displaying their weapons. Boys are mostly the victims of various assaults whereas girls are victims of rape, kidnap and assaults. The above allegations of assaults and threats are mainly directed at boys rather than girls. But boys who promise to join them become their friends.

4.2.3 REASONS WHY STUDENTS AFFILIATE TO DELINQUENT SUBCULTURES

If the activities of delinquent subculture outweigh the school culture to an extent that activities erupt into violence, unfavourable publicity of the school results. The view of the community about the school is how it performs academically and how it performs in its different sporting activities. One of the participants was worried about the image of the school as the police frequent it due to inter-school group fights. Pupils who got injured on the school premises also send another bad image of the school.

The enrollment at the school in focus, indicated that there were many pupils in higher grades. This is indicated in the classroom allocation explained above where the ratio of class allocation from grade eight to higher grades varies from 3:4 to 3:8. This can mean that delinquent subcultures have a high membership. As they are not serious about their school work, they would not mind repeating grades. To grade eight, it can mean that since there are more members of the subcultures as compared to the newcomers, they may be overpowered by these subcultures. As youngsters like to conform to their peer group, they imitate what members of the subcultures do and thus affiliate to them. This is supported by an increase in the absenteeism rate as learners gain experience at the institution reflected on page 51. Grade eight pupils are forced into affiliating to the said subcultures because of the frustrations that pierce their hearts and personal dignity. They join them in search of the human needs which cannot be fulfilled in

either of the socializing agents they have passed through. Frustration can emanate from all agents of socialization, such as the home, the school, the peers and from members of the community.

4.2.3.1 FRUSTRATION THAT EMANATES FROM HOME ENVIRONMENT

A social condition that causes frustration is poverty. Most of the impoverished areas are also overcrowded, which lead to the establishment of squatter camps and slums. In this type of housing, there is a lack of privacy. Overcrowding deprives children of the space to play and a conducive place to study, whereas poverty causes absence of an authority figure and parental supervision as parents work for long hours away from home. Most of the research population are from the impoverished areas. The type of houses range from match-box, four roomed houses to RDP houses and slums. One of the participants, when asked about his parents work history, indicated that he stays with his grandmother and there is no source of income except his grandmother's welfare grant. Another boy who comes to school wearing a *tekkie* on one foot and a shoe on another came to the observation of the researcher. When he was asked about his home background, it was discovered that he is an illegitimate child with an unemployed mother. He picked up the shoe and *tekkie* in the dumping ground near *Boitumelo* squatter camps. Such children are frustrated at home and are likely to be demoralized if school also frustrates them.

4.2.3.2 FRUSTRATION THAT EMANATES FROM THE SCHOOL

Frustration in many schools is nurtured by teachers and administrators who display a lack of love or respect for the students as individuals. This can be evident in circumstances where rigid rules are applied without considering circumstances. Teachers in the classrooms make higher demands on learners in such a way that they do not get a chance to experience success. This makes the learners experience what psychologists call learned helplessness. This is a

state where an individual has constantly tried something without success. The school in focus adds to this state of affairs by awarding merit certificates to pupils who achieve academically. Pupils are on rare occasion rewarded for participating in sports, for good attendance or any other celebration of success. This means that the school only recognizes the gifted children who form just a fraction of the total enrollment at the school. Pupils become discouraged and experience an impaired motivation and are likely to leave the school prematurely. The decision to leave the school turns them into retreatists and a thorn in the side of the community.

4.2.3.3 REASONS FOR EIGHTH GRADE AFFILIATION TO DELINQUENT SUBCULTURES.

During the focus group interview Jane, one of the participants who indicated openly that she would like to join the subcultures in that institution, she indicated reasons such as protection, material resources, solidarity of group members as well as the respect she will gain after affiliating to delinquent subculture groups. She also indicated a feeling of being overpowered by the activities of these subcultures as she says: "There is no way in which we as newcomers can change how these groups operate. The school also does little to protect us from these groups." The said background factors push newcomers in grade eight to seek refuge in the delinquent subcultures.

