THE COPING ORIENTATION AND SELF-ESTEEM OF BLACK LEARNERS
ENROLLED IN UNDER-RESOURCED STATE SCHOOLS IN THE NELSON MANDELA METROPOLE

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THE COPING ORIENTATION AND SELF-ESTEEM OF BLACK LEARNERS ENROLLED IN UNDER-RESOURCED STATE SCHOOLS IN THE NELSON MANDELA METROPOLE

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DECLARATION: In accordance with Rule G4.6.3, I hereby declare that the above-
mentioned treatise/dissertation/thesis is my own work and that it has not previously been
submitted for assessment to another University or for another qualification.

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ABSTRACT

It is common knowledge that the delivery of a high quality, well-resourced educational service to learners enrolled in state schools in the Eastern Cape has ground to a halt and this lack of service delivery has now become a pervasive problem. South African education has to a large extent failed to meet the needs of Black learners. Schools, like other contexts of childhood and adolescence are intimate places where youths construct identities, build a sense of self, read how society views them, develop the capacity to sustain relations and forge the skills to initiate change. These are the contexts where youth grow or shrink. Buildings in disrepair are not, therefore, merely a distraction; they are identity producing and self-defining. There has been much debate on the topic of self-esteem and its relationship to school performance and academic achievement. Previous studies have highlighted that self-esteem and resilience do play a role in academic achievement. Despite the many challenges facing learners in under-resourced schools, many learners have overcome such challenges and achieved academic success. This study aimed to explore and describe the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. An exploratory, descriptive survey design was employed and eighty-five research participants completed the Orientation to Life Questionnaire 29 Item (OLQ 29 Item), Battle’s Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory Form AD (CFSEI Form AD) and a biographical questionnaire. Key findings revealed fairly high mean scores on the OLQ 29 Item and low total self-esteem scores. The General, Social and Personal self-esteem of the learners were found to be average. The results also revealed that learners with a high sense of coherence are likely to have high self-esteem; hence high sense of coherence is better explained by high self-esteem and low sense of coherence is better explained by low self-esteem.
Key words: Coping orientation, coping, sense of coherence, self-esteem, under-resourced schools
CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa insists that all learners, irrespective of race, language, culture, religion and belief, have a fundamental right to education and equal access to educational institutions, and warns that discrimination in this regard will not be tolerated (The South African Constitution, 1996). The South African Education Department continues to receive the biggest share of the country's budget. Despite this, South African education has been described as a national disaster (Bloch, 2009). It is common knowledge that the delivery of a high quality, well-resourced educational service to learners enrolled in state schools in the Eastern Cape has ground to a halt and this lack of service delivery has now become a pervasive problem. South African education has to a large extent failed to meet the academic needs of Black learners. There are schools with dilapidated buildings and mud schools, yet many learners still manage to achieve despite these difficult circumstances (Jansen, 2011). The present chapter provides an overview of the theory underlying the research on self-esteem and coping orientation of learners enrolled in under-resourced schools. The motivation for this research is outlined and a literature review against which the study can be viewed is presented. The aims of the study are also discussed followed by a delineation of the research methodology and the layout of the chapters of this research.

1.2 Background to this Study

Self-esteem forms an important part of coping orientation (Johnson, 2004). In addition, positive self-esteem has been shown to correlate significantly with proactive coping behaviours (Lo, 2002). Several studies have also shown that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and academic performance (Howcroft, 1991; Walz & Bleuer 1992).
More specifically, self-esteem is an outcome rather than a cause of academic performance. Students with good grades should hence have a high self-esteem.

Apart from the important relationship between academic performance and self-esteem, academic performance may also be linked to the availability of adequate resources in schools. Particularly in South Africa, many schools in less affluent areas are characterized by poor infrastructure, poor management, textbook shortages, as well as the absence of school libraries (Hendriks, 2008). In comparison to the other provinces in South Africa, the Eastern Cape rates higher in terms of lack of resources in schools. Besides the parlous physical conditions of Eastern Cape schools, the problematic provision of water, sanitation, electricity and sufficient textbooks to schools, remains a major challenge (Hendricks, 2008). Other hurdles that are facing the Eastern Cape Education Department are the very high number of vacant posts in education district offices (Mkokeli, 2005).

Overall, the challenges learners face in under-resourced schools is extensive. These difficulties result in a lack of motivation in learners, whilst their academic performance may also be affected negatively (Schneider, 2002). Furthermore, difficulties such as the lack of language proficiency among second language learners, instruction by inexperienced teachers, as well as a lack of resources and space ultimately may lead to high student dropout rates (Young, 2009).

Interestingly, South Africa receives approximately 20% of the total government expenditure for Education in comparison with other countries such as the United Kingdom, which received 6.6% of the Gross Domestic Product for education for the period 2010 to 2011 (Bolton, 2010). Bloch (2009) expresses concern that the South African education system has to a large extent failed to meet the needs of learners, in particular Black learners and adds that the education system is a national disaster.
Black children continue to fare worse than whites because most of them continue to attend vastly inferior schools (The Economist, 2010). Most former black schools remain overwhelmingly black because they are generally in deprived black areas, whereas the former white schools tend to have a good racial mix because middle-class blacks have moved into their catchment areas (The Economist, 2010). According to the Economist (2010) the current minister of basic education admits that black schools are ‘in crisis’ and lack resources. The learners generally come from poor, often broken homes. It is a testament to the resilience of Black learners that many achieve university endorsement. Black education is characterised by poorly qualified teachers, inadequate physical resources and overcrowded classrooms (Lumadi, 2008). However, some schools in less affluent areas have been successful in meeting the needs of learners of colour (Young, 2009), some schools achieve impressive pass rates. For example, some under-resourced schools in the Eastern Cape reported a 100% matric pass rate (Matomela, 2010). Overall, the success of these schools demonstrates that Black learners attending schools in high poverty urban areas can achieve academic success (Young, 2009).

In researching the exceptional academic performance of low socioeconomic learners of colour, three distinct approaches to exceptional achievement arose (Morales & Trotman, 2004). These included the inordinate degree of familial resistance that the learners face and their approaches to that resistance; the value and importance of post-school goals and ambition; and the presence of effective cross gender mentoring relationships. For the purposes of this study, the term ‘resilience’ is an umbrella concept referring to coping. More specifically, academic resilience is understood here as the process and results that are part of the life story of an individual who despite obstacles is academically successful (Morales & Trotman, 2004).
In order to provide a framework through which to view the resilience process, some common basic components are discussed in the subsequent text. Four dynamics often discussed in resilience theory are risk factors, protective factors, vulnerability areas and compensatory strategies (Kitano & Lewis, 2005). Firstly, risk factors are the environmental issues that place learners in potential danger. These may include under-resourced schools and a lack of parental attention. Secondly, protective factors are strengths students have that mitigate the risk factors. These may include effective social support systems, a strong work ethic, an internal locus of control, or a supportive community organization. Thirdly, a vulnerability area is a specific aspect of a learner that manifests itself as problematic in a particular situation. Gender, class and race or ethnicity are potential vulnerability areas depending on the psychosocial dynamics of a given situation. Donald, Lazarus and Lolwana. (2002) also echo that race and gender are vulnerability areas. Such disparities can develop into barriers to learning. The fourth dynamic is compensatory strategies which are tactics that learners develop to protect themselves from being vulnerable and that contribute to positive academic outcomes.

Antonovsky (1979; 1987) developed a theory of the stress-resistant personality while exploring issues around how people coped well with stress. Antonovsky began with the assumption that human beings are inherently active, curious, exploratory and variety-seeking and also added that people seek active involvement in life changes that foster a sense of growth, development and a positive change. Eventually he developed his model of positive coping, which he named a sense of coherence (Antonovsky, 1987). According to Compton (2005), Antonovsky stated that stress management interventions that merely return a person to a state of homeostasis would be different from interventions that enhance active and exploratory coping. In contrast, Compton (2005) stated that researchers interested in stress should focus on how to enhance active, exploratory and variety-seeking orientation to life
rather than focusing on how to return people to a homeostatic state that is impossible to maintain. He also highlighted that this approach is similar to that taken by positive psychology. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) also developed a model of positive coping. They hypothesised that available resources affect the coping mechanisms of the individual (Antonovsky, 1987).

In summary, the intricate link between self-esteem, academic performance and coping behaviours may explain the high academic success of some Black learners in schools characterized by the low availability of resources. Nevertheless, more research is needed to unravel the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced schools.

### 1.3 Primary Research Objectives

The primary aims of the study are:

To explore and describe the coping orientation of Black grade 12 learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

To explore and describe the self-esteem of Black grade 12 learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

To investigate whether there is a relationship between coping orientation and self-esteem of learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

### 1.4 Delineation of the Research

Chapter 1 provides the background and aims of the research, whilst Chapter 2 describes under-resourced schools in South Africa and the elements that prevail in these schools.
Chapter 3 focuses on the theoretical substantiation of the research project by providing the main theoretical framework for the current study. The theoretical concepts of coping orientation (sense of coherence) and self-esteem are also explored. Chapter 4 outlines the research design and methodology employed in the present study. In Chapter 5, the results are reported and discussed. These results are discussed in terms of the literature presented in Chapters 2 and 3. Finally, the conclusion, limitations and future recommendations are provided in Chapter 6.

### 1.5 Conclusion

The current parlous state of the South African education was briefly discussed focusing upon Black learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools. The salutogenic orientation in terms of coping was introduced. The role of self-esteem and its impact upon academic performance was also introduced. The aims of the present research were highlighted. The chapter delineation of the current research was provided. The following chapter provides a detailed discussion of under-resourced state schools.
CHAPTER 2

UNDER-RESOURCED STATE SCHOOLS

2.1 Introduction

It is essential to provide a background of South African Black education in order to understand under-resourced state schools. In general, under-resourced schools comprise of different elements. Le Roux (1993) defined under-resourced schools as schools where learners are exposed to inadequate facilities, irrelevant curricula and syllabi, non-exemplary behaviour by teachers, obsolete equipment, sharing of textbooks, large classes and a lack of individual attention from teachers. All of these elements are known to play a critical role in facilitating teaching and learning. The concept of disadvantaged schools can be used interchangeably with that of under-resourced schools. Mothata (2000) concurs with Le Roux’s definition of a disadvantaged school as a school that was or is suffering from severe economic and social disadvantage, often as a result of the previous discriminatory laws in education. These schools are characterised by dilapidated buildings, a lack of facilities and equipment, a high incidence of dropouts and absenteeism, and the low morale of learners, staff and the parents of learners. Finally these schools are found in historically under-resourced areas such as townships, rural and former homelands where they cater for the educational needs of Black communities. This is the education system that the newly elected democratic government inherited.
2.2 History of Black Schools

Under apartheid, all aspects of education-governance, funding, professional training and curriculum were defined and operated along racial lines in an egregiously unequal manner. The educational policies of apartheid systematically deprived Black schools of resources. The fundamental prerequisites for quality education, including adequate school facilities and qualified teachers were the hardest hit (Fiske & Ladd, 2005). The following section will provide a brief historical overview of education in South Africa.

2.2.1 Bantu Education

Bantu Education was characterised by segregation, inequality, repression and authoritarianism. It was also characterised by very little provision of resources in secondary schooling (Unterhalter, 1991). Schooling took place under appalling conditions for both pupils and teachers with large classes, double sessions, inadequate accommodation and undertrained teachers. Particularly in the Eastern Cape, learners and parents had to do regular maintenance work due to the state of disrepair of many existing schools, coupled with the Eastern Cape Education Department’s neglect of routine maintenance.

The Eastern Cape Province is considered to be more disadvantaged in terms of resources as compared to the other Provinces in South Africa (Lumadi, 2008). Jansen (2011) suggests that the underlying distress among the poor, particularly in the education system needs to be dealt with. He furthermore warns that the longer the education system fails hundreds of thousands of grade 12 learners annually, the more there will be a resurgence of racial thinking among Black South Africans. Jansen (2011) reports that South Africa has two unequal school systems, namely, the small elite for the Black and the White, and a massive, dysfunctional,
impoverished system for the majority of poor Black children. These Black learners generally come from poor, often broken homes (The Economist, 2010). The Department of Education Directorate (2002) reports that an awareness of the association that exists between education provision and the socio-economic conditions in any society is imperative. A study conducted by Lumado (2008) revealed that many schools in the Eastern Cape are severely under-resourced.

Some severely under-resourced schools classified in the lowest level in the poverty ranking have obtained pass rates between 80% and 99% (Department of Basic Education, 2010). Other independent schools in Grahamstown also routinely achieve a 100 per cent matric pass rate and 80% to 90% matriculation endorsement (university admission). However, most poorly-resourced schools generally achieve a pass rate below 50% (Hendricks, 2008).

2.3 Elements of Under-resourced Schools

A number of elements or features prevail in under-resourced schools, which affect the performance of learners and the motivation of teachers to be effective in the school environment or in teaching learners. These are now discussed.

2.3.1 Funding and Management

Fees may affect school quality directly by enabling schools to acquire additional resources, including teachers that may enhance learner performance (Fiske & Ladd, 2005). Poorly resourced schools charge fees which are so low that they are completely dependent on the Education Department to provide resources and equipment (Hendriks, 2008).
Furthermore, the initial state financing of African education was extremely meagre and carried out in accordance with strict principles of racial segregation. A Bantu Education Account was established in 1955 as the only source of official finance for African education. The chief revenues paid into this account came from the poll tax on all African adults and a fixed contribution from the general revenue account of R13 million. Although the National government had significantly increased spending on Black students by 1994, the amount spent per learner in White schools was still more than two and a half times that spent on Black learners in the urban townships (Fiske & Ladd, 2005).

According to the United Nations data for 1995-1997, South Africa spent 7.6% of its Gross National Product on education, which far exceeded the 4.7% average for the seventy-eight countries that the United Nations characterized as having medium human development (Fiske & Ladd, 2005). At present, and in comparison with many other countries such as the United Kingdom which received 6.6% for 2010-2011 of the Gross Domestic Product for education (Bolton, 2010), South Africa receives approximately 20% of total government expenditure for Education (South African Info, 2010). To illustrate, the Eastern Cape Education Department has received a large chunk, that is, R22 billion of the total budget of the province for 2010 (Eastern Cape Department of Education, 2010). Estimates are that non-governmental sources have spent R1 billion annually since 1994 on school improvement programmes (Taylor, Muller & Vinjevold, 2003). According to the Economist (2010), South Africa spends a larger portion of its Gross National Product on education than most other countries as South Africa’s commitment of 22% of its budget far exceeded the 16% average for other countries. Fiske and Ladd (2005) add that South Africa was among the top ten highest spending countries on education in its comparable group. There are varying perceptions about whether this enormous amount of money is contributing to real
improvements in schooling. Taylor (2007) argued that there have been very limited gains in learning outcomes in the Eastern Cape.

A large proportion of the education budget discussed above is allocated to personnel. However, the high personnel expenditure has had a negative impact on spending on facilities and learning materials, and the focus has now shifted to increasing spending on the latter as well as on improving quality, efficiency and management (Bot, Wilson & Dove, 2000). Furthermore, most of the increases in funding for previously disadvantaged provinces and schools had to come at the expense of those schools that previously had more support (Fiske & Ladd, 2005).

Despite this generous financial allocation for education, it is estimated that 80% of South African Schools are dysfunctional. Furthermore, Fiske and Ladd (2005) stated that the Eastern Cape Education Department has been plagued with charges of official corruption, mismanagement and administrative chaos throughout its short history. It has also been a revolving door for heads of education and spent most of 2002 trying to hire a new head of education. A further indicator that the problems in the Eastern Cape Education Department are systemic is the very high number of vacant posts in education district offices (Mkokeli, 2005). Yet, the extent of vacancies in Eastern Cape district offices has not changed much since 2005, when the then-superintendent-general emphasised that the province needs 600 education development officers to roll out outcomes-based education. Presently there are only 34 (Mkokeli, 2005).

### 2.3.2 Conditions of South African Under-resourced Schools

Schools are sites where learners construct a sense of their own ability, agency and selfhood (Hendriks, 2008). What is the impact of these uneven and limited material resources on learners? In a study of youths in run-down schools in the United States of America, Fine,
Burns, Payne and Torre (2004) argued that dilapidated buildings coupled with a chronic shortage of up-to-date textbooks cripple learners’ social aspirations, ability and sense of self (Hendricks, 2008, p.5):

Schools, like other contexts of childhood and adolescence, are …

intimate places where youths construct identities, build a sense of self,
read how society views them, develop the capacity to sustain relations
and forge the skills to initiate change. These are the contexts where

youth grow or shrink …

Buildings in disrepair are not, therefore, merely a distraction; they are identity
producing and self-defining.