4.3 AREAS OF VULNERABILITY

Most of pupils who are vulnerable are boys in grade eight. This means that gender and newness render them easy targets. Incidences of assaults gathered from the interviews involved mostly boys. Members of the community may aggravate the activities of the subcultures by giving them negative labels. Labels that are given to teens that appear to have lost a sense of purpose are the 'lost generations' or 'marginalised youths'. These particular labels can encourage youngsters to identify themselves with the deviance and crimes they are expected

to be involved in. It is a well known how the delinquent subcultures as found at this school operate. If they have committed a delinquent act, most of the community members do not report it as they are afraid of victimization. This culture of silence aggravates delinquent activities.

4.4. IMPLICATION OF THE FINDINGS

From the research conducted, I have learned that, many black communities have indeed disintegrated and become disorganized. Communities of blacks characteris by ethnic groups used to live in close unity. They used to share the same values and lived in harmony and adhered to cultural norms and values. Social control such as initiation schools helped to keep the community together. The chief ruled the whole community in their particular geographical area. If a person did not want to play by the rules, he/she was punished or chased away from the community. Due to social and economic changes where battering was replaced by monetary exchange, people started moving to areas where they hoped to find jobs and to earn a better salary. That was the beginning of urbanization with the consequence of disintegrating and disorganizing family groups. As the activities of delinquent subcultures flourish in disorganized communities, they cropped up because of the imbalance between the rich and the poor. In rural areas, social control such as polygamous marriages and an emphasis on caring for the poor and the disabled, helped to organize the community into a unit.

In modern society, as Sergiovanni (1994) stated, communities moved away from *gemeinschaft* towards *gesellschaft*. The *gesellschaft* life is individualistic. People work in isolation. In such cases people became aware of the inequality in their community which they find difficult to overcome. The fact that the community members changed the cultural goal of viewing a rich person, made people to pursue the same cultural goal of financial success. There is a high demand for money. This is the reason why there are many people who are involved in

different syndicates these days. They have formulated their subculture, which employ the services of school children. Hence the delinquent subculture in secondary schools. The existence of delinquent subcultures affects the culture of teaching and learning. This is evident by the overcrowding in higher grades, the poor school attendance, the failure rate and dropout of grade eight pupils as indicated in section three. If children experience a lack of love, respect and recognition from those who are supposed to offer them, they tend to formulate their symbols construction of community through a system of value, norms, and moral codes, which provides a sense of identity within a bounded whole, (Cohen, 1995). This is expressed by different delinquent subcultures where members can be identified through their characteristic such as values, norms and activities as reflected in Table 2.

4.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Juvenile delinquency is linked to the marginalization of young people who are also disconnected from the society, the school and the family. The following intervention strategies which are expected to link families and community are suggested:

- Involvement of school social workers.

Social workers can and should play a major role in schools. Social workers are in a strategic position to identify problems at an early stage. He/she can form an important bond between the child, the school, the family and the community. Contributory factors to the formation of delinquent subculture can be identified and dealt with timeously. Individual or group therapy can help members of delinquent subcultures to be rehabilitated. As the present government emphasizes community service from professionals, social workers who have just graduated, may start by doing community service to their neighbouring schools.

- The school team approach:

A team may consist of parents, students, school staff and some members of the community. Members of the group will be trained, in a two week session, to deal

with problem behavior in schools. They have to develop an action plan such as setting out a room for disruptive students, making home visits to problem students and using peers as counsellors. This intervention may help to connect members of delinquent subculture into the community.

- Building community schools

This is according to Sergiovanni (1994) a total restructuring of both the school's curriculum and the setting in which education take place. The schools must be open to the community and community resources should be utilized by the school. Adult basic education and peace gardens may be established at the school. They can address the problems of the community, of the family as well as problems of the learners.

- Recognition through merit awards.

Various forms of recognition must be used. Although merit awards gained through academic achievement should be given to learners who deserve them, they must be coupled with other merit awards which view learners in totality. Merit awards need not be discriminative in nature. This can result in frustration.

4.6. CONCLUSION

Delinquent subcultures emanated from the inequality in a particular environment. This inequality resulted from societal expectation of the cultural goal of viewing success in monetary terms. One must understand that both the poor and the rich have the same needs in life according to the hierarchy of needs. The only difference is how the accumulated material resources are gained. Poor people aspire to be recognized and respected as rich people one day. If they realize that the means of reaching the cultural goal is too long, they resort to the alternative way of living through the activities of the subcultures. The poor social and economic background of black family members puts them in stress. This is evident in the contributory factors to the formation and affiliation of youngsters to delinquent subcultures. Families start to malfunction as a result of poverty . The

rigidity of the school's rules and regulations and content-based curriculum which does not offer children the opportunity to acquire skills at school, makes schooling irrelevant to the job market. People leaving the school cannot be guaranteed job opportunities because of the high rate of unemployment. The more disruptive the school is, the less its new members will be attracted to it. The youths should be encouraged to affiliate to youth movements that support the prosocial behavior by recognizing any prosocial activities pursued by them.



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APPENDIX 1 : INTERVIEW GUIDE

OPINION QUESTIONS

1. Tell us why did you chose to do grade eight at this school.
2. Tell us things that made you like the school.
3. W hat are things that you disliked about the school?
4. What are things that make this school popular?
5. How would you describe the behaviour of students at this school?

FEELING QUESTIONS

6. How did you feel after knowing that you were admitted to this school?
7. Tell us about your experience on your first day at the school.
8. After gaining experience at this school do you still feel as you did before?
9. How do you feel about different groups of students you met at this school?
10. Is there any group of students you would like to affiliate to?

KNOWLEDGE QUESTIONS



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11. What kind of troublesome students have you met at this school?
12. Tell us about the activities they are engaged in.
13. After identifying the activities of the troublesome students, can you say what their general beliefs are?

BACKGROUND QUESTIONS

14. Can you please introduce yourself?
Your name, age, where you stay and your previous school.
15. Tell us about your general activities at that school.

APPENDIX 2 : QUESTIONNAIRE

PERSONAL DETAILS

FILL IN THE FOLLOWING:

NAME:.....

HOW OLD ARE YOU?.....

WHAT IS THE NAME OF YOU PREVIOUS SCHOOL?.....

FAMILY BACKGROUND

CHOOSE ONE ANSWER FROM THE FOLLOWING WHICH IS MORE RELEVANT TO YOU BY MAKING A CROSS ON IT.

1. Where do you stay?
 - A. Zone 14 B. Zone 16 C. Zone 17 D. Other places
2. With whom are you staying at your home?
 - A. Both parents B. Mother only C. Father only D. Other family members
3. Are your parents or the people you are staying with employed?
 - A. Employed B. Unemployed C. Self-employed D. None
4. What type of employment does your bread winner have?
 - A. Self-employed B. Labourer C. Professional D. Pensioner
5. In which neighbouring town does your breadwinner work?
 - A. Vereening B. Vanderbijl C. Sasolburg D. Johannesburg
6. How often does your guardian come home?
 - A. Everyday B. Sometimes C. Once a week D. Weekends only
7. Who gives orders in your family?
 - A. Father B. Mother C. Both parents D. Other family members
8. Would you say your parents are free to talk to you about the facts of life?
 - A. Seldom talk to me B. Always talk to me C. Do not talk to me D. None of these
9. To whom do you talk to when you experience personal problems?
 - A. Friends B. Mother C. Father D. Teachers
10. Why do you choose to turn to the person in question 9 ?
 - A. I like him/her B. He/she listens me C. I trust him/her D. I believe in him/her

Appendix 3: CODES USED IN CATEGORISING DATA.

D.S.A.= Delinquent subculture activities

L.O.R.= Lack of respect

D. S.C. = Damage the school culture

P. D. G. = Pressure from delinquent subculture

B. S. R. = Breaking the school rules

U. E. = Unprotected environment

R. D. S. = Realizing delinquent subcultures

L.P.L. = Lack of parental love

P.L. = Parental love



APPENDIX 4 : STRUCTURED INTERVIEW WITH A GRADE EIGHT PUPIL.