Most importantly, teacher-learner ratios affect learner achievement. The teacher-learner ratio can be taken as an indicator of potential teacher attention to learners and, therefore, an indication of the quality of the school (Hendricks, 2008). The most favourable ratio of 1:17 was found at two well-resourced schools but also at one poorly-resourced rural school. The highest teacher-learner ratio of 1:31 was found at a poorly resourced township school (Hendricks, 2008). Abnormal ratios of one teacher to 94 learners and even 1:120 in grade 8 have also been mentioned. Magisterial districts with very high learner-classroom ratios are predominant in the Eastern Cape (Bot et al., 2000). For example, Bungeni junior secondary school (JSS) in the Lusikisiki district had 17 teachers and over 764 learners in 2007. Lumadi (2008) stated that teachers complain about overcrowded classrooms, where large numbers of learners are gathered without an orderly arrangement. Jansen (2011) and Bloch (2009) express concern about overcrowded classrooms in these under-resourced schools. Teachers also pointed out that they do not control the learners’ work regularly because they find it difficult to handle such big groups and that they are not able to pay special attention to individual learners.
In addition to inflated teacher-learner ratios, there is a shortage of classrooms (Hendriks, 2008). In March 2002, 13 874 classrooms were needed in the Eastern Cape, the biggest shortfall in the country (Bot, 2005). In this region, scattered rondavels in the surrounding village often serve as classrooms (Hendriks, 2008). Furthermore, Hendriks (2008) stated that many schools are tiny farm schools, mud structures or in a serious state of disrepair. Often the construction material is insufficient to withstand severe weather. Classrooms also often had broken windows, cracked walls, no doors and roofs, whilst some buildings were collapsing. Besides the physical conditions of Eastern Cape schools, the problematic provision of water, sanitation, electricity and sufficient textbooks to schools, remains (Bot et al., 2000). In general, 41% of schools are in a poor or unacceptable state of maintenance (Bloch 2009), whilst many schools suffer an infrastructure backlog (Developmental Bank of Southern Africa Report, 2009). Backlogs have been estimated at a minimum of some R153 billion. Bloch (2009) has recorded some examples of the backlogs in education infrastructure based on departmental figures:

17% of schools have no access to electricity
79% of schools have no library facilities
60% of secondary schools have no laboratory facilities
68% of schools have no computers
31% of schools depend on boreholes or rainwater for their water supply
Of the 9 461 schools with municipal services, 6% depend on mobile tankers and
30% on communal standpipes
61% of schools with bucket or pit latrine systems have no sewerage disposal systems in place.
Teaching and learning cannot occur in an environment which is lackadaisical, unpredictable and not directed towards optimising quality classroom time (Lumadi, 2008).
This has also been confirmed in another study of youths in run-down schools in the United States of America, where dilapidated buildings coupled with a chronic shortage of up-to-date textbooks crippled learners’ social aspirations, ability and sense of self (Fine et al., 2004).

2.3.2.1 Facilities and Learning Materials in Under-Resourced Schools

For learning to take place there are minimum requirements in terms of facilities and resources, both material and human. Resources such as learner support materials include textbooks, writing pads, exercise books and stationery that assist learners to make maximum use of teaching and learning time. Many studies regard adequate learning support materials as essential to the effective running of an education system, and in particular, textbooks and stationery. Several South African researchers also regard reading materials as particularly significant resources for children’s literacy (Hendricks, 2008). Many schools suffer from shortages of facilities such as libraries, ablution blocks, furniture and textbooks (Lumadi, 2008). Many books that teachers use are obsolete. According to Stander (2011) disadvantaged school learners are again left in the lurch just a little more than a month before Eastern Cape matrics write their important trial examinations, grossly under-funded schools across the province are battling to survive. The learners in the Eastern Cape Province state schools are still without textbooks. The former Model C schools are largely unaffected by the crisis while pupils in previously disadvantaged schools have been left with little or no hope of improving the dismal pass rates that have plagued the Eastern Cape province for the past decade.

Coleman, Graham-Jolly and Middlewood (2003) state that the new OBE C2005 policy did not differentiate White schools from Black schools, rural schools from urban schools, and privileged schools from disadvantaged schools. All the schools were provided with the same learning material or curriculum programme and these schools received little or no support materials, irrespective of their physical condition or geographical location. Already
disadvantaged learners were exposed to a curriculum that made a fragile learning environment worse (Jansen, 2011). The consequences of the above were clearly visible as those schools with material resources, internal stability and qualified teachers managed OBE successfully (Coleman et al., 2003).

Themane and Mabasa (2002) stated that one of the most intractable problems in South African education is the problem of the delivery of textbooks or, more broadly, learning materials. For example, most poor Eastern Cape homes have little for children to read beyond a bible. Furthermore, community libraries are rare in rural areas, and over three-quarters of schools nationally have no library (Bot, 2005). At one school in the Eastern Cape, the shortage of textbooks in 2005 meant that 65 learners shared 20 textbooks (Hendricks, 2008). Other problems encountered are the lack of timely delivery of learner support materials (LSMs) to schools, delivery of learner materials that have not been ordered, storage of learner support materials that were supposed to be currently in use and corruption by some of the education officials who sell these materials to the unsuspecting public (Northern Review, 1999).

The above problems are also highlighted in other studies. For example, Jansen and Christie (1999) found that in South Africa, LSMs were developed and translated into official languages in time but only reached schools between April and June of each year. Papo, Cele and Comney (1999) found that LSMs were kept in the principal’s offices and never reached the classrooms. In another study by Potenza and Monyokolo (1999) it was found that teachers did not use learner support materials because they thought it was too time-consuming to use them. This situation is regrettable because learner support materials are vital in the education of the learner. Overall, the issues raised above illustrate that the system of delivery of learner support materials is riddled with problems. There are still problems with LSM’s as suggested
by Bloch (2009), Jansen (2011) and Lumado (2008). Stander (2011) reports that the lack of resources such as textbooks is a major challenge and will affect final outcomes.

Besides the shortages of textbooks, learners either had no desks or have to be seated on low benches, whilst the teacher had neither table nor chair in the classroom (Hendriks 2008). Furthermore, Hendriks (2008) stated that at one school, 880 learners and 21 teachers all had to share one toilet, which was blocked within months of being installed. Most learners therefore had to use the bushes around the school as toilets. Overall, Bloch (2009) stated that schools are not a physically attractive venue.

In general, shortcomings in the material resourcing of schools play a significant part in preventing poor children from getting life chances comparable to those of other children (Hendriks, 2008). Despite the significant amount spent on school improvement in the Eastern Cape since 1994, the combination of profound inequality coupled with persistent ECED bureaucratic incompetence means that the vastly different levels of school resourcing that still prevail could actually worsen the social divide for the majority of learners.

2.3.3 Teacher Quality

The education district offices and key staff such as subject advisors and education development officers are the crucial district level link in the chain from national and provincial education structures through to schools and classrooms. Hartshorne (1992) stated that all the structures and mechanisms of the education system from the head office down to the inspectorate and the local authorities concerned with the school should exist not for their own purposes, but to empower teachers to do an effective and creative job in their everyday contact with learners. Their role is to ensure that the curriculum is understood by teachers and implemented in their classrooms. Increased funding, better physical facilities, new curricula, improved syllabuses and learning materials, democratic structures, effective planning and
administration all have their part to play but in the end, success or failure depends upon the
teacher in the classroom. Hartshorne (1992) stated that teachers are the key people in South
African education. The great task of the teacher attains fulfilment in the aim of formative
education, namely the guidance of the child as not-yet-adult member to adult membership
along a specific path laid down by a particular philosophy of life. Teachers try to accomplish
this task with the aid of specific means at their disposal.

According to Beane (2005) teaching has often been viewed as a noble profession. Many
teachers went on a prolonged strike in 2010 which compromised the academic aspirations of
grade 12 learners. Many of the teachers who went on strike disrupted the poorest schools
where learners were hoping that they would be able to learn. There have been reports in the
South African media about teachers not being at school and teaching as they are supposed to
and those who use pay-day as half-day. The president of South Africa has insisted that
teachers must be at school, teaching every day (Jansen, 2011).

Luthuli (1982) explained that no teacher will be able to accomplish teaching unless he is
trained both academically and pedagogically in such a way that he understands the child
entrusted to him and the subject-matter to be passed on to the child, and is above all able to
interpret the subject-matter in terms of the philosophy of life of the people he represents.
According to the qualification standard, the typical teacher in both primary and secondary
reported that in 1980, only 17% of the 1 019 secondary school teachers had a university
degree. This means that Black Education is predominantly in the hands of non-graduate
teachers or teachers with modest or poor qualifications. Despite the progress in improving the
qualifications of teachers between the period of 1994-2000, more than one in five teachers
were still under-qualified at the end of this period (Fiske & Ladd, 2005).
Ramphele (2008) states that since 1994 there has been resistance among unionised teachers to participate in a skills audit to assess the match between teaching assignments and skills. An audit would lay a better foundation for focused training to fill whatever skills gaps are identified in individuals and in the profession as a whole. Ironically, resistance to this audit perpetuates the mismatch between skills and teaching assignments that undermines the future of the pupils who are entrusted to under-qualified teachers (Ramphele, 2008).

Ramphele (2008) reports that in the 2003 Third International Mathematics and Science Study in which the HSRC tested 9 000 learners for maths and science proficiency at the appropriate level, South Africa came last out of 50 countries, and these scores showed the widest distribution of all countries tested. Disaggregation of the scores by categories of former departments in the apartheid era also showed that African schools performed the worst whereas former white-only schools performed the best, with a mean score closer to the international mean. Coleman et al. (2003) state that there was no in-depth sustained training with support plans when the OBE programme C2005 was introduced. There were no subject advisors and no learning programme expertise sent to the schools to help teachers make sense of the new curriculum.

Luthuli (1982) stated that there is little doubt in the mind of every educator that an ill-qualified teaching force is not only a limiting factor in the implementation of a Black oriented education and school curriculum, but it is likely to contribute to problems which have recently resulted in chaos in these schools because they do not even understand or know which direction to take in leading their pupils. These material realities and the fact that almost 75 per cent of South African schools are formerly designated as black (Soudien, 2004) is indicative of the resource problem in schools. According to Ramphele (2008), the legacy of discriminatory education lives on in the under-qualified and unmotivated teachers who teach pupils in most poor former Bantu Education schools. Research to collect data on unqualified
and under qualified teachers was commissioned in 2009 (South African Government Information, 2009). This suggests that the Department of education still has unqualified and under qualified teachers who educate learners. Stander (2011) reports that many state schools in the Eastern Cape Province have to cope with a lack of temporary teachers. Stander (2011) adds that there are teachers who remain in abolished posts keeping the much needed posts from being filled. The movement from achievement to dysfunction means that vast numbers of young people, indeed the majority, are shut out and do not receive the same opportunities as their richer, urban and often White brothers and sisters (Ramphele, 2008).

2.3.4 Black Learners in Under-Resourced State Schools

In South Africa, the nomenclature for the various race groups is sometimes confusing (Mchunu, 2008). In the strict legal sense, Black refers to Africans, Coloureds and Indians or alternatively all those who were discriminated against by the apartheid state. In a less specific sense, the term refers to Africans, that is, indigenous Africans (Mchunu, 2008). For the purposes of this study, the term is used in the latter context.

Under-resourced schools are usually associated with serving economically poor students with heightened social and academic problems (Tatel, 1999). Many learners in disadvantaged areas are not able to reach schools because there are no transport facilities available due to the department not delivering on its promise to transport children (Matomela, 2006). Eighty-one percent of learners have to collect domestic water, spending on average 16 hours a week on this task (The Economist, 2010). Such long hours left learners tired, which negatively affected their attendance at school as well as their performance in class. In the Eastern Cape, rural parents similarly depend on their children to help with domestic labour. The Nelson Mandela Foundation survey also observed that household chores created tensions between school schedules, family responsibilities, social roles and the desire for education (Hendriks,
In addition to the challenges discussed in this chapter, communication at schools in a second language also seems to be a challenge.

### 2.3.5 Language in Under-Resourced Schools

Mda and Mothata (2000) state that the role of language in education is crucial because it is the main means through which knowledge is conveyed and learning acquired. There can be little doubt that language teaching has long been a terrain of struggle in South Africa. Unlike White learners, the Black learners are usually taught in English that is not their own, by teachers who themselves cannot speak it properly (The Economist, 2010). Language has been used as a basis for classifying and dividing people and as the cornerstone of segregationist education policies. Languages in South Africa have also not enjoyed equal status. The present English curriculum is historically tied to an ideology of racial superiority (Mda & Mothata, 2000). Power and Whitty (2002) state that there are differences in language between the middle class and the low class. Jansen (2011) suggests that learners from under-resourced schools struggle to write and read well by the time they get to institutions of higher learning.

Uys, van der Walt, van der Berg and Botha (2007) state that the majority of learners in Southern Africa receive their education through the medium of a second language, English. Although English teachers play a crucial role in helping learners acquire language skills in the medium of instruction, Uys et al. (2007) argued that the lack of attention to the teaching of language skills by teachers may be a reason for learners’ lack of academic achievement. Learners are also most frequently asked to produce isolated exercises based on a narrow curriculum. The reasons for this may be ascribed to the fact that teachers are constrained in the kinds of questions they can set and worse still, that questions are often set by repressive departments of education (Mda & Mothata, 2000). Generally, the situation as it presently exists inside schools in South Africa does not encourage learners to write for the real world.
2.4 Conclusion

This chapter on under-resourced schools has tried to focus on the current state of the educational landscape, its history and available resources in schools. If the allocation of resources remains as skewed as it is, where the majority of rural schools are made of grass and thatched grass, with no piped water, no electricity, no modern technical equipment, no affordable transport for both learners and teachers, effective teaching will not take place (Lumadi, 2008). Shortages of teaching and learning materials also prevent students from learning and hamper academic performance. However, as discussed in Chapter one, self-esteem and coping orientation have been pointed out to also play a role in academic performance. In the next chapter, a theoretical view of self-esteem, coping orientation and sense of coherence is discussed.
CHAPTER 3
Coping Orientation and Self-Esteem

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapters have indicated that a number of learners perform well despite their schools being under resourced. In order to provide a context for understanding the broader theoretical framework on which the present study is based, this chapter discusses theoretical concepts of this study, namely sense of coherence (SOC) or coping orientation, based on the salutogenic paradigm, followed by a discussion on self-esteem. The relationship between these concepts is discussed along with the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance.

3.2 Salutogenic Paradigm

Before the concepts of coping and sense of coherence are discussed, this section briefly discusses what the salutogenic paradigm is. Antonovsky (1979; 1984; 1987) maintains that the salutogenic paradigm focuses on the origins of health and wellness. This includes the location and development of personal and social resources and adaptive tendencies which relate to the individual’s character, allowing the person to appropriately decide on strategies that would help with confronting stressors. It could be postulated that a person with a ‘salutogenic view’ has a positive way of cognitively appraising the world and will be likely to show readiness and willingness to exploit the resources at their potential disposal (Antonovsky, 1979). Antonovsky (1996) proposed that the salutogenic paradigm does not focus on keeping people ‘well’ but the strengths and the weaknesses of promotive, preventive, curative and rehabilitative ideas and practices. Antonovsky (1996) maintained the salutogenic paradigm would prove to be more powerful than the pathogenic orientation, as
the salutogenic paradigm does not hold the view that human beings are inherently flawed but rather focuses on people’s abilities rather than inabilities. The sense of coherence will now be discussed.

3.3 The Sense of Coherence

3.3.1 Description of the Sense of Coherence Construct

Positive human functioning is perhaps most significant when seen in contexts of significant life challenges and adversities (Keyes & Haidt, 2003). Antonovsky (1979) developed the sense of coherence concept to indicate an individual’s general orientation to life. Antonovsky (1987, p.19) defines sense of coherence “as a global orientation that expresses the extent to which the individual has a pervasive, enduring, though dynamic feeling of coherence, that (1) the stimuli deriving from his/ her internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable, and explicable; (2) the resources are available to meet the demands posed by these stimuli; and (3) these demands are challenges worth of investment and engagement”. Antonovsky (1987) states that the sense of coherence (SOC) construct has three elements:

Comprehensibility refers to the degree to which an individual regards the stimulus from both the internal and external environment as clear, ordered, structured and consistent. McCubbin, Frommer, Thompson and Thompson (1998) add that comprehensibility is the belief that the problem from the world as a whole, to a current issue is clear. Individuals with a high sense of comprehensibility will expect the stimuli they encounter to be predictable and those with a low sense of comprehensibility will perceive the stimuli accidental, chaotic and inexplicable. Antonovsky (1987) maintained that individuals with a high sense of comprehensibility understand the challenges and make cognitive sense out of them.
Manageability refers to a belief that resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli. McCubbin et al. (1998) state that manageability is the extent to which one not only understands a problem, but also possesses the required resources to cope with the problem successfully. Meaningfulness refers to the degree to which life demands are seen as challenges, worthy of investment and engagement and an individual feels that life makes sense emotionally. Individuals with a sense of meaning are found to cope better. In addition to this, such individuals do not perceive themselves as victims of circumstances but rather approach situations believing that they have the resources to cope. This suggests that individuals with a high sense of coherence cope effectively with stressors.

Antonovsky (1979) views coping as a resistance resource; a buffer to stress. The strength of the sense of coherence is connected to a variety of coping mechanisms known as generalised resistance resources (GRR’s) (Antonovsky, 1979). These are defined as any characteristic of a person, a group, or environment that can facilitate effective tension management. Pearlin and Schooler (1978) suggest that resources are more helpful in sustaining people who are facing strains that arise out of conditions over which they may have little direct control. There are factors that are helpful for the development of a positive attitude or orientation to life. Self-efficacy further develops the sense of coherence in that it assists individuals arise out of challenges situation. According to Heslin and Klehe (2006) Bandura defined self-efficacy as a person’s belief in his or her own capability to perform successfully at a particular task.

Another factor that further develops the sense of coherence is locus of control (Antonovsky, 1996). Sutherland and Cooper (1990) define locus of control as the extent to which a person perceives their level of control over a given situation. An individual with an external locus of control feels out of control, sees no relationship between his or her own behaviour and events, attributes the cause of events to the environment, others and fate and
feels anxious, frustrated and helpless. An individual with an internal locus of control feels in control, sees a relationship between behaviour and outcomes, attributes the cause of events to themselves, feels empowered and masterful and thus experiences less stress. The development of the sense of coherence is now discussed.

3.3.2 The Development of the Sense of Coherence

Antonovsky (1987) outlines the development of the sense of coherence through infancy and childhood, adolescence and adulthood. The participants in the study are in the adolescence and early adulthood developmental stages hence the focus of this section is on these stages.

3.3.2.1 Sense of Coherence in Adolescence

Antonovsky (1987) states that the development of the sense of coherence in adolescence is primarily influenced by the cultural and social settings in which they spend most of their time. Antonovsky (1987) described four different environments in which adolescents grow up, which may foster life experiences that shape their sense of coherence. These four different environments are: 1) the complex open society which provides the adolescent with a wide variety of legitimate, realistic options, including drugs, sex, religion and education; 2) the homogenous and isolated subcultures that rigidly define legitimate teenage behaviour; 3) the socio-economically devastated and confusing subculture that challenges adolescents to develop in a state of socio-economic deprivation; and 4) the fundamentalist culture which is linked to power and destruction (Antonovsky, 1987). These environments will now be discussed.