TRANSCRIPTION OF AN INTERVIEW:

This is the 21st of September 1999. I am interviewing a grade eight learner in needlework centre at Setjhaba-sohle secondary school. Zodwa (pseudo name) is a newcomer at the institution.

Interviewer: Will you please introduce yourself?

Zodwa: My name is Zodwa , I am 14 years old. I attended my primary school at Seviwe primary school. I am staying in zone 16 Sebokeng. I do not like bad friends because my father would not like me to have bad company.

Interviewer: What was your feeling after knowing that you were admitted at this institution?

Zodwa: I was so excited. People around here perceive Setjhaba-sohle secondary as a nice and disciplined school. I am so happy to be one of the student here.

Interviewer: Could you please share with me your experience as a new student at this school?

Zodwa: On my first day while we were at the morning devotion, while the principal was making some announcements, I was shocked to learn that ^{R.D.S} there are some boys who talk back to the principal. Although one could not see who was talking but there was a talk back from the direction of boys. I then looked at them and realised that most of them were not in proper school uniform. Some of them had multi-coloured shirts, tekkies and trousers that were not part of the school uniform as stipulated on the school's code of conduct.

D.S.A

B.S.R

Some of them had different hairstyles such as dreadlocks,

R.D.S

B.S.R

S- curl and different haircuts. Some of the boys had earrings in one ear. Still all these were against the code of conduct given to us when we were admitted to the school.

I was still shocked and could not ask anyone about this.

On my way home I asked my cousin who is in grade ten, why boys behaved as they did in the morning devotion.

While she was trying to explain to me two boys went pass us. She immediately kept quiet for a while. The two boys greeted my cousin and said to her : ^{L.R.O} Monywere wo ke mang? ^{L.R.O} Meaning, who is this newcomer you are with? I did not like the way they have addressed me but I was forced to keep quiet.

Interviewer: Why did you keep quiet?

Zodwa: This is because I am scared of them. They operate in groups. They meet and form these groups in the streets, agree on how they should behave as group members. They carry on with their behaviour even if they are in the school yard.

R.D.S

Interviewer: Would you say that there is consistency in how students are handled in this school?

Zodwa: ^{B.S.R} No ! The bossy learners do not come to class. They do not do school work. They bunk classes, do not wear proper school uniform , they roam around during school hours. How can one say that there is consistency? Every lunch break becomes a nightmare to most of learners, especially girls. Bully boys would come to our class while we are eating , they will go to these girls and propose love to them in a forceful manner .

U.E

If they refuse they will be in for it after school.

The life inside and outside the school yard is so terrible for every pupil at this school. ^{D.S.A} Every after school it is either boys outside the school who will rob you of your belongs or boys from the school who will take whatever they want from you.

Interviewer : Why are learners always carry their book bags during break?

Zodwa: As I have already said that lunch time is a terrible time for us, during this time, tsotsi elements from the streets will get to our class, steal our books and sell them to our classmates. If you have a beautiful; book bag they will throw away your books and take your school bag. So for safety sake one has to always carry his or her bag.

U.E

Interviewer: Thank you very much Zodwa. I think we should stop here, so that you have the last five minutes to listen to the play back.



Appendix 5 : Profile of eight graders

SUBJECT	SEX	AGE	RESIDES	PLACE OF WORK	INTERACTION	REASON
ZODWA	Female	16	Father only	Self employed	Friends	Trust
LIFA	Male	16	Other members	Self employed	Brother	Believe in him
TEFO	Male	16	Mother only	Labourer	Mother	Believe in him
ZONDI	Male	16	Mother only	Professional	Mother	Trust him
SABELO	Male	16	Both parents	Labourer	Friends	Believe in him
KHADI	Male	16	Other members	Unemployed	Teachers	Believe in him
MAPULE	Female	18	Mother only	Labourer	Mother	Trust her
MOSIMA	Female	15	Other members	Labourer	Teacher	Believe in her
LUCY	Female	15	Both parents	Labourer	Friends	Trust her
JANE	Female	15	Both parents	Labourer	Mother	Believe in them

L.P.L

L.P.L

P.L

P.L

L.P.L

L.P.L

P.L

L.P.L

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