The complex open society: This society provides the adolescent with a wide variety of legitimate, realistic options which are presented by sophisticated parents, peers, teachers and media. In addition to the above, this complex open society also provides the adolescent with
options including drugs, religion, sex and education. The adolescent has an opportunity and a possibility of experiencing and experimenting with a wide variety of new things. Furthermore, the information and choices offered by the environment are always realistic and clear. In such an environment, a strong sense of coherence can be formed (Antonovsky, 1987).

The homogenous and isolated culture or subculture: A strong sense of coherence is found in those homogenous, historically rooted, and culturally isolated groups who live in modern societies. These cultures or subcultures take part in the life of the bigger society on one level, but do not participate on a more profound level (Antonovsky, 1987). Adolescents in these historically rooted cultures, experience life as a rich tapestry of myths, rituals and models. A further characteristic of these cultures is the sense of cultural and religious rootedness which provides the adolescent with life experiences that are meaningful, resourceful and consistent (Antonovsky, 1987).

The socio-economically devastated and confusing culture and subculture: This culture or subculture refers to communities characterised by relative socio-economic deprivation. A large number of adolescents find themselves in alien, hostile and incomprehensible environments because of these conditions of deprivation which make them experience life as unpredictable and stressful (Antonovsky, 1993).

The fundamentalist culture or subculture: In this kind of a community “a leader arises who offers the solution to all problems, a clear, consistent message, a legitimate channel for the expression of aggression, a promise of redemption, and membership in the community of the elect” (Antonovsky, 1987, p.105). According to Antonovsky (1987) a strong, yet rigid sense of coherence might arise out of such a community.

Research findings indicate that sense of coherence may potentially be a salutogenic factor in adolescents’ adaptation to school-related stress, and that relationships between sense of
coherence and healthy adaptation, may be evident in younger age-groups than previously anticipated (Torsheim, Aaroeb & Wold, 2001).

In a study conducted by Honkinen et al. (2008) results revealed no significant change in sense of coherence between the ages of 15 to 18 years, and coherence stability did not depend on the initial sense of coherence. Honkinen et al. (2008) reported that sense of coherence appears to be reasonably stabilized before the age of 15 years. Moksnes, Espnes and Lillefjell (2011) report that sense of coherence is not fully developed in adolescence and most adolescents do not have the adulthood experiences that contribute to the crystallization of the sense of coherence; the sense of coherence seems to be a meaningful concept to investigate in adolescent populations.

A strong sense of coherence among adolescents is associated with the moderate use of alcohol, being a non-smoker, better care of oral health and better social competence (Mattila et al., 2011). As such a sense of coherence is related to healthy behaviours which may be related to a good coping orientation. A study by Neuner et al. (2011) revealed overall well-being, self-esteem, and school-related well-being were positively associated with a higher sense of coherence. Antonovsky (1979, 1987) also postulated that significant life stressors diminish the belief that the world is comprehensible, meaningful, and manageable, and may result in psychological distress. Thus, a sense of coherence is also a mediator of the effect of life stressors.

3.3.2.2 Sense of Coherence in Early Adulthood

McCubbin et al. (1998) hypothesised that the strength of an individual’s sense of coherence is more or less stabilized by the age of 30, when the person has been in the ‘normal’ work and family situation of one’s culture and subculture for a number of years. During this life stage many young adults become committed to life, marriage, a career, a particular lifestyle and social roles and as such have formed a world-view (Feldt, Kivimäki,
For Antonovsky (1987), the concept of work was a strong factor for consideration when considering the development of sense of coherence in early adulthood. According to Antonovsky (1987), there exist definite and identifiable environments that may foster life experiences which ultimately shape the sense of coherence in adolescence. He identified variables specifically within the work arena which provided life experiences valuable to the development of the sense of coherence in adulthood. These included:

Consistency: Consistency refers to the degree to which the working condition promotes seeing the whole work picture and one’s position in it. This enhances one’s confidence in job security and the predictability of the future and provides social support, group identification and applicable feedback in social relations. The life experience of constancy aids in the development of a sense of comprehensibility which has been described earlier as a component of the sense of coherence.

Load balance: Load balance is defined as the availability of resources for an individual to perform the job well and the degree to which the job situation allows an individual to develop his/her full potential, which is then utilised in what Antonovsky (1987) called “work of substantive complexity” (p.12). The sense of manageability described earlier is influenced by load balance in the work situation.

The sense of meaningfulness in an individual is influenced by the opportunity to participate in the decision making processes at work, in so doing the conditions of an individual’s work promote a sense of joy and pride. Central to meaning in life, is seeing purpose in one’s existence (Makola & van der Berg, 2008).
3.3.3 Sense of Coherence and Gender

Research on Chinese American males reveals that males enjoy a higher sense of coherence than females (Ying, Lee, & Tsai, 2000). In a study conducted by Honkinen et al., (2008) the sense of coherence scores of boys at the ages of 15 and 18 years were significantly higher than those of girls. Similar findings were found by Buddeberg-Fischer, Klaghofer and Schnyder (2006) where the sense of coherence in male adolescents was significantly higher than that of females. There are gender and age differences on sense of coherence; boys score higher on sense of coherence than girls across all age groups (Eriksson, 2007; Myrin & Lagerström, 2006). In some adjustment areas females are found to adjust more negatively to stressors related to pubertal development, peers, family relationships and the school context, which may lead to a feeling of personal inadequateness and psychological ineptness (Hampel & Peterman, 2006; Rudolph, 2002). It is clear from the findings of previous studies that there are gender differences on sense of coherence, these differences suggest that females see life as less coherent than males, and therefore are more prone to negative health.

3.4 Coping Orientation

Considerable work has been done on how to deal with the effects of stressful challenges; and in general, approaches to positive coping employ two strategies (Compton, 2005). The first tends to focus on external environment, physical health, or health behaviours. The second approach tends to focus on psychological factors. These cognitive factors are the expectations, attitudes or beliefs that people use to interpret life events and in turn give them meaning. Such interpretive trends are habitually stimulated by potential stressors. Should the resultant interpretation be negative, the result actually produces or exacerbates the stress (Compton, 2005). The large variety of responses can be understood better by dividing them into three different dimensions: 1) coping styles, 2) coping resources and 3) coping strategies.
These coping styles are the basic and fundamental approaches used to deal with challenges. The following section will focus upon coping styles which form part of Lazarus’ and Folkman’s (1984) model of coping.

**3.5 Lazarus and Folkman’s Model of Coping**

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) define coping as constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and/or internal demands that are appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person. Bednar, Wells and Peterson (1989) state that the ability to successfully cope is a measure of personal adequacy. Coping is determined by cognitive appraisal. There are two forms of coping; emotion-focused coping and problem focused coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Cognitive processes directed at lessening emotional distress include strategies such as avoidance, minimization, distancing, selective attention, positive comparisons and gaining positive value from negative events. Some individuals need to feel worse before they can feel better; in order to get relief they first need to experience their distress acutely and to this end engage in self-blame or some form of self-punishment. In other instances, individuals deliberately increase their emotional distress in order to mobilise themselves for action. Other strategies include behavioural changes such as engaging in physical exercises, meditating or having a drink and seeking support. Individuals use emotion-focused coping to maintain hope and optimism (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Problem focused coping employs efforts which are often directed at defining the problem, generating alternative solutions, weighting the alternatives in terms of their costs and benefits and choosing among them and acting (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). According to Ogden (2004) coping involves confronting the problem and reconstructing it as manageable. There are two major groups of problem-oriented strategies, those directed at the environment and those directed at the self (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Those directed at the environment are
strategies for altering environmental pressures, barriers and resources. Those directed at the self are directed at helping the person manage or solve the problem, learning new skills and procedures. Problem and emotion-focused coping can both facilitate and impede each other in the coping process.

Coping is a process rather than trait-oriented in that it is concerned with what the person actually thinks or does in a specific context, and with changes in these thoughts and actions across encounters or as an encounter unfolds (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Bednar et al. (1989) state that coping generates favourable self-evaluations because of the high quality of the psychological responses inherent in this behaviour. The way a person copes is determined in part by his or her resources, which include health and energy; existential beliefs, for example, about God, or general beliefs about control; commitments which have a motivational property that can help sustain coping; problem solving skills; social support and material resources. Coping is also determined by constraints that mitigate the use of resources. Personal constraints include internalized cultural values and beliefs that prescribe certain ways of behaving and psychological deficits (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). It has been observed that there is a positive relationship between a strong sense of coherence and successful coping (Fouché, 1999). The following section discusses the relationship between sense of coherence and coping.

### 3.5.1 The Sense of Coherence and Coping

The sense of coherence is a global resource which precedes coping (Johnson, 2004). The sense of coherence is viewed as a coping orientation that allows a choice from a variety of coping strategies that are deemed most appropriate when dealing with life stressors (Antonovsky, 1987). van Schalkwyk and Rothmann (2008) explain differences in the coping and non-coping of individuals in terms of sense of coherence. Individuals who do not cope
well tend to view the world as unorganised and meaningless and tend not to have resources to deal with daily life, while those who cope view the world as organised and meaningful and have sufficient resources to meet life’s demands. Individuals with a strong sense of coherence may be able to cope successfully with different life stressors, and an individual with a weaker sense of coherence may be overwhelmed by life stressors and therefore cope less effectively. According to Antonovsky (1987), individuals with a weak sense of coherence have a tendency to perceive internal and external stimuli as disorderly and incomprehensible. Fouché (1999) states that an individual with a moderate to weak sense of coherence would tend to become overwhelmed by the stressor, or at least cope less successfully. In a study conducted by Pisula and Kossakowska (2010) findings revealed a high sense of coherence level was positively associated with positive coping strategies such as seeking social support and self-controlling. According to See, Sek and Lopez (2005) sense of coherence is a strong determinant of successful coping. A stronger sense of coherence allows for adopting problem-focused coping profile that allows for better coping with work-related stressors (Tomotsune et al., 2009). Tomotsune et al. (2009) report that a stronger sense of coherence allows a person to cope proactively with life stressors. According to van Schalkwyk and Rothmann (2008) the importance of sense of coherence for an individual to cope with daily life demands is well documented.

An individual’s sense of coherence or sense of well-being requires certain inherent prerequisites for coping successfully which are represented by the concepts of comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness (Antonovsky, 1987). As the presented literature has shown that sense of coherence allows a person to cope effectively with life stressors; self-esteem has its role to play as well. Self-esteem is discussed in the following section.
3.6 Self-Esteem

There have been controversies in defining self-esteem, and the terms self-concept and self-esteem are often used interchangeably in the published literature (Adams & Berzonsky, 2003). The aim is not to debate the use of the term self-esteem but to define it in a frame that matches the purpose of the present study. According to Battle (1981), self-esteem refers to the perception the individual possesses of his/her own worth. Self-esteem is the evaluation which the individual makes and customarily maintains with regard to himself. It expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes himself to be capable, significant, successful and worthy (Coopersmith, 1981). Self-esteem is often conceptualized as a protective psychological resource that enables people to adapt and recover from stressful events (Lee-Flyn, Pomaki, DeLongis, Bieasands & Puterman, 2011).

According to Humphreys (2002), self-esteem is central to educational development. The need to maintain learners’ self-esteem is self-evident and most teachers are well aware of the importance of the value attached to helping learners feel good about themselves (Lawrence, 2006). Positive self-esteem is associated with adaptive functioning in almost every area of life (Compton, 2005). Common-sense would suggest that learners with high self-esteem perform better in class than learners with low self-esteem (Lawrence, 2006). This is supported by research which consistently shows a positive correlation between learners’ self-esteem and their levels of achievement. Lawrence (2006) states that correlation studies usually reveal that other factors in addition to self-esteem are also relevant to whether learners achieve or not. Bednar et al. (1989) state that self-esteem is dependent upon accepting imperfectness and still striving to complete the goals of a chosen style of life. Raised levels of self-esteem are the product of a response style that favours coping. Educational practices attempting to boost learners’ self-worth have demonstrated only limited
and temporal effects unless they targeted specific self-concept domains (O’Mara, Marsh, Craven & Debus, 2006).

3.6.1 Components of Self-Esteem

A vital issue for researchers is demarcating relations between the self and other aspects of the self. Self-esteem can be either global or specific and there exists a relationship between these two facets of self-esteem (Lawrence, 2006). Global self-esteem refers to a general feeling of self-worth and confidence and most researchers measure global self-esteem which is a combined self-perspective drawn from the domains of the self (Adams & Berzonsky, 2003). Assessment of the general or global self-esteem does not allow for the assessment of competence in specific domains. Self-esteem may vary considerably from one domain to another.

One of the primary functions of general self-esteem appears to be the compensation of weaknesses in specific domains. As Rosenberg (1982) writes, an individual “will be inclined to value things which he considers himself to be good at and to devalue qualities which he considers himself poor” (p. 538). The use of compensatory approaches by academically less talented learners may explain why these learners may have higher scores for general self-esteem than their peers who obtain good school results. In order to compensate for the weaknesses in academic achievements, learners inflate their general self-esteem; it is therefore reasonable to expect that students with low and perhaps medium academic performance and self-esteem use this self-protecting approach.

Domain or specific self-esteem, on the other hand, describes self-satisfaction in specific areas (for example; appearance, academics, social) (Gentile et al., 2009). It is a feeling of worth and confidence with regard to a specific activity or behaviour such as academic self-esteem.

Previous studies show that the teacher, like all the other significant others in the learner’s life, has a substantial impact on academic achievement and academic self-esteem. These findings support previous studies signifying the importance of support from significant others, including parents, teachers and peers in the development of adolescents (Brown & Kafer, 1994; Dunn, Putallaz, Sheppard & Lindstrom, 1987; Mangione & Speth, 1998; Wolfendale, 1984; Zern, 1985). This suggests that psychological support from significant others plays a substantial role on learners’ academic self-esteem, interest in academic work and overall academic performance and as such show a consistent pattern of potentially strong effects of social support on academic self-esteem.

Social self-esteem is the extent to which an individual feels comfortable and secure in his or her emotional and social relationships. Social self-esteem is conceptualized by self-image and social esteem values. Friendships and social approval are important for social self-esteem (Leary & Downs, 1995). William James (1890) conceptualized the self as consisting of three parts: the material self, the spiritual self, and the social self. He further proposed that the social self is based primarily on one’s relationships with significant individuals and social groups which is the social self. It has been seen that one’s relationships with significant others has a significant influence upon one’s self-perceptions (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Sullivan, 1953). Cooley conceptualized a looking-glass self-framework in which relationships with significant others are a mirror through which an individual constructs a view of the self (Berns, 2007).
Personal self-esteem is the individual’s intimate views of own self-worth (Sasat et al., 2002). Haynes (1990) defines personal self-concept as a measure of an individual’s evaluation of personality apart from the physical body or relationship to others. Research on personal self-esteem is limited and conflicting.

3.6.2 The Development and Process of Self-Esteem

Battle (1994) suggests that self-esteem is fundamental to all stages of human development and that it can affect one's accomplishments, interaction with others, achievement patterns, ability to adjust to environmental demands, level of mental health and general state of well-being. Abraham Maslow believed that healthy self-esteem is necessary for a person to be truly productive and successful (Joseph, 1994). He argued that self-esteem comes from two basic sources: love, respect, and the acceptance a person receives from significant others and the person’s sense of competence and achievement.

Carl Rogers (1951, 1959) emphasized the role played by unconditional love and acceptance in the formation of positive self-esteem. This, he termed unconditional positive regard. Unconditional positive regard communicates that the person is valued just for existing. To provide this kind of love, parents do not have to approve of everything a child does. On the contrary, parents and teachers need to give children accurate and direct feedback about their shortcomings as well as their strengths. In the case of unconditional positive regard, there is a clear distinction between the feedback that is given for behaviour and performance and the general love and acceptance that one person has for another; parents and teachers may need to deal with a child’s behaviour, but their love and caring is always there.

Unconditional positive regard is a self-esteem enhancer for several reasons. Positive regard provides a person with a sense of being loved and valued. Unconditional positive regard makes this source of self-esteem a certainty. If a person believes that they are loved,
no matter who they are or what they accomplish, then they have less reason to fear negative evaluations or mistakes and will therefore be more likely to take advantage of new opportunities for self-development. Because one does not have to worry about losing the security of the basic love and acceptance from the significant people in life, they have more energy and time to spend pursuing goals and self-development. Finally, having someone who values one for who they are always leaves someone with something to fall back on when they receive negative feedback (Joseph, 1994).

Conditional positive regard does not have the same effect. Coopersmith (1967) suggests four major factors that contribute to the development of self-esteem: 1) the value that the child perceives others have toward the self – expressed in affection, praise, and concerned attention; 2) the child’s experience with success – the status or position one perceives oneself to hold in the environment; 3) the child's individual definition of success or failure – the aspiration and demands one places upon oneself determine what constitutes success; and 4) the child’s style of dealing with negative feedback or criticism. Bednar et al. (1989) add that parents have a central role in each of these. Coopersmith (1981) states that parents need to communicate clearly their acceptance of the children as well as a effectively communicate well-defined limits and high expectations for performance.

Aside from the need to belong and to be loved, an individual’s self-esteem is also dependent upon feeling basically competent (Joseph, 1994). Bandura (1977) refers to this sense of competency as self-efficacy, which is an individual’s evaluation of his ability to handle life situations, and one’s judgement about how well one is able to perform particular tasks or activities. According to Berns (2007) people who score high in their own estimation approach tasks and persons with the expectation that they will be well received and successful. These individuals have confidence in their perceptions and judgements and believe that they can bring their efforts to a favourable resolution. Their favourable self-
attitudes lead them to accept their own opinions and place credence and trust in their reactions and conclusions. This permits them to follow their own judgements when there is a difference of opinion and also permits them to consider novel ideas. The attitudes and expectations that lead the individual with high self-esteem to greater social independence and creativity allow them to be more assertive and display more vigorous social actions. They lack preoccupation with their problems which permits them to consider and examine external issues.

According to Berns (2007) children accumulate a set of personal evaluations as they develop. They also begin to understand how they are viewed by others. During socialization, people internalise values and attitudes expressed by significant others and as a result express them as their own. Thus self-esteem develops from success or failure at meeting one’s internalized values and attitudes derived from the reflected appraisal of others.

Coopersmith (1967) research suggested that the following factors contribute to development of positive self-esteem:

- The amount of respect and acceptance an individual receives from the significant others.
- The history of successes and status and position a person has in society
- The person’s way of responding to devaluation.

People with low self-esteem lack trust in themselves (Berns, 2007). They do not wish to expose themselves and present with self-consciousness and preoccupation with inner problems. This prevents them from attending to other persons and issues which again results in morbid preoccupation with their problems. This also decreases the chances of having supportive relationships. Researchers have established an association between low levels of self-esteem and poorer adaptational outcomes, such as depression and negative affect (Lee-Flynn et al., 2011). Individuals with high self-esteem have been found to apply stress-
reducing strategies that help them keep unpleasant and ruminative thoughts at bay. Applying those strategies over long periods can have positive influences on adaptational outcomes (Lee-Flynn et al., 2011). Although past research has suggested a profound effect of self-esteem on adaptational outcomes, much attention has been devoted to understanding how self-esteem acts as a diathesis to stress (Butler, Hokanson & Lee-Flynn, 1994). It is proposed that self-esteem is associated with adaptation to stress by changing the impact of stress appraisals on adaptational outcomes.

Self-esteem fluctuates during life-span mirroring individuals’ social, environmental and maturational changes. The following section discusses self-esteem development during adolescence.

3.6.3 The Development of Self-Esteem during Adolescence

Previous research on adolescent self-esteem has been inconsistent regarding development patterns and processes with some researchers concluding that self-esteem is a static construct and with others concluding that it is a dynamic construct (Baldwin & Hoffmann, 2002). There are many factors that impact on the adolescent’s development of self. Adolescents go through changes such as pubertal changes; and they may experience adjustment difficulties during this time as Robins and Trzesniewski (2005) suggests that self-esteem suffers a decline during adolescence. Puberty may be a contributing factor as well as having to think about oneself as well as the future. In addition to this adolescents have a tendency to magnify the severity of stressful events (Compass, Davis & Forsythe, 1985; Compass, Orosan & Grant 1993; Larson & Asmussen, 1991).

Adams (1995) describes the adolescence stage as a stage with ups and downs and a result an individual’s perception of the society is altered. Adolescence is a developmental period characterized by multiple changes in virtually every aspect of an individual’s life, calling for
new psychological adaptations (Dahl & Gunnar, 2009; Williams, Holmbeck, & Greenley, 2002). Adolescents are faced with dramatic changes in the adolescence stage that often set them up for losses in positive feelings of self-worth (self-esteem) (Rhodes, Roffman, Reddy & Fredriksen, 2004).

Self-esteem has an essential role during adolescence and it has been studied by various researchers (Brown, 2004; Corcoran & Franklin, 2002; Cox, 2007; Daniels, 2007; Henn & Henn, 2005). According to Baldwin and Hoffmann (2002) literature suggests that there is a relationship existing between stressful life events and adolescent dysfunction, such as low self-esteem. Research shows that early adolescents’ self-esteem is lowest for most, but self-esteem scores increase across middle adolescence (Cox, 2007). Harter (1993) proposes that self-esteem is highest when adolescents believe they are competent at activities that are important to them and when their social relations are positive. Those with low self-esteem lack competence in areas they deem important and/ or have difficult relations with peers, family members and teachers. Daniels (2007) reports that friends assist in building self-esteem and self-confidence in ways that most supportive families cannot.

According to Robins and Trzesniewski (2005) self-esteem is relatively high in childhood, drops during adolescence, especially for girls. It is clear from the presented literature that self-esteem declines in adolescence. There seems to be gender differences in self-esteem. The following section discusses self-esteem and gender.

3.6.4 Self-Esteem and Gender

Gender is generally asserted to impact upon the growth, demonstration and manifestation of self-esteem (Naderi, Hashemi, Koupayeh & Ahmad, 2009). Zareh (1994) studied the relationship between achievement, motivation, self-esteem and gender among high school students and found that there is a significant relationship between self-esteem and gender.
Cooke (1999) states that studies reveal that adolescent girls tend to have low self-esteem and more negative assessments of their physical characteristics and intellectual abilities than boys.

A study by Gentile et al. (2009) found no significant gender differences in academic performance, social acceptance and self-esteem. The results demonstrate the influence of reflected appraisals on self-esteem. Thus, domain-specific self-esteem may show larger gender differences than global self-esteem (Sondhaus, Kurtz & Strube, 2001; Tiggemann & Rothblum, 1997). Thus, the reflected appraisals model would predict gender differences in areas where societal standards are different for men and women. Although self-efficacy and self-esteem are distinct concepts, domain-specific self-esteem has some overlap with self-efficacy, because it addresses confidence in a certain area of competence. The small gender differences found in global self-esteem (Kling, Heidi, Showers & Buswell, 1999; Major, Barr, Zubek & Babey, 1999; Twenge & Campbell, 2001) may be masking larger differences among specific domains. It is also not clear which specific facets favour men and which favour women, and how large any differences are.

In conclusion research indicates that gender plays a role in self-esteem. The impact of the school upon the self-esteem of learners will now be explored.

3.6.5 The Influence of School on Self-Esteem

Previous research suggests that the physical environment of a school can have a direct impact on students’ academic achievement and behaviour in school (McEwen et al., 2007). Adolescents spend much of the day for nine months of the year in the school environment, and the school environment has a substantial impact on self-esteem (Adams & Berzonsky, 2003). The impact of the school environment on self-esteem therefore becomes important when considering the fact that research has highlighted a positive relationship between
individuals’ perceptions of themselves and academic achievement (McEwen et al., 2007). According to the Best Practice Briefs (2004) the school climate/environment reflects the physical and psychological aspects of the school that are susceptible to change and that provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning to take place. The classroom is not only an educational arena but a powerful social context in which the psychological adjustment of learners can be affected (Juvonen & Wentzel, 1996). A caring school climate is associated with higher self-esteem and self-concept. An effective environment promotes a sense of belonging and self-esteem (Best Practice Briefs, 2004).

Ramphele (2008) and Jansen (2011) have raised a concern about the quality and practice of teachers in South Africa. Teachers have a major impact on learners’ motivation to learn as they represent and communicate a particular educational philosophy and the standards by which learners will be evaluated (Juvonen & Wentzel, 1996). Furthermore, teachers convey approval with regards to school work and also to the learner as a person.

Research suggests that the physical environment can have a direct impact on students’ academic achievement and behaviour in school (McEwen et al., 2007). Furthermore, research suggests that the school environment also impacts on students’ self-perceptions and self-esteem. A study by McEwen et al. (2007) indicated that students from newly built schools report the greatest improvement in their self-perception’s while students from refurbished schools reported the least improvement. The results also revealed that there is a relationship between the learners’ perceptions of their physical environment and their academic self-esteem which also extended to the learners’ global self-esteem.

It has been found that learners with higher self-esteem are more likely to be successful in school and achieve more than children with low self-esteem. This relationship becomes stronger as learners progress to higher grades. The more positively learners feel about their ability to succeed, the more likely they are to maximise effort and feel a sense of
accomplishment when a task is finished. On other hand, the more negatively learners evaluate their ability to succeed, the more likely they avoid activities in which there is uncertainty of success, the less likely they are to maximise effort, and the less likely they are to attribute any success or lack of it to themselves. Those with low self-esteem tend to have increased fear of failure (Berns, 2007).

Successful experiences in school are no guarantee of a generally positive self-concept, but they increase the probabilities that such will be the case. Unsuccessful experiences guarantee that the individual will develop a negative self-concept and increase the probabilities that an individual will develop a negative academic self-concept and increase the probabilities that he will have a generally negative self-concept (Berns, 2007).

3.6.6 Sense of Coherence and Self-Esteem

According to Mayu and Naoyasu (2008) there is a high correlation between sense of coherence and self-esteem. Self-esteem and sense of coherence serve as protective factors for mental health in high school learners. High sense of coherence levels have been found to be related to high self-esteem and low distress levels (Cederblad, Ruksachatkunakorn, Boripunkul, Intraprasert & Höök, 2003). Positive self-esteem is also a protective factor that contributes to better health and positive social behaviour through its role as a buffer against the impact of negative influences (Gajdosova, Orosova, Madarasova-Geckova, Tavel, & van Dijkj, 2009). Higher sense of coherence is associated with a lower level of psychological distress, especially in challenging times. This suggests that sense of coherence acts as a protective factor in increasing stress resistance (Antonovsky, 1987). A study by Moyer (1997) revealed that the combination of sense of coherence and self-esteem explains self-perceived clinical competence better than either variable alone.
Johnson (2004) concluded that sense of coherence is related to general health, and it seems to mirror more dynamic dispositions, referring to an active self-esteem structure and self-determination. Antonovsky’s (1979) sense of coherence concept indicates that an individual’s general orientation to life reflects self-esteem and perceived control over life events (Kalimo & Vuori, 1990; Underhill & Stewart, 1996). The first dimension of Antonovsky’s (1979) sense of coherence refers to an internal locus of control, a sense of self-reliance in the face of challenges (Paulhus, 1983; Rotter, 1966). This dimension mirrors high self-esteem. The second dimension mirrors self-confidence, in the form of a sense of efficacy and effectiveness to deal with challenges. A further important element of sense of coherence is self-esteem (Kalimo & Vuori, 1990; Pallant & Lae, 2002) and especially an active type of self-esteem. Although a high sense of self-esteem indicating contentment and security gives balance, it may not alone develop a strong sense that life is controllable, meaningful and challenging; an active component of self-esteem that drives an individual out to explore and seek experiences is also required (Geyer, 1997). Johnson (2004) makes a tentative suggestion that the composition of self-esteem is a contributory factor in why some people perceive life to be more solid, meaningful, and manageable than others.

3.6.7 Self-Esteem and Academic Achievement

The relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement has received much attention (Naderi et al., 2009). Baumeister, Campbell, Krueger and Vohs (2003) report that many studies have shown that self-esteem is positively correlated with academic performance. Hansford and Hattie’s (1982) research found a significant positive relationship between self-esteem and academic performance was found, with self-esteem accounting for between 4% and 7% of the variance in academic performance. It may seem obvious that high self-esteem should facilitate academic achievement and good grades should enhance self-
esteem (Adams & Berzonsky, 2003). Learners are able to identify that they like some subjects as they do well in them and dislike others as they do not do well in them. This is a self-adjustment, a form of self-esteem. A limited correlation was revealed between self-esteem and academic achievement (Pullmann & Allik, 2008). Pullmann and Allik (2008) also add that some studies have found that low general self-esteem does not necessarily signal a poor academic achievement. The causation in the relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement continues to be debated (Adams & Berzonsky, 2003). Baumeister et al. (2003), report that several studies have explored the positive association between self-esteem and academic performance as a way of establishing causal priority. These authors report that these studies have explored whether third variables, such as socioeconomic status or intelligence could be responsible for the correlations between self-esteem and academic performance.

Studies by Bachman and O’Malley (1977) and Maruyama, Rubin and Kingsbury (1981) found that self-esteem correlated with school performance but did not point to any causal role for self-esteem. These studies concluded that shared prior causes, including family background, ability and early school performance affect self-esteem and later educational attainment and were responsible for the correlation between self-esteem and academic performance. According to Baumeister et al. (2003) high self-esteem fosters high aspirations and persistence, which lead ultimately to better academic performance and career success. Another study has shown no significant relationship existed between self-esteem and achievement analyzed data (Maruyama, Rubin & Kingsbury, 1981). This study was longitudinal in design thereby allowing better specification of interrelations between self-esteem and achievement. Maruyama et al. (1981) reveals that self-esteem and achievement were not “causally” related to each other.
Self-esteem is frequently positively correlated with academic performance, but it appears to be a consequence rather than a cause of high achievement (Baumeister et al., 2003). This suggests that increasing students’ academic skills is a more effective means to boost their self-esteem than vice versa. According to Mwamwenda (2004), research suggests that a learner with a positive self-esteem stands a better chance of performing better than a learner with a negative self-esteem. The importance of self-esteem cannot be restricted to achievement since a positive self-esteem is viewed as the hallmark not only of academic achievement but, more broadly, of the healthy person (Mwamwenda, 2004). Mwamwenda (1995) states that self-esteem is crucial to learning activity and is related to school performance. As a result of self-esteem, a person or learner is motivated to engage in a number of activities such as work, investigation, learning to solve problems, striving to achieve and competition. Mwamwenda (2004) states that individuals with a positive self-esteem at school are associated with 1) a favourable attitude towards school, 2) positive characteristics in the classroom, 3) volunteering ideas in class more frequently, 4) more motivation, 5) showing more initiative, 6) trying harder, 7) persisting longer when challenged, 8) independence in judgement, 9) a greater acceptance of others and 10) seeing themselves as competent. Those with a low self-esteem are associated with 1) being less original and showing less initiative, 2) feeling rather worthless, 3) not trying hard when they encounter problems and 4) reducing their effort or giving up.

Numerous studies that link self-esteem and academic achievement have been carried out in Africa have reported that there is a relationship between self-esteem and academic achievement (Mwamwenda, 2004). The reciprocal effects involving academic self-esteem are clearly stronger and more consistent (Marsh & O’Mara, 2008; Pinxten, de Fraine, van Damme & D’Haenens, 2010; Roy & Litalien, 2010). Academic self-esteem shows a strong pattern of reciprocal effects with subsequent achievement.
3.7 Conclusion

Salutogenesis posits a fundamentally different philosophical assertion about the world than does pathogenesis (McCubbin et al., 1998). It directs individuals to the mystery of health, perhaps for the purposes of this study it can be stated that it directs one to the mystery of positive coping despite the challenges.

This chapter provided the discussion of the concept of the sense of coherence as well as its development. This was followed by the discussion of the concept of self-esteem as well as its development. A discussion of the relation between sense of coherence, coping and self-esteem was provided. The gender differences in sense of coherence and self-esteem were highlighted. An exploration of the influence of the school environment on learners’ self-esteem was presented. The following chapter provides an overview of the research methodology employed in the present study.
CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Chapter Overview

The present chapter provides an overview of the research design and methodology employed in this study. The primary objectives of the research have been included. A discussion of the measures utilised in this research is provided in order to enhance understanding of the data collection process. The research procedure and the data analysis of the study are outlined. Finally, the ethical considerations that were taken into account whilst conducting this research are discussed. Prior to discussing the research methodology the primary objectives of the research are reviewed.

4.2 Primary Objectives of the Research

The primary objectives of this study were:

• To explore and describe the coping orientation of Black learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

• To explore and describe the self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

• To investigate whether there is a relationship between coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.
4.3 Research Design

A quantitative, exploratory-descriptive method of research was used in which the participants were requested to complete self-report survey-type questionnaires. These methods are used to provide accurate measurements of variables and to identify correlations between and among them. Adams, Khan, Raeside and White (2007) add that quantitative research is used in almost every sphere of life, including clinical, biological, epidemiological, sociological and business research. Accumulation of findings through exploratory research allows for the use of descriptive designs (Yegidis & Weinbach, 2002).

The descriptive method was considered to be the most suitable for this study as its purpose was to explore and describe the coping orientation and self-esteem of learners enrolled in under-resourced schools. These methods look at the relationships between two or more variables to see whether those variables correlate (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007). It allows the researcher to test hypotheses about virtually any variable in virtually any situation and can be used even when irrelevant variables cannot be controlled or their effects accounted for (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007). Without being able to manipulate variables and account for the effects of irrelevant variables, a researcher cannot legitimately make causal effect statements. In other words, one can find out that two variables are related but one cannot find out why. The disadvantage is that descriptive methods cannot test causal hypotheses but can however stimulate causal hypotheses. However, the descriptive research design can generally predict a relationship or correlation (Yegidis & Weinbach, 2002).

In descriptive research, there is usually no attempt to manipulate or control variables. Descriptive methods look at the relationships between two or more variables to see whether those variables correlate (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007). This type of research helps to explain and describe behaviour, which is the goal of psychology (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007). The researcher intends to use the information gathered from the study as the basis for assumptions
about the total population (Yegidis & Weinbach, 2002). Exploratory-descriptive design seeks to understand a problem and the factors that are associated with it. The researcher seeks to verify the presence of a relationship between or among variables (Yegidis & Weinbach, 2002).

There are five basic strategies for investigating variables and their relationships. These research strategies include: (1) Quasi-Experimental which attempts to produce a cause and effect explanation, (2) Experimental which aims to produce a cause and effect explanation for the relationship between two variables under investigation, (3) Non-experimental which also aims to produce a description of the relationship between two variables but does not attempt to explain the relationship between the variables, (4) Correlation which aims to produce a description of the relationship between two variables but does not explain the relationship, thereby establishing a relationship between two variables with an unknown cause. The fifth research strategy is descriptive which was used in this study.

This descriptive strategy is extremely useful as preliminary research (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012), as it provides a snapshot of specific characteristics of a particular group of individuals and helps to capture naturally existing behaviours. This is often accomplished with the use of surveys and questionnaires and studies that use the results from a survey to describe a phenomenon are referred to as survey research design. Survey research focuses on specific phenomenon. It can be used to obtain information about different variables including attitudes, opinions, preferences and behaviours which may be difficult to describe in any other way. According to Gravetter and Forzano (2012), survey research provides an easy and efficient way to collect large amounts of information. Survey research involves the collecting of information from a sample through responses to questionnaires (Engel & Schutt, 2005). It continues to be popular because of its versatility, efficiency of data collection and
generalizability (Blaikie, 2010; Engel & Schutt, 2005), and can be used for exploration, description, or explanation purposes.

Surveys are suitable for gathering demographic information that assists in describing the research sample (McIntyre, 1999). The challenge with this kind of design is that the information obtained is always self-reported; and the quality of a survey study depends on the accuracy and truthfulness of the research participants (Gravetter & Forzano, 2012). This latter issue arose with the Culture Free Self Esteem Inventory (Form AD) and the Lie scale which is discussed in chapter five. The respondents may also have difficulty assessing their own behaviour or have poor recall of the circumstances surrounding their behaviour.

Careless attention to measurement has led to failures in research (Engel & Schutt, 2005). In this study, an effort has been made to use reliable and valid measurements which have been tested for reliability using Cronbach’s Alpha. According to Gravetter and Forzano (2012), Cronbach’s Alpha is intended to measure split-half reliability by estimating the average correlation that would be obtained when considering every possibility of splitting a test in half.

4.4 Measures

In this study standardised questionnaires were used to avoid poor measurement of the construct of self-esteem and sense of coherence. The data was collected through the use of paper and pen measures requiring the research participants to report on their feelings, thought and activities/behaviours. Self-administered data collection instruments were used to gather descriptive data about research participants’ feelings, characteristics, behaviours and attitudes (Yegidis & Weinbach, 2002).
Three measures were utilised to gather data for this study and included a biographical questionnaire, Antonovsky’s (1983) Orientation to Life Questionnaire (OLQ-29 Item) and the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI: Form AD) (Battle, 1981). A discussion of these measures follows.

4.4.1 The Biographical Questionnaire

The biographical questionnaire was used to obtain relevant biographical information about the participants. The biographical questionnaire gathered contextual demographic and background information pertaining to the participants. This information was used to describe the sample group. The variables in the biographical questionnaire included age; gender; religious affiliation; health status; involvement in extracurricular activities; employment status of parents or guardians; payment of school fees; tensions between home chores and school work; the desire for education; participants’ class performance in comparison to classmates; number of learners in class; feelings about school performance if the school had not been under-resourced; and how stressful the research participants found the school experience to be.

4.4.2 The Orientation to Life Questionnaire (OLQ-29 Item)

The OLQ-29 has been found to be the most common way of measuring sense of coherence (Antonovsky, 1987). The Orientation to Life Questionnaire was developed by Antonovsky (1987) to measure the concept of sense of coherence. An individual’s sense of coherence is assessed according to three elements: comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness. These three elements of the sense of coherence consist of different numbers of items: Comprehensibility (11 items), (2) manageability (10 items) and (3) meaningfulness (8 items)
(Antonovsky, 1987). The comprehensibility score ranges from 11 to 77, the manageability score ranges from 10 to 70, and the meaningfulness score ranges from 8 to 56.

The scores for comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness are summed together to compute a total overall score for the sense of coherence construct. Antonovsky (1993) warned that the Orientation to Life Questionnaire (OLQ-29 Item) was technically constructed to measure the global orientation, and not the explicit components of comprehensibility, manageability and meaningfulness. According to van Schalkwyk and Rothmann (2008), several studies aiming to identify and analyse the three elements of the sense of coherence have failed to identify the three elements. In an attempt to enhance the statistical properties of the Orientation to Life Questionnaire, the theoretical three-factor structure for the sense of coherence is widely accepted but often negated in favour of the one-factor approach which Antonovsky (1993) advocated. There has been no other theoretical model to replace Antonovsky’s theory and research has been failing to confirm the three-factor structure of sense of coherence. It is therefore recommended that further research should treat the Orientation to Life Questionnaire as a single-factor instrument (van Schalkwyk & Rothmann, 2008).

The Orientation to Life Questionnaire 29 Item requires research participants to select responses to questionnaire items ranging from 1 (never have this feeling) through 7 (always have this feeling). According to Antonovsky (1993), the global score ranges from 29 to 203, with higher scores reflecting a stronger sense of coherence and therefore effective successful coping ability and lower scores reflecting a poorer coping ability. According to Austin, Dahl and Wagner (2010), the global sense of coherence entity is reflected by the total score of the measure.
4.4.2.1 Reliability and validity

The Orientation to Life Questionnaire has been proven to be a reliable and valid measure (Austin, Dahl & Wagner, 2010). The Orientation to Life Questionnaire (OLQ-29 Item) has shown an internal consistency averaging .91 for published articles, .85 for theses and dissertations, and .88 for unpublished research (Antonovsky, 1993). Eriksson and Lindstrom (2005) report that in 124 studies that used the OLQ-29 Item, the Cronbach's Alpha ranged from 0.70 to 0.95. According to Antonovsky (1993), the OLQ-29 Item has been translated into 14 different languages with a high internal consistency, which is indicative of reliability across diverse populations. Wissing and Van Eeden (1997) studied the use of the OLQ-29 Item in the South African context by examining its validity and applicability across cultures. The results of this study indicated that the OLQ-29 Item is valid to be used in South Africa across the different cultures. South African studies that have used the OLQ-29 Item include Bezuidenhout and Cilliers (2010), Brown, Howcroft and Jacobs (2009), Cairns (2001), Diraz, Ortlepp and Greyling (2003), Katalan (2003), Strümpfer and de Bruin (2009), van der Colff and Rothmann (2009) and van Schalkwyk and Rothmann (2008). Muller and Rothmann (2009) found the Orientation to Life Questionnaire to show acceptable reliability and construct validity in their study. van Schalkwyk and Rothmann (2008) report that studies have been unable to confirm the factorial validity of the OLQ and the hypothesised three-factor structure.

The sense of coherence construct cuts across lines of gender, religion, social class and culture (Antonovsky, 1993). The interest in the sense of coherence construct is also shown by the fact that the OLQ-29 Item is available in at least 33 languages in more than 30 countries and in at least 15 versions (Eriksson & Lindström, 2005). These languages include Afrikaans, Czech, Dutch, English, Finnish, German, Hebrew, Norwegian, Rumanian, Russian, Serbian, Spanish, Swedish and Tswana.
The OLQ-29 Item is not without limitations. These result from the psychometric construction and the quality of the language used. A number of the items are plagued by language problems such as semantics, syntax and grammar (van Schalkwyk & Rothmann, 2008). This makes understanding of the OLQ-29 Item difficult especially for an English second-language speaker to comprehend. The participants in the present study speak English as a second language and the inclusion criteria was English. There were very few requests for clarification of questions from the research participants during the data collection process. The schools recommended that the learners would be able to participate in the study as they are able to comprehend English well.

For the purposes of this study, the English version of the OLQ-29 Item was used because of its reliability and validity across cultures and reputability as evidenced by the number of international and local studies. The OLQ-29 Item has been proven to be psychometrically comparatively sound (Eriksson & Lindstrom, 2005).

4.4.3 The Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Form AD)

The Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI-Form AD) was developed by Battle (1992) to measure self-esteem. This measure is designed for a broad age range. The Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventories (Battle, 1992) for grade one and over were designed for the assessment of the self-esteem of children and adults. The CFSEI has been shown to be a valid and reliable way of measuring self-esteem amongst adult populations (Drake, Bull & Boon, 2008). The CFSEI is a self-report inventory which assesses individuals’ self-perception (Sasat et al., 2002). Battle (2002) states that the CFSEI is a norm-referenced self-report instrument which measures global and specific dimensions of self-esteem. Battle’s Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventories include Form A, B and AD. Battle’s (1981) Culture Free Self Esteem Inventory Form AD was used to measure the self-esteem of research participants in
this study. Form AD measures general self-esteem, social self-esteem and personal self-esteem (Brooke, 1995). Battle’s (1981) Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory for adults comprises of 40 items divided into the following subscales: a) General self-esteem (16 items), b) Social self-esteem (8 items), c) Personal self-esteem (8 items), and d) Lie scale (8 items) items which indicates whether the research participants are falsely projecting high levels of self-esteem. The total possible self-esteem score is 32 and the highest lie score is 8. A higher score on the lie subscale scale reflects less honest responding. Participants are instructed to tick either ‘yes’ or ‘no’ in answer to all 40 items. A total self-esteem score is derived through the summation of each of the three self-esteem subscale scores. Scores for the CFSEI are obtained by summing the number of items which indicate a high self-esteem excluding the lie scale. Items are divided into two groups: those which indicate high self-esteem, and those which indicate low self-esteem (Brooke, 1995). The following tables illustrate the classification of self-esteem scores and the classification of subscale scores. These scores can be converted into $t$-scores.

Table 4.1 Total Self-Esteem Classification

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-29</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-26</td>
<td>Intermediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table illustrates the five interpretive levels according to the different subscales of the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory.
Table 4.2 Self-Esteem Classification according to Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscales</th>
<th>Very High</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Very Low</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>15+</td>
<td>12-14</td>
<td>8-11</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>4-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6-7</td>
<td>4-5</td>
<td>2-3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.4.3.1 Reliability and Validity of the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI)

Battle claimed that there have been no concerns regarding cultural bias of the measure. According to Brooke (1995), Battle does not show or discuss how the measure was found to be culture free. Battle (1978, 1988, 1992) conducted validity studies for the measure and found that the CFSEI were valid measures of self-esteem. According to Brooke (1995), support from other researchers is indicated in the 1992 manual. The CFSEI was compared with the Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (1967) to establish concurrent validity and the correlations were .71 to .80 between the two instruments which were significant for both genders. A study by Kozeluk and Kawash (1990) found a high correlation between the two self-esteem inventories. Brooke (1995) reports that the CFSEI has been successfully used in more than 800 dissertations and doctoral dissertations.

Battle (1976, 1977) found the CFSEI Form AD to be a reliable measure of self-esteem with internal consistencies being reported as follows: General (78), social (57), personal (72) and lie scale (54). Brooke (1995) suggests that the internal consistency of some of the subscales such as the social subscale and lie subscale is questionable. Arrufat, Canals and Domenec (1998) found high validity correlations between test retest reliability and construct reliability. In a study conducted by Drake et al. (2008) the findings showed the alpha-
coefficients to range from 0.57 for social self-esteem to 0.78 for general self-esteem and the test–retest reliability for total self-esteem was found to be 0.81.

The CFSEI (Form AD) shows no significant sex differences (Brooke, 1995). Sasat et al. (2002) report that the CFSEI has been translated into different languages and there are no concerns about the cultural bias of the measure raised by practitioners. The original was done in English and this research used the original English version of the measure. The original measure has been translated into French, German, Japanese, Spanish, Italian and Vietnamese. In a study conducted by Sasat et al. (2002) where the CFSEI was translated into the Thai language, cultural bias concerns were raised.

On a test-retest reliability study subtest means, standard deviations and correlations for participating subjects indicated that correlations for the standardization sample were significant for the total and all subtests as well (Battle, 1981). The CFSEI has been found to be a reliable and valid measure (Sasat et al., 2002). Different studies that address the issue of validity have been conducted within the South African context. Findings of the studies indicate that the Culture Free Self Esteem Inventory constitutes a valid measure of self-esteem (Battle, 1981). The 1994/1995 Sigma Catalog described the test as proven to be useful in a variety of settings including educational and industrial and in culturally diverse settings (Holaday et al., 1996). Battle’s Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory has been utilised in South African Studies, for example, by Cox (2007), Daniels (2007), Darney (2010) and Howcroft (1991). Using a validated measure gives a researcher observations of behaviour that are a step ahead of other techniques discussed because the validity and reliability of measure has already been tested.

The primary disadvantage of using these measures is that the observations are considered self-reports which means that they may not be accurate representations of an individual’s behaviour (McBride, 2010). Research participants may want to portray themselves more
positively to the researcher and this can bias the results of a measure. This is called social desirability. This was also observed from statements made by Brooke (1995) about the lie subscale of the CFSEI. McBride (2010) suggests that researchers should be careful when interpreting behaviours observed with these techniques as they may not be accurate representations of individuals’ behaviours.

4.5 Sampling

As described in the above section, data collection has great importance in research as the data is meant to contribute to a better understanding of a theoretical framework (Bernard, 2002). Therefore selecting the manner of gathering the data and the subjects from whom the data is collected must be done with a sound judgment as no amount of analysis can correct for improperly collected data (Bernard, 2002). The inherent bias of purposive sampling contributes to its efficiency, and the method stays robust even when tested against random probability sampling (Tongco, 2007). The purposive sampling technique is also called judgment sampling (Tongco, 2007). The researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Bernard, 2002). Random or probability sampling is seen to be efficient and therefore is recommended as a means of informant selection as it reduces bias and allows for the generalization of results to the sampled population (Bernard, 2002). Unfortunately, random sampling is not always efficient. It may come with higher costs for a researcher. Missing data is a common phenomenon rendering samples invalid. When a sample is representative, it becomes valid over the realm it represents, providing external validity (Tongco, 2007).

Despite its inherent bias, purposive sampling can provide reliable and robust data (Tongco, 2007). The selection of the sampling units in purposive sampling is subjective as
there is reliance on the judgement and experience of the researcher (Guarte & Barrios, 2006). Guarte and Barrios (2006) suggest that as much as there are shortcomings with purposive sampling, this sampling technique continues to be very popular among researchers especially in the social sciences. It is important for the members of a purposive sample to share certain characteristics (Holloway & Wheeler, 2002).

Sometimes cases are selected as they are believed to give the researcher access to an approach to a problem, situation or condition researcher wish to understand (Yegidis & Weinbach, 2002). A non-probability sampling method was used in this study. Some studies cannot adequately identify the members of a population in order to draw a sample (Blaikie, 2010). Insisting on random sampling would make the research impossible. It is then necessary to compromise the ideal and use non probability sampling. The process of random sampling can result in sampling error which is the inconsistency between the characteristics of the subjects and the population (Engel & Schutt, 2005). Purposive sampling was used in this study. This kind of sampling is used in exploratory research and uses the judgement of an expert in selecting cases or the researcher selects cases with a specific purpose in mind (Neuman, 2006). In purposive sampling the researcher samples with a specific purpose in mind, the researcher builds up a sample which enables understanding of the specific characteristics. This type of sampling is helpful when a researcher wants to construct a historical reality, describe a phenomenon or develop something about which only a little is known. Participants are selected as they exemplify theoretically important characteristics or because of their life experiences with regard to the phenomena under study (Mertens, 2009). Neuman (2006) asserts that with purposive sampling, the researcher never knows whether the cases selected represent the population. Purposive sampling leads to greater depth of information from a small number of selected research participants (Bickman & Rog, 2009). Descriptive research helps explain and describe behaviour, and the important goal of
psychology is to describe behaviour (Mitchell & Jolley, 2007). Engel and Schutt (2005) state that in purposive sampling, each element is selected for a purpose, usually because of the unique situation of the sample elements; for example studying mid-level managers with a reputation for efficiency, and examining the efficiency of an intervention with subjects who have particular characteristics.

According Blaikie (2010), purposive sampling is a commonly used sampling technique. One use is to deal with situations where it is impossible or very costly to identify a particular population. A second use of the purposive/judgemental sampling technique is for selecting some cases of a particular type that the researcher is interested in. The selection will be a matter of judgement as to which subjects would be mostly appropriate.

### 4.6 Research Participants

In the strict legal sense, Black refers to Africans, Coloureds and Indians; alternatively all those who were discriminated against by apartheid (Mchunu & Le Roux, 2010). In a less specific sense, the term refers to Africans that is, indigenous Africans. In this study, the term is used in the latter context. The research sample consisted of a cohort of eighty-five grade 12 learners comprising of both males and females from three senior secondary schools in the township of the Nelson Mandela Metropole. The age range of the sample in the present study was 16 to 22 years.

The sample consisted of fifty six females and twenty nine males. The Department of Basic Education (2010) recorded no difference in the performance of learners by gender for the 2009 results hence the inclusion of both males and females in the study. It was recorded that 251, 404 males wrote and 155, 729 achieved, whereas 300, 536 females wrote and 178, 880 achieved. These numbers show that there were no significant differences in the academic
performance of the different gender groups hence both males and females were included in the study.

The participants were divided into two groups: those who had obtained 60 per cent overall achievement from their matric June results and those below 50 per cent. The Department of Basic Education (2010) describes 60% to 69% as substantial performance on the scales of achievement. The standardised school reports consider 33% as an elementary achievement and 40% to 49% as a moderate achievement.

The Department of Basic Education (2010) has reported that there are schools that have been classified in the lowest level in the poverty ranking and which are severely under-resourced and yet these schools have done well by obtaining pass rates between 60% and 99%. For the purpose of this study, the research participants were selected from under-resourced schools whereby the learners do not have access to internet on school premises, do not have a library or do not have a functional library in that it has out-dated material at school that provides access to up-to-date resources and have limited access to necessary resources such as textbooks. These schools have a teacher: learner ratio that is more than that of most well-resourced state schools that has a low teacher: learner ratio of 1:17 (Hendricks, 2008). The teacher: learner ratio in these schools ranged from 1:27 to 1:45. Finally, annual school fees are less than R500.00. The ability to comprehend the English language was an inclusion criteria as the measures used were in the English language.

4.7 Research Procedure

The research proposal for this study was presented to the Department of Psychology. Ethical approval was then obtained from the Faculty Research and Technology Innovations Committee (FRTI). Permission to conduct research at the specific schools was obtained from the relevant authorities at the Department of Education in the Eastern Cape in the Nelson
Mandela Metropole. Three under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole were identified. The researcher went to the schools in person and meetings were set up with the school principals and HOD of the schools who assisted in the identification of learners who participated in the research. Permission was obtained from these identified schools and appropriate times were negotiated as to when the researcher could come to introduce the research to the learners (Appendix B). The learners were then approached and the proposed study was discussed with them. The learners were provided with a cover letter informing the participants of the procedure and outcomes of the research, and their rights as participants were also explained (Appendix C). The learners were provided with a consent form which they took to parents or guardians. The researcher set up an appointment to meet with the learners who wanted to participate in the study and these learners were asked to bring their signed consent forms on the day that the researcher would return to collect the consent form and ask the participants to complete the questionnaires. The consent form (Appendix C) ensured that participation was voluntary. The learners were informed that their participation was voluntary and they could stop their participation in the study whenever they wanted to. There were no financial gains and participating in the study would not affect them in anyway.

Anonymity was maintained as the participants were requested not to write their names on any of the questionnaires. The learners were provided with the researcher’s work office number in the event that they required assistance or were unclear about the proposed research. The learners were identified by the school teachers and were informed of when the researcher was coming. These teachers did not know who had decided to participate or not participate; they only informed the learners and did not have access to the research questionnaires that were answered by the research participants.

On the identified date with the school and the learners, consent forms were collected from the participants and the participants were requested to complete three questionnaires; the
biographical questionnaire, the CFSEI (Form AD) and the OLQ (29 Item). These measures were administered in a group setting with the researcher supervising and clarifying unclear questions for the participants. The learners were enrolled in three different schools and these schools had varying numbers (20, 28 and 37) of learners who consented to participate in the proposed study. After the data collection had been completed with the participants from these schools, the data was entered and sent to a statistician for analysis. Computerised data analysis software was used for the analysis of the data.

4.8 Data Analysis

Bickman and Rog (2009) state that data needs to be summarised into meaningful forms that are easy to understand, compare and communicate. Quantitative data was collected in this study. The obtained data was analysed in terms of the aims of the study. Descriptive statistics were used for the first two aims of the study which were to explore and describe the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black grade 12 learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. Correlational analysis was used to investigate whether there is a relationship between coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. The biographical data was also analysed using descriptive statistics.

4.8.1 Descriptive Statistics for Research Aim 1 and 2

Descriptive statistics are the most widely used method of descriptive data analysis which includes measures of relative standing and measures of relationships between variables. These measures summarise the raw data (Argyrous, 2005). Measures of central tendency were used and these included the mean and the median. The mean is the average of all data and the median is the middle value of the ordered data (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006). The mean is
described as the most accurate measure of central tendency as it uses every score in a distribution (De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delport, 2007). The median is also a measure of the representative value of group scores (Aron, Aron & Coups, 2008) and it provided the middle scores of the sample in this study.

Measures of variability were used to summarize the spread and describe the distribution of obtained scores. These measures included the range which is the difference between the highest and the lowest score; the inter-quartile range which is the difference between the score which has one quarter of the scores below it and that which has three-quarters of the scores below it (Robson, 2002). Standard deviation was used as it is a powerful indicator of spread (Sapsford & Jupp, 2006). The standard deviation is the most frequently utilised measure of spread (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 2005). According to Sapsford and Jupp (2006) the standard deviation is an average representing how the distribution is spread out. The descriptive statistics were used to describe the relationship between variables however Bickman and Rog (2009) report that these are insufficient for estimation and testing hypotheses.

### 4.8.2 Correlational Statistics for Research Aim 3

Correlational analysis was used to investigate whether there is a relationship between coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. Multiple correlation techniques were used to explore and describe the relationship between the OLQ-29 Item global score and the total self-esteem score and the four subscales of the CFSEI (Form AD). This was done in order to explore whether a significant relationship existed between these variables. The relationship between variables does not imply that the variables are causally related (Aiken, 2000).
According to Harris (1998), multiple correlations illustrate a relationship between variables. When a correlation between variables has been recognised, it is important to assess the significance of this relationship. The correlation can be described as a descriptive statistic as it describes the direction of the correlation whether positive or negative (Aron, Coups & Aron, 2011). The researcher needs to know whether the results, specifically the correlation between variables is statistically significant and whether the effect size is large enough for the results to be useful. A statistically significant result means that the researcher can have the confidence that there is some real effect, but this does not tell much about whether this effect is significant in a practical sense.

In order to assess the significance of the correlation for the relationship between coping orientation and self-esteem the levels of significance were used. Quantitative analysis is virtually synonymous with significance testing (Robson, 2002). Tests of statistical significance were used in data analysis to ascertain whether the results obtained by data analysis are statistically and practically significant. De Vos et al. (2007) state that the aim of the tests of statistical significance is to make probability statements regarding the population from which the sample was drawn. The result of a statistical difference helps to rule out the possibility that the results could be due to random variation in the sample, rather than due to real differences in the sample (Robson, 2002). One problem is that statistical significance is not related to the size or relationship which is what most researchers are interested in. The chance of obtaining a statistically significant result increases as the sample size increases. According to De Vos et al. (2007), tests of statistical significance are executed on a ‘level of significance’. These are referred to as conventional levels of significance (Aron et al., 2008). They are described as the 0.05 and 0.01 level of significance. The 0.05 level of significance which implies that there is a 95% chance that the obtained results are due to independent variables and not to chance (De Vos et al., 2007). The 0.01 level of significance means that
there is a 99% chance that the results are due to the influence of independent variables. Statistical significance plays an important role in behavioural and social science research (Aron et al., 2011). Bothe and Richardson (2011) define practical significance as the size of the difference between groups, or the extent to which two or more distributions of scores are said to differ.

Harris (1998) suggests that a p-value of .05 is regarded as being statistically significant, a p-value of .01 or .001 is considered to be more significant, these p-values are representative of more stringent and rigorous significance levels. The following set of guidelines by Guilford (1946) was used for the interpretation of the magnitude of the relationships between variables:

- Less than .20 slight; almost negligible relationship
- .20 - .40 low correlation; definite but small relationship
- .40 - .70 moderate correlation; substantial relationship
- .70 - .90 high correlation; marked relationship
- .90 – 1.00 very high correlation; very dependable relationship

Inferential statistics involving significance tests provides information regarding the possibility that the results are ‘just by chance and random error’ versus their occurrence due to some fundamentally true relationship that exists between variables (Bickman & Rog, 2009). In addition, these methods of data analysis provide information regarding the magnitude of the relationship or the effect.

A researcher carries out a study that provides the scores and means for a sample of people that the researcher wants to compare a population for which the mean is known but the variance is unknown. Hypothesis testing in this situation is called t test for a single sample (Aron et al., 2011). T tests were used for the total self-esteem and the subscale scores of self-esteem in the present study.
4.8.3 Additional Data Analysis

Additional multiple comparisons were conducted using the Mann Whitney U test. Items from the biographical questionnaire were correlated with scores from the OLQ 29 Item and the total self-esteem scores and the self-esteem subscale scores. These items included correlating subjective experience of stress and OLQ scores as well as self-esteem and academic performance with OLQ 29 Item scores and the CFSEI (Form AD) scores. The Mann Whitney U test is used to test whether two independent samples of observations are drawn from the same distributions (Choudhury, 2010). An advantage with this test is that the two samples under consideration may not necessarily have the same number of observations, therefore providing information about relationships between the samples’ parent populations. The test assumes that the samples are random, independent of each other; observations are numeric or ordinal (arranged in ranks). When there is one nominal variable and one measurement which does not meet the normality assumption of an ANOVA, the Kruskal-Wallis test is used (McDonald, 2009). The sample of this study was relatively small; hence the Kruskal-Wallis test was used. McDonald (2009) maintains that this test does not make assumptions about normality. When the original data set actually consists of one nominal variable and one ranked variable, the ANOVA cannot be done alone and the ANOVA and Kruskal-Wallis test must be done. The Kruskal-Wallis test does not test the null hypotheses that the populations have identical means which is the null hypothesis of a one-way ANOVA.

The third research aim was to investigate whether there is a relationship between the coping orientation and levels of self-esteem of learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. The data obtained from the CFSEI and OLQ was used to describe the relationship between the coping orientation and self-esteem of learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools. Descriptive statistics were used to interpret the results obtained from these measures. Kruskal-Wallis test was utilised to explore and describe
the relationship between the subjective experience of school related stress and coping orientation/sense of coherence.

The Chi-square test was used in this study. When a research question does not direct the data to be collapsed into two classifications, but directs the researcher to the distribution of cases across values of a variable, the chi-square test is used (Argyrous, 2005). The OLQ 29 Item could not have been collapsed into two responses such as yes/no. The OLQ 29 Item had a multimodal distribution. A multimodal distribution is defined as a distribution with more than two points on a scale (Argyrous, 2005).

The above sections have discussed the analysis of the data obtained from the OLQ 29 Item and CFSEI (Form AD) which have been found to be reliable and valid measures. The Cronbach’s alpha was used to measure the reliability of the measures in this study. According to Mertens (2009), the Cronbach’s alpha is used to compare the internal consistency of items on an instrument to see if respondents are consistent in the way they respond to the overall instrument. The reliability of measures is an important part of research as well as the ethical considerations followed in the study. The following section discusses the ethical considerations that were followed in the study.

4.9 Ethical Considerations

The APA Ethics Code has been revised several times in order to ensure ethical conduct with regard to research due to studies such as Milgram’s and Zimbardo’s (McBride, 2010); and questions have been asked about the ethics of well-known studies such as those by Asch (1951) on group pressure, Bennett and Holmes (1975) on self-esteem (Allan, 2008). As a result, more emphasis has been placed on protecting the rights of the research participants (Allan, 2008). Ethical guidelines have been put in place in order to prevent researchers from engaging in scientific misconduct which includes neglecting the confidentiality, anonymity
and privacy of research participants, involuntary participation of people in research and deceiving participants (Struwig & Stead, 2001). Ethical issues arise from the researcher’s interaction with other people (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). However, survey research typically carries fewer ethical predicaments than field or experimental research (Engel & Schutt, 2005). Babbie and Mouton (2001) states that the researcher has the right to the search for truth but not at the expense of the rights of other individuals in society.

Ethical guidelines were carefully followed in this study. Ethical clearance to conduct the study was obtained from the Faculty Research and Technology Innovations Committee (FRTI) of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). For the purposes of the current study, the ethical code of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University was adhered to, namely, i) all participants were informed about the nature, goals and possible advantages of this research; ii) participants had the freedom to choose not to participate in the study; iii) participants were given informed consent should they choose to participate in the study; iv) the research had no known risks or discomfort for the participants; v) data was gathered under the supervision of a qualified psychologist; and vi) participants’ confidentiality was guaranteed in that all the material and data were treated as confidential at all times. Permission was also obtained from the Department of Education.

The researcher has an ethical responsibility to ensure that research participants have knowledge of what they are getting themselves into and know that they can withdraw from the research at any point (Rosnow & Rosenthal, 2005). Researchers are required to inform research participants at the beginning of the study of their right to withdraw from the study at any time and whether or not financial gain or any other inducement has been offered (Breakwell, Hammond, Fife-Schaw & Smith, 2006). Informed consent was obtained from the grade 12 learners which were signed showing that they have chosen to participate in the study. To ensure that potential research participants were protected, researchers are required
to provide an information document for the research participants (Allan, 2008). Some of the information contained in the information documents included: (1) identification of the researcher with contact details and identification of the institution involved, (2) the degree for which the researcher is studying and the names of the research supervisors, (3) title of the research, (4) an invitation to participate in the study, (5) a statement regarding what the collected data will be used for and an undertaking that the information provided will only be used for the purpose of this research. It was stated in the information documents that this study if for a Masters Degree in Clinical Psychology (6) an indication that there were no risks involved in participating in the study, (7) a statement that participation in the study is voluntary and that the research participants can withdraw their participation in the study without penalty and (8) a statement that the information provided will be kept confidential and that the identity of the research participants will not be disclosed.

Ethical principles require that all information obtained about research participants during the study must be confidential unless it has been agreed upon otherwise in advance. The research participants should be told by the researcher that the information they provide during the study will be treated with confidentiality and if published will not be identifiable as theirs (Breakwell et al., 2006). The research participants were informed that the findings will be published and they will remain anonymous and their schools will not be identifiable.

4.10 Conclusion

This chapter highlighted the research design and procedure as well as the ethical considerations. This study employed an explorative and descriptive approach and the survey research strategy was utilised. The results obtained through the biographical questionnaire, the Orientation to Life Questionnaire (29-Item) and the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Form AD) are presented in Chapter 5. The data obtained from these measures was analysed
through descriptive statistics and correlational statistics. The results and discussion of findings will be presented in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 5

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

The results of this study are presented in this chapter. A description of the sample is initially provided. A biographical questionnaire was used to obtain the demographic information and contextualises the findings in relation to the other two measures, the Orientation to Life Questionnaire (OLQ 29-item) and the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (CFSEI Form AD) that were utilised in this study. The results obtained from the CFSEI are presented in order to understand the self-esteem of the learners enrolled in under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. This is followed by a presentation of the results obtained from the OLQ-29 Item in order to understand the coping orientation of these learners. The chapter concludes with the presentation of the results regarding the relationship between the self-esteem and coping orientation of learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools.

5.2 Demographic Description of the Sample

Information obtained from the biographical questionnaire was used to present the responses that the research participants provided. The biographical variables included age, gender, religious affiliation, involvement in extracurricular activities, number of learners in a class, performance at school, perceptions regarding their experience of school, conflict between school schedules and home chores and perceptions regarding performance if the school was better resourced.
5.2.1 Participants: Gender

The following table presents the gender distribution sample of this study (N=85):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>56 (66%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>29 (34%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A cohort of eighty-five learners participated in the study. The majority of the research participants were female (fifty-six) and twenty-nine male participants taking part. The eighty-five learners who gave consent to participate in this research were all Black Xhosa speaking learners.
5.2.2 Age

The following table presents the age distribution of the sample of this study (N=85):

Table 5.2 Age Distribution of Sample deteriorate

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age in Years</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>3 (3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>19 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>33 (39%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>18 (22%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>6 (7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>4 (5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the age distribution of this sample the minimum age was 16 years and the maximum age was 22 years. The mean of the age was 18.29.

5.2.3 Religious Affiliation

The majority (n= 75) of the participants in this sample have a religious affiliation. The results illustrate a high involvement with religion by the research participants as only 10 of the research participants do not have a religious affiliation.

5.2.4 Involvement in Extracurricular Activities

The following table illustrates the distribution of this sample’s involvement in extracurricular activities.
Table 5.3: Extracurricular Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extracurricular Activities</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Involved</td>
<td>47 (55%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Involved</td>
<td>38 (45%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Of the eighty-five research participants, 55% is involved in extracurricular activities. There is no significant difference between those who are involved in extracurricular and those who are not involved in extracurricular activities.

5.2.5 Health of the Research Participants

The following table illustrates the varying degrees of the physical health of the research participants.

Table 5.4 Description of Health

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Health</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>45 (53%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>40 (47%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the biographical questionnaire the research participants were requested to describe their health by selecting one of the three options provided, namely poor, good and excellent health. Fifty-three percent of the research participants described their health as good followed
by 40% of research participants who described their health as excellent. None of the research participants described their health as poor.

5.2.6 Family of the Research Participants

The research participants were also requested to report on whom they lived with. The majority of the research participants (n=79) (93%) reported that they live with adults in their home. This includes parents and/or relatives. The remainder of the sample reported that they live alone or with siblings.

5.2.7 Employment of Parents

The research participants were requested to report whether their parents were employed or unemployed. Fifty percent of the research participants reported that their parents were unemployed and fifty percent reported that their parents were employed at the time of the current research.

5.2.8 Payment of School Fees

On the biographical questionnaire the research participants were requested to report on who pays their school fees. A substantial number of the research participants (82%) reported that their school fees were paid by their parents and others reported that they were not paying school fees. A key policy change in the South African Education system which has engendered a change in education financing is the introduction of the no fee policy. Learners are granted an exemption from paying school fees and this applies to those who apply and are granted an exemption based on income. According to Sayed and Motala (2009), learners cannot be denied admission to a school because of their parents’ failure to pay fees or the learner’s inability to pay school fees. Forty percent of South African schools were declared
no fee schools as of 2007 (Sayed & Motala, 2009). This was determined by poverty indicators such as income, unemployment rates and the level of education of the community, which are weighted to assign a poverty score for the community and the school (Consortium for Research on Education, Access, Transitions and Equity, 2009). Sayed and Motala (2009) maintain that the implications and extent of these efforts to promote equity and redress in education continue to generate concerns that while failure to pay school fees may not keep children out of school, they do help to sustain a class-differentiated two tier education system.

Jansen (2011) reports that South Africa has two unequal school systems, namely, the small elite for the Black and the White, and a massive, dysfunctional, impoverished system for the majority of poor Black children. These Black learners generally come from poor and often broken homes (The Economist, 2010). Jansen (2011) warns that the longer the education system fails hundreds of thousands of grade 12 learners annually, the more there will be a resurgence of racial thinking amongst Black South Africans. The South African public schooling system thus remains characterised by a vast number of distinctly disadvantaged schools and a small pocket of highly privileged schools. The Eastern Cape and Limpopo have 56% of their learners in the poorest category. With poorer schools having been declared no fee schools, exemptions only apply to fee-charging schools (Sayed & Motala, 2009).

5.2.8 Travelling to School and Attending to Home Chores

The research participants were requested to report on how they get to school. The following options were provided on the biographical questionnaire: walking, riding a bicycle, taking a taxi and using transport arranged by the school and other, should none of these options apply. The research participants were not requested to indicate the distance or the amount of time it takes for them to travel to school. Only two options were selected by the research participants from those provided on the biographical questionnaire. A significant
number of these learners walked to school (85%) and 15% of the learners reported that they used a taxi to reach school. None of the research participants rode bicycles or had transport arranged for them by the school. Many learners currently have to walk long distances to school in the heavy rain that the province has been experiencing (Equal Education, 2011). This is something that needs to be resolved. The Department of Education of the Eastern Cape expressed concern over the fact that there are learners who are required to walk long distances to school. This has had the tendency to influence school attendance and in turn increase learner drop-out rates. In some remote areas it has even influenced the starting age of learners and in extreme cases contributed to the complete failure in obtaining schooling at all (South African Schools Act, 1996). Historically, this has been one of the programmes that has significantly changed the lives of thousands of poor learners from impoverished backgrounds, and its suspension has impacted negatively on the ability of learners to benefit from their right of access to basic education. According to the South African Human Rights Commission (2010), the Eastern Cape announced suspension of transport and food programmes and these kinds of announcements are not new to the Eastern Cape; this is the same province that still has learners who are learning in unsafe mud classrooms. According to Matomela (2006), learners in many disadvantaged areas are not able to reach schools because of the unavailability of transport facilities and the fact that the department has not delivered on its promise to transport children. This problem has been compounded by the new transport policy which banned the use of bakkies for transporting pupils to school (Matomela, 2006). Learner transport issues still exist and transport is a major concern that links with the inadequacy of the South African Education infrastructure (Makube, 2010).

When exploring the extent to which daily chores impacted on school performance, Mack (2007) reported that some learners have to perform these chores when they get home from school and that this has been found to have a negative effect on their motivation to study. In
this current study the majority of the research participants indicated that although they had home chores to perform, they did receive assistance with the chores from other family members. In exploring this further, the research participants were asked whether household chores created tension between school schedules and the desire for an education. The majority (67%) of the research participants reported that home chores did not create tension between school schedules and the desire for an education.

### 5.2.9 Subjective Rating of Stress

On the biographical questionnaire the research participants were provided with three options to report their levels of stress. The following table provides a subjective rating of stress as experienced by the research participants.

**Table 5.5 Experience of Stress**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjective Rating of Stress</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Not Stressful</td>
<td>14 (16%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderately Stressful</td>
<td>60 (71%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extremely Stressful</td>
<td>11 (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85 (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the biographical questionnaire the research participants were requested to rate the extent to which they experience school to be stressful. The majority (71%) of the research participants reported that they experience school to be moderately stressful. Boethel (2004) indicated that stressors from within the socio-psychological and broad social context of the previously disadvantaged learner give rise to high levels of stress. Stressors amongst previously disadvantaged learners include the following: insufficient infrastructure (for
example, water and electricity supply), insufficient housing, financial difficulties, changes (for example, technological developments), family crises (for example, illness or death) and transportation problems. Becker and Beyers (2011) add that all the above-mentioned factors may give rise to high stress levels. Jansen (2011) suggests that the underlying distress amongst the poor, particularly in the education system needs to be dealt with.

5.2.10 Learners’ Perception of Academic Performance in a Resourced School

The following table illustrates what the learners feel their academic performance would be if their school was not under-resourced.

Table 5.6 Perception of Academic Performance in a Resourced School

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Performance</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perform Better</td>
<td>74  (87%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Perform Better</td>
<td>11  (13%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>85  (100%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On the biographical questionnaire the research participants were asked whether they feel they would perform better than they are currently performing if their school was not under-resourced. The majority of the research participants reported that they felt they would in fact perform better than they are currently performing if their school was not under-resourced. It is clear from the Policy Brief that learners in well-resourced schools perform better than those in under-resourced schools (Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity, 2009). Despite resource shifts to poorer schools, the children in poor South African schools have made little progress and still perform much worse than their counterparts in more adequately resourced schools.
When considering the results of the national reading test in South Africa, the results showed that in resourced schools, learners scored 188 points more than their under-resourced school counterparts on the test and in 2007 this had increased to a 191 point difference (van der Berg & Moses, 2011). Learners in the under-resourced schools performed significantly worse than learners in the resourced schools. In addition, South African learners in under-resourced schools performed much worse than most of their counterparts in other countries. This Policy Brief has shown that the bulk of South African schools - those outside the most affluent quintile - perform extremely weakly, compared to both the more affluent schools and, more relevantly, to even under-resourced schools in other African countries (van der Berg & Moses, 2011).

5.2.11 Number of Learners in Class

The research participants were requested to report the number of learners in their class. The maximum observed response was 45 and the minimum observed response was 27 with an average of 35.65. The teacher-learner ratios for these research participants’ schools do not seem to be the most favourable. According to Hendricks (2008), the highest teacher-learner ratio of 1:31 was found at a poorly resourced township school. The most favourable ratio of 1:17 was found at two well-resourced schools but also at one poorly-resourced rural school (Hendricks, 2008).

5.3 Results of the Measures of the Standardised Measures

The results in this section are presented according to the three aims of this study. These aims were:

- To explore and describe the coping orientation of Black grade 12 learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.
To explore and describe the self-esteem of Black grade 12 learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

To investigate whether there is a relationship between coping orientation and self-esteem of learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

Descriptive statistics and correlational statistics were used to analyse the results obtained from the measures used in this study. This section starts with the coping orientation results and self-esteem results and are followed by the description of the relationship between the coping orientation and self-esteem. Finally, additional results are also presented. The said results are not the aims of the research, but are additional results incorporating findings from the biographical questionnaire, the Orientation to Life questionnaire 29 Item as well as the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory-Form AD (CFSEI-Form AD) are included.

5.3.1 Description of Coping Orientation

The first aim of this research was to explore and describe the coping orientation of Black grade 12 learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. The coping orientation was measured through the use of the Orientation to Life Questionnaire which measures the sense of coherence. It is important to review the definition of the sense of coherence before discussing the results obtained from the Orientation to Life Questionnaire 29 Item (OLQ 29 Item).

Antonovsky (1987, p.19) provided the following definition of sense of coherence: “The sense of coherence is a global orientation that expresses the extent to which the individual has a pervasive, enduring, though dynamic feeling of coherence, that (1) the stimuli deriving from his/her internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable and explicable, (2) the resources are available to meet the demands
posed by these stimuli and (3) these demands are challenges worth of investment and engagement”.

Antonovsky (1987) maintained that only global scores should be used to interpret the sense of coherence of individuals. Only the global scores of the learners in this study were used in order to discuss the levels of the sense of coherence. The sense of coherence predicts the extent to which individuals feel that there is a probability that things will work out well (Antonovsky, 1979). It consists of three core personality characteristics, namely comprehensibility (making sense of the stimuli in the environment), manageability (coping with the stimuli in view of the available resources) and meaningfulness (an emotional identification with events in the environment). The strength of the sense of coherence is connected to a variety of coping mechanisms called generalised resistance resources (GRR’s) (Antonovsky, 1979), defined as any characteristic of the person, the group, or the environment that can facilitate effective tension management. According to Antonovsky (1987), the strength of individuals with a strong sense of coherence lies in their ability to mobilise and utilise a combination of effective resources to confront the stressor. These individuals will perceive situations and life experiences as comprehensible, manageable and meaningful, are flexible in their approach to situations and are able to prevent tension aroused by the event from turning into stress (Antonovsky, 1987; Fouché, 1999).

The following table presents these global scores as obtained from Orientation to Life Questionnaire 29 Item (OLQ-29) in the sample (n=85) of this study.
Table 5.7 Sense of Coherence Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sense of coherence</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sense of coherence</td>
<td>130.69</td>
<td>19.81</td>
<td>76.00</td>
<td>188.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.8 Reliability and Consistency of OLQ-29 in the Current Sample

| Cronbach’s Alpha | 0.79 |

The global scores obtained from the Orientation to Life Questionnaire 29 Item (OLQ 29 Item) are presented in this chapter. Normative data for the Orientation to Life Questionnaire 29 Item (OLQ-29 Item) was not provided by Antonovsky (1987). Nevertheless, a number of internationally published studies which provide normative data exist (Antonovsky, 1987) to place results into perspective. The following table presents normative data from internationally published studies.
Table 5.9 International Normative Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normative Data from Internationally Published Studies using the Orientation to Life Questionnaire</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Swedish high-risk children</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>152.6</td>
<td>22.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibbutz fathers</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>152.5</td>
<td>14.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israeli retired men (aged 65)</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>152.2</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibbutz men (aged 65)</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>152.2</td>
<td>22.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibbutz mothers</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>151.0</td>
<td>15.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israeli medical students at entry</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>150.2</td>
<td>16.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish adult male sample</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>150.2</td>
<td>21.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibbutz fathers, disabled children</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>146.3</td>
<td>19.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish adult female sample</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>146.1</td>
<td>22.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibbutz women (60 years)</td>
<td>130</td>
<td>145.7</td>
<td>20.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israeli retired women (age 60)</td>
<td>368</td>
<td>145.0</td>
<td>23.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech controls in cancer study</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>145.0</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kibbutz mothers, disabled children</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>140.1</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA male patients at VA clinics (aged +55 years)</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>139.6</td>
<td>36.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish university students (52% women)</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>138.6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Zealand, chronic pain (78% women)</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>138.6</td>
<td>14.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israeli Jewish national sample</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>136.5</td>
<td>19.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA production workers (76% women)</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>133.0</td>
<td>26.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Israeli cerebral palsy (aged 18-33)</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>131.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA undergraduates (68% women)</td>
<td>307</td>
<td>129.5</td>
<td>24.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czech cancer patients</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.10 South African Normative Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normative Data from South African Studies</th>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nurses at a Psychiatric Hospital</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>140.69</td>
<td>Bester (2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cancer patients</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>151.71</td>
<td>Cairns (2001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patients with Major Depressive Disorder</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>100.56</td>
<td>Carstens (1995)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers of learners with disabilities</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>144.95</td>
<td>Brown, Howcroft &amp; Jacobs (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HIV-positive adult females attending a support group</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>116.65</td>
<td>Katalan (2003)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Patients in cardiac rehabilitation</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>Madhoo (1999)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult patients with depressive mood</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>99.10</td>
<td>Otto (2002)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post graduate learners</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>145.47</td>
<td>Smith (2006)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group of rural university students</td>
<td>249</td>
<td>140.21</td>
<td>Wissing et al. (1992)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mixed group sample of Psychology students</td>
<td>550</td>
<td>136.52</td>
<td>Wissing &amp; Van Eeden (1997)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adult family caregivers of HIV/AIDS patients</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>124.18</td>
<td>Naidoo (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered nurses in South Africa</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>137.92</td>
<td>van der Colff &amp; Rothmann (2009)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female academics in higher-education institutions in South Africa</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>128.22</td>
<td>Bezuidenhout &amp; Cilliers (2010).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There have been no established standardised norms for the sense of coherence for any population group. The OLQ 29 Item results from the sample in this study was compared with the previous studies as shown in Tables 5.9 and 5.10. The sample in this study obtained a mean score of 130.69 and the maximum observed score was 188. This mean is higher than that obtained by a USA sample of 307 undergraduate students who obtained a mean score of 129.5 with a standard deviation of 24.5. The mean score of the sample in the present study is closer to that of USA production workers with a mean score of 133.0.

A South African study of a mixed group sample of psychology students (N= 550) obtained a mean of 136.52 (Wissing & Van Eeden, 1997). The sample in the present study obtained a mean score of 130.69. A study of South African females academics in higher-education institutions found a mean score of 128.22 (Bezuidenhout & Cilliers, 2010). The mean score of these female academics in higher education institutions is lower than that of the sample in the present study. This may suggest that the learners in the present study perceive situations and life experiences as comprehensible, manageable and meaningful.

Antonovsky (1993) calculated a mean score of 121.86 on the sense of coherence for 26 studies to be in the mid-range of means. Strumpfer and Wissing (1998) calculated a mean score of 137 on the sense of coherence for 27 South African studies. Wissing et al. (2010) reported that the majority of the studies that Strumpfer and Wissing (1998) analysed were conducted mostly on White individuals or multi-cultural and urban population groups. Eriksson and Lindström (2005) conducted an analysis of 124 studies and reported mean scores for the OLQ 29 Item between 100.5 and 164.5. The mean score of 130.69 obtained by the sample in the present study is higher than the mid-range of means reported by Antonovsky (1993) and slightly lower than the high score reported by Strumpfer and Wissing (1998). The results obtained by the sample in this study suggest fairly high levels of sense of coherence. This conclusion takes into consideration the fact that sense of coherence
according to Antonovsky (1987) improves throughout the life-span and only crystallises at the age of 30. The age of the research participants in this present study ranged from 16 to 22 years. This age group represents individuals whose sense of coherence has not yet crystallized, although recent data imply a stabilization of sense of coherence already at age 15 (Blom, Serlachius, Larsson, Theorell & Ingvar, 2010).

The fairly high levels of sense of coherence obtained by this sample reflect an overall ability to cope with stress. Blom et al. (2010) state that high sense of coherence levels mirror a successful coping with stressors and thereby increased resilience. A high sense of coherence score has been suggested to act as a buffer against the negative impact of emotion-oriented coping.

The results of the levels of the sense of coherence of learners in this sample suggest that the learners in under-resourced schools 1) perceive stressors as predictable and explainable (comprehensibility), 2) have the confidence in their capacity to overcome the stressors (manageability) and 3) judge it worthwhile pursuing an education despite the fact that their school is under-resourced. It could be speculated that they attend the school because they cannot afford well-resourced schools and see education as a way to better their lives and their family and therefore they find meaning in what they do.

Even though the majority of the learners (70%) in the present study indicated that they find their schools to be moderately stressful, their high sense of coherence levels suggest that these learners find meaning in enduring the environment that they find themselves in. What is more is that they demonstrate an effective ability to cope in these under-resourced environments. According to Antonovsky (1987), coping is seen as a resistance resource and as such, a buffer against stress.
Bednar et al. (1989) state that the way a person copes is determined in part by his or her resources, which includes health and energy; existential beliefs, for example a belief in a higher power, or general beliefs about control; commitments which have a motivational property that can help sustain coping; problem solving skills; social support and material resources. Coping is also determined by constraints that influence the use of resources. Personal constraints include internalized cultural values and beliefs that prescribe certain ways of behaving and psychological deficits (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Under the conditions where there are limited or a total lack of resources for learners to function successfully within the school context, the learners in this present study show high effective coping levels. “Schools are intimate places where youths construct identities, build a sense of self, read how society views them, develop the capacity to sustain relations and forge skills to initiate change. This is the context where the youth grows or shrinks…” (Hendriks, 2008, p.5). The classroom is not only an educational arena but a powerful social context in which psychological adjustment of learners can be affected (Juvonen & Wentzel, 1996).

In conclusion, the sense of coherence of the participants in the present study could be described as fairly high and as such participants feel that situations in life are comprehensible, meaningful and manageable. It is likely that these learners will experience low levels of negative affect and find adequate solutions when coping with negative situations. They employ effective coping strategies, have a good coping orientation and a belief that things will work out well.

As previously stated, the sample obtained fairly high scores on the sense of coherence. However, differences have been observed between the results of the male research participants and female research participants in the present study. The following table presents the sense of coherence of the male and female research participants in this study.
Gender differences were observed in the results of the sense of coherence of the learners in this current study. The male group obtained a higher mean score of 135.45 compared to that of female research participants which was 128.23. The maximum score observed for the male group was 188.00 and that of females was 173.00 which was less than that of the male research participants. According to Eriksson (2007), Honkinen et al. (2008); Myrin and Lagerström (2006), males enjoy higher sense of coherence levels than do females, who in some areas are found to adjust more negatively to stressors related to pubertal development, peers, family relationships and the school context which may lead to a feeling of personal inadequateness and psychological ineptness (Hampel & Peterman, 2006; Rudolph, 2002). Blom et al. (2010) reports that in relation to men, these weaker sense of coherence scores are applicable to both teenage as well as adult females.

The gender differences on the sense of coherence levels may reflect that girls see life as less coherent than boys, and therefore are more prone to negative health development (Moksnes et al., 2011). A study by Myrin and Lagerström (2008) determined five factors associated with low sense of coherence in a multivariate analysis with girls. These factors included life dissatisfaction, feeling depressed, worries about family members, poor psychosomatic health and being a girl. In summary, males enjoy higher levels of sense of coherence. In the subsequent section, the self-esteem results are presented and discussed.
5.3.2 Description of Self-Esteem

The second aim of this research was to explore and describe the self-esteem of Black grade 12 learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. This section presents the findings and discussion of the results from the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory Form AD (CFSEI Form AD). Descriptive statistics served to facilitate understanding of the levels of self-esteem. Prior to discussing these results it is important to establish whether this measure was found to be reliable in this sample.

5.3.2.1 Internal consistency and reliability

Chapter 4 indicated the importance of reliability of a measure. Cronbach’s alpha was utilized to establish the internal consistency and reliability of the CFSEI (Form AD) with regard to the research participants. The following Table presents the results of the internal consistency and reliability according to the different subscales.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subscale</th>
<th>Cronbach’s Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>0.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The subscales have been found to be within acceptable ranges (Holaday et al., 1996). The social subscale was observed to be lower on its reliability and internal consistency. Brooke (1995) reported that the internal consistency of the social subscale is questionable.
5.3.2.2 Measuring defensiveness: lie scale

The following Table illustrates the lie scale scores obtained by the research participants in this sample.

Table 5.13 Lie Scale Scores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>[1 to 2]</th>
<th>[3 to 4]</th>
<th>[5 to 7]</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>37%</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A higher score on the lie scale reflects less honest responding (Roberts, Gunes and Seward, 2011).

The above table illustrates the results obtained from CFSEI Lie scale. As shown in Table 5.13, the higher the score on the lie scale, the higher the defensiveness of the research participants. The mean score for the lie scale in this sample was 3.04. This score fell in the middle range. Seventy-four percent (N= 63) of the research participants fell in the middle range; (N=28) (44%) of these research participants were in the normal range and (N=35) (56%) obtained authentic scores Eighteen of the research participants had inflated their self-esteem levels. This was established through the use of the built in lie scale. This does affect the results of the study as the self-esteem scores may not be a true reflection of the self-esteem levels for some of the research participants. However, it must be noted that this measure has no scale to assess authenticity. Individual differences in authenticity have been considered vital in understanding well-being and freedom from psychopathology (Rogers,
According to Lopez and Rice (2006), there is an absence of measures to assess the construct of authenticity.

5.3.2.3 Results of Subscales of CFSEI

This section presents the findings and discussion of the results obtained from Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory. These results are presented according to the different self-esteem subscales of the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory. The following Table presents the classification categories of self-esteem levels.

Table 5.14 Classification of Self-Esteem Scores for the Total Self-Esteem

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Classification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30+</td>
<td>Very High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27-29</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20-26</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-19</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14-</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following Table presents the results obtained from the research participants (N= 85) in this study.

Table 5.15: CFSEI Results according to Subscales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>S.D.</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General</td>
<td>10.25</td>
<td>2.99</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
<td>5.53</td>
<td>1.42</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>4.01</td>
<td>1.94</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>8.00</td>
<td>Average</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>19.79</td>
<td>4.93</td>
<td>7.00</td>
<td>29.00</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3.2.3.1 Total self-esteem

The CFSEI which consists of 32 items was used to measure an individual’s general, social and personal self-esteem which together makes up the total self-esteem subscale. This total self-esteem score of the research participants was then used in this section to describe their total self-esteem/global self-esteem (Drake et al., 2008).

Before discussing these results it is important to revisit the definition of self-esteem. There have been controversies when defining self-esteem, as in general usage many employ the terms self-concept and self-esteem interchangeably which is the case in much of the published literature (Adams & Berzonsky, 2003). According to Battle (1981), self-esteem refers to the perception an individual possesses of their worth and is therefore their subjective evaluation of themselves. It expresses an attitude of approval or disapproval, and indicates the extent to which the individual believes to be capable, significant, successful and worthy (Coopersmith, 1981). Nathaniel Branden (1969) defined self-esteem as the disposition to experience oneself as competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and as worthy of happiness (Malbi & Reasoner, 2000). Lawrence (2006) defines total/global self-esteem as a general feeling of self-worth and confidence. Global self-esteem is the global satisfaction of the individual with oneself, and is also an important motive of behaviour. It can be defined as a personal judgment of worthiness that is expressed in the attitudes which an individual holds about themselves (Coopersmith, 1967).

The total self-esteem scores of the learners in the present study fell in the low category with a mean score of 19.79 out of a possible score of 32. This was 0.21 points away from the average mean of the normative data which is 20-26. The minimum observed was 7.00 and the maximum observed was 29.00. These results indicate that overall the learners in this sample have low self-esteem. Redenbach (1991) documented the importance of high self-esteem in
academic achievement, social and personal responsibility. According to Humphreys (2002), self-esteem is central to educational development. Chapters 1 and 3 have documented the literature on self-esteem and academic performance. On the biographical questionnaire, the learners were provided with four categories to rate their performance and these included -25, 50, 75 and 100 and these learners either placed their performance in the 50- category or 50+ category and these were transformed into 2 categories. The academic performance of the learners in this study was then divided into two groups: 75+ and 50-. Twenty-five of the learners in the 75+ category have average to high self-esteem scores and only 7 have low self-esteem scores and 42 of the learners in the 50- category have average to low self-esteem and only 18 learners have high self-esteem.

In addition to the relationship between self-esteem and academic performance, Lee-Flyn et al. (2011) maintains that self-esteem is a protective psychological resource that enables people to adapt and recover from stressful events. Out of the 85 research participants in the present study, 16% described school as not stressful and these learners obtained a mean t score of 48.43. Seventy-one percent of the research participants in the present study described school as moderately stressful and these learners obtained a mean t score of 45.62. Out of the 85 learners, 13% of these learners described school as extremely stressful and obtained a mean t score of 42.09. These findings suggest that the learners who found school to be extremely stressful had lower self-esteem than the learners who found school to be moderately stressful and the learners who described school to be not stressful have higher self-esteem than those who found school to be moderately stressful. Turner and Roszell (1994) maintain that an individual with high self-esteem is an individual who can minimise the effects of stress.

As self-esteem has been described as comprising of different components or elements (Battle, 1981, 1990), a vital issue for researchers is demarcating relations between the self
and other aspects of the self. Self-esteem can be either global or specific and there is a relationship between these facets of self-esteem (Lawrence, 2006). Most researchers measure global self-esteem, a combined self-perspective drawn from the domains of the self (Adams & Berdonsky, 2003). Assessment of the general or global self-esteem does not allow for the assessment of competence in specific domains and this is significant as self-esteem may vary considerably from one domain to another. The following sections present the results of the different domains of self-esteem.

5.3.2.3.2 General self-esteem

Sasat et al. (2002) defines general self-esteem as individuals’ overall perception of their overall worth. The research participants in this study obtained a mean score of 10.25, which reveal the participants in the present study to have an average general self-esteem. These results suggest that these learners generally view themselves in a positive way and view themselves as worthy individuals. One of the primary functions of general self-esteem appears to be the compensation of weaknesses in specific domains. As Rosenberg (1982, p.538) writes, an individual “will be disposed to value those things which he considers himself to be good at and to devalue those qualities which he considers himself poor at”. The use of compensatory approaches by academically less talented learners may explain why these learners may have higher scores for general self-esteem than their peers who obtain good school results. In this study it was observed that the learners in the 75+ category obtained a mean t score of 50.47 with a standard deviation of 8.20 and the 50- category obtained a mean score of 46.49 with a standard deviation of 9.75. In order to compensate for the weaknesses in academic achievements, learners inflate their general self-esteem; it is therefore rational to expect that students with low and perhaps medium academic performance and self-esteem use this self-protecting approach. Out of the fifty-three learners
in the 50- category; 27 had average general self-esteem, 15 learners had low general self-esteem and 11 had high levels of general self-esteem.

General self-esteem correlates strongly with emotional health (Havelka, 1992). The findings in this study suggest that the learners who experienced school to be moderately stressful and not stressful obtained higher levels of general self-esteem than those who experienced school to be extremely stressful. Out of 6 learners who experienced school as extremely stressful, only 4 obtained average levels of self-esteem and the last 2 obtained high levels of self-esteem.

5.3.2.3 Social self-esteem

Social self-esteem refers to an individual’s perceptions of their relationships (Sasat et al., 2002). Social self-esteem or social acceptance is the extent to which an individual feels comfortable and secure in his or her emotional and social relationships. Social self-esteem is conceptualized by self-image and social esteem values. Friendships and social approval are important for social self-esteem (Leary & Downs, 1995). William James (1890) proposed that the social self is based primarily on one’s relationships with significant individuals and social groups which is the social self. It has been reported that one’s relationships with significant others has a significant influence upon one’s self-perceptions (Cooley, 1902; Mead, 1934; Sullivan, 1953). Maslow (1987) maintained that psychological health is not possible if a person is unaccepted, unloved and not respected by others and by him/herself.

The learners in the present study obtained a mean score of 5.53 out of a possible score of 8. This finding suggests an average social self-esteem indicating that learners have a sense of belonging and acceptance from others and are comfortable with themselves and in relationships with significant others, including friends, family and school teachers. Self-esteem allows people to face life with confidence, benevolence and a positive attitude and therefore an ability to self-actualize.
5.3.2.3.4 Personal self-esteem

Personal self-esteem is the individual’s intimate views of their own self-worth (Sasat et al., 2002). The mean score for personal self-esteem of the learners in the present study was 4.01 with a standard deviation of 1.94. The maximum score observed was 8.00. The personal self-esteem of the learners is described as average. Twenty (24%) of the learners obtained a low personal self-esteem score. Sixty-five (76%) of the learners obtained average to high personal self-esteem scores. The results of this study reveal that the learners in this study hold favourable opinions of themselves. The levels of the learners’ personal self-esteem suggest that they take pride in themselves and evaluate themselves as capable individuals.

In conclusion, the grade 12 research participants from under-resourced schools have low average total/global self-esteem; however they had average personal, social and general social self-esteem. Gender differences were observed with the total/global self-esteem. The male research participants showed higher personal, social, general and total/global self-esteem levels compared to the female research participants. The general and total self-esteem of the male research participants had a medium practical significance. In a study by Gašić-Pavišić, Joksimović and Janjetović (2006) findings revealed that males showed significantly higher self-esteem than girls.

5.3.3 The Relationship between Coping Orientation and Self-Esteem

This section presents a correlation of self-esteem and sense of coherence. The following Table presents the correlational analysis between sense of coherence and self-esteem.
Table 5.16 Correlation between Self-Esteem and Sense of Coherence (Level of Significance 0.05).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations - All (N = 85)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SEI-TGeneral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEI-TSocial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEI-TPersonal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEI-TTotal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SOC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The following table presents the correlation between the self-esteem and sense of coherence results. The $t$ test was used in analysing this data.

Table 5.17 Total Self-Esteem Correlated with Sense of Coherence

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total SE and SOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Self-Esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1 to 39]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[40 to 51]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[52 to 62]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Chi²(d.f. = 4, N = 85) = 26.48; p < .0005; V = 0.39 Large).

Out of forty-two of the learners with average total/global self-esteem; 27 obtained average sense of coherence levels and nine of the learners obtained high levels of sense of coherence.
while only six of these learners obtained low sense of coherence levels. Eighteen research participants obtained high levels of self-esteem; and out of these 18, ten learners had high levels of sense of coherence, six learners had average sense of coherence and only two of these learners with high self-esteem had low sense of coherence levels. The learners with low sense of coherence levels obtained low self-esteem levels. Out of the eighty-five research participants; N=25 obtained low self-esteem and from this N=25, 15 obtained low levels of self-esteem and low sense of coherence levels. Nine learners out of the N=25 obtained low sense of coherence levels and only one obtained a high sense of coherence level. This finding is suggestive of a relationship between self-esteem levels and sense of coherence, meaning that learners with low self-esteem are likely to have low sense of coherence levels. This suggests that there is a relationship between self-esteem and sense of coherence and the use of adaptive coping strategies. According to Mayu and Naoyasu (2008), there is a high correlation between sense of coherence and self-esteem. The suggestion is that self-esteem and sense of coherence serve as protective factors for mental health in high school learners. High sense of coherence levels have been found to be related to high self-esteem and low distress levels (Cederblad et al., 2003). The following tables present a correlation between self-esteem subscales $t$ scores and sense of coherence.
Table 5.18 General Self-Esteem Levels and Sense of Coherence

(Chi²(d.f. = 4, n = 85) = 36.95; p < .0005; V = 0.47 Large)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General SE and SOC</th>
<th>SOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[1 to 120]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 to 43</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44 to 56</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57 to 66</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When the general self-esteem of the research participants is correlated with the sense of coherence, the learners with low general self-esteem also obtained low levels of sense of coherence. None of the research participants who had low general self-esteem had high sense of coherence scores as well. Only one research participant had high general self-esteem and low sense of coherence scores. These results are suggestive of a relationship between high general self-esteem and high sense of coherence levels. Low levels of self-esteem are better explained by low levels of sense of coherence and higher levels of self-esteem are better explained by high sense of coherence levels. There is limited research that correlates general self-esteem and sense of coherence. The available literature on global self-esteem and sense of coherence is suggestive of a strong positive correlation (Antonovsky, 1979; Cecen, 2008; Johnson, 2004). A study by Mayu and Naoyasu (2008) found a high correlation between sense of coherence and self-esteem and this study suggested sense of coherence as a contributing factor to mental health in high school learners.
Table 5.19 Personal Self-Esteem and Sense of Coherence Levels

(\(\chi^2(\text{d.f.} = 4, n = 85) = 7.31; p = .120\))

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal SE and SOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1 to 120]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1 to 46]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[47 to 60]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[61 to 70]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above table shows that the majority of the research participants fall in the middle range. Only 9% of the research participants obtained the lowest personal self-esteem scores as well as low sense of coherence scores when compared with those who obtained higher sense of coherence as well as high self-esteem scores. Only two research participants obtained the highest personal self-esteem score and the lowest sense of coherence score. Self-esteem thus forms an important part of coping orientation (Johnson, 2004).
Table 5.20 Social Self-Esteem and Sense of Coherence Levels

(Chi²(d.f. = 4, n = 85) = 7.01; p = .135)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social SE and SOC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SOC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[1 to 35]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[36 to 58]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[59 to 67]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The correlation between social self-esteem and sense of coherence follows a similar pattern to that of personal self-esteem and sense of coherence. The majority of the research participants fall in the middle range when compared to this sample. Eleven of these research participants obtained low social self-esteem scores as well as low sense of coherence scores. Twenty-three of the research participants had low sense of coherence scores (1-120) and 11 of these learners had low social self-esteem. These findings suggest a relationship between levels of social self-esteem and levels of sense of coherence.

5.4 Conclusion

This study is a preliminary attempt at exploring and describing the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools. The OLQ 29 Item results revealed fairly high levels of sense of coherence. These results suggest that the learners in under-resourced schools perceive stressors as predictable and explainable (comprehensibility), 2) have the confidence in their capacity to overcome the stressors
(manageability) and 3) judge it worthwhile to pursue an education despite attending an under-
resourced school. These results are suggestive of a good coping orientation and use of
effective coping strategies and ability to confront a problem and reconstruct it as manageable.
Even though the participants in the present study have been enrolled in under-resourced
schools these learners are able to cope successfully within their school context as they
employ effective coping strategies, have a good coping orientation and a belief that things
will work out well. The CFSEI results indicated low average self-esteem results, however,
differences were observed between the total self-esteem and the other subscales of the
CFSEI. The findings indicated average general, social and personal self-esteem. A vital issue
for researchers is demarcating relations between the self and other aspects of the self. These
learners view themselves as worthy, competent individuals and are comfortable with
relationships with significant others and additional to this, these learners generally view
themselves in a positive way and have a positive attitude.

Correlations between the CFSEI subscales and global sense of coherence yielded a
positive relationship. High sense of coherence scores could be better explained by high self-
esteein levels, and low sense of coherence levels could be better explained by low self-esteem
levels. Overall, the relationship found suggested that in the sample under investigation, the
learners who demonstrated higher levels of sense of coherence were also likely to
demonstrate higher self-esteem levels. In the following chapter the limitations,
recommendations and conclusions of the present study are explored.
CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

The present chapter provides conclusions of this study. This chapter serves to highlight findings, limitations and contributions of this study, and recommendations for future research have been included. Prior to discussing these findings, the primary objectives of the study are revisited.

6.2 Primary Objectives of the Study Revisited

The primary objectives of this study were to:

- Explore and describe the coping orientation of Black learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.
- Explore and describe the self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.
- Investigate whether there is a relationship between coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

6.3 A Discussion of the Overall Findings and Conclusion

Quantitative data was obtained to achieve the aforementioned primary research objectives. The main findings and conclusions of this study are now discussed according to these primary objectives of the research.
6.3.1 Description of Coping Orientation

The first aim of this study was to explore and describe the coping orientation of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools. The Orientation to Life Questionnaire 29 Item was used to measure Antonovsky’s (1979) concept of sense of coherence of the grade 12 learners. Sense of coherence is defined as a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring though dynamic feeling of confidence that (a) the stimuli deriving from one’s internal and external environments in the course of living are structured, predictable, and explicable; (b) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli; and (c) these demands are challenges, worthy of investment and engagement (Antonovsky, 1987).

Data from previous studies was used to assess the level of the sense of coherence which was used to describe the coping orientation of the learners as there are no established standardised norms either for international population groups or South African population groups. In this study the mean score obtained was compared with mean scores of population groups that were much more compatible with the sample in the present study.

The global mean scores were used to interpret the levels of sense of coherence of learners in under-resourced state schools. As there are no established norms for this measure, there was difficulty in assessing whether the mean score for this sample is significantly higher or lower than that of other studies. When the sense of coherence mean scores were equated to some international and South African studies, the mean score for the current sample was fairly high. The majority of learners reported that they either find school to be extremely stressful or moderately stressful and only sixteen percent of the research participants in the present study reported that they do not find school to be stressful. It can be speculated that the learners who do not find school to be stressful or the learners who find school moderately stressful have a strengthened sense of coherence. A central factor determining whether
stressful life events produce desirable outcomes appears to be whether or not the individuals are able to find meaning and purpose within their circumstances (Antonovsky, 1987). It is speculated that the above findings might be true for these learners as they may be finding meaning in education despite the under-resourced school environment. It has been indicated in Chapter 2 that it is mostly learners from poor and broken homes who attend under-resourced schools (The Economist, 2010). Since the research participants in the present study obtained a fairly high sense of coherence score it can be stated that these learners may have a strong belief that things will work out well and that their school environments will improve. In addition to this, it can be speculated that these learners find meaning in obtaining education despite the current school environment.

Lindsfors, Lundberg and Lundberg (2005) explain the differences with the coping and non-coping of individuals in terms of sense of coherence. Individuals who do not cope well tend to view the world as unorganised and meaningless and tend not to have resources. The current sample of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools obtained a fairly high mean score on the Orientation to Life Questionnaire 29 Item. These scores suggested a good coping orientation and use of effective coping strategies by these learners. The results indicated that the learners in this study perceive stressors as predictable and explainable, have the confidence in their capacity to overcome the stressors, judge it worthwhile to be at a school even though the school is under-resourced as they value obtaining an education.

Nygren et al. (2005) states that the coping phenomenon between people who cope and those who do not cope has been well researched in an attempt to identify what enables individuals to meet and handle life’s difficulties while maintaining health. Antonovsky (1987) maintains that the strength of individuals with a high sense of coherence lies in their ability to mobilise and utilise a combination of effective resources to confront the stressor. The fairly high sense of coherence scores obtained by the sample in the current study suggest
that these learners are flexible in their approach to situations and are able to prevent tension aroused by an event from turning into stress. It can be speculated that these learners will likely experience low levels of negative affect and find adequate solutions when coping with negative situations. The way a person copes is determined in part by his or her resources, which include health and energy; existential beliefs, for example, about God, or general beliefs about control; commitments which have a motivational property that can help sustain coping; problem solving skills; social support and material resources (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Based on the sense of coherence results these learners are their own tools in coping with stressors and also make use of available coping resources.

Literature indicates that the sense of coherence develops throughout the life-span and stabilises around the age of 30 years (Antonovsky, 1987). The age range of the research participants is from 16-22 have not crystallised sense of coherence. Tomotsune et al. (2009) reports that a stronger sense of coherence allows a person to cope proactively with life stressors. Literature in Chapter 3 illustrated the role of self-esteem in coping. The following section presents the concluding findings on self-esteem.

6.3.2 Description of Self-Esteem

The second primary objective of this research was to explore and describe the self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools. This was done by administering the Battle’s Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory (Form AD). Prior to describing the self-esteem it is important to provide the definition of self-esteem. Battle (1981) defined self-esteem as the perception an individual possesses of his/her worth. It was found that the total/global self-esteem of the research participants in the present study fell in the low range and this was 0.21 points away from the average mean of the normative data.
Research suggests that the school environment impacts students’ self-perceptions and self-esteem. A study by McEwen et al. (2007) indicated that students from newly built schools report greatest improvement in their self-perception’s while students from refurbished schools reported the least improvement in their self-perceptions. The results also revealed that there is a relationship between the learners’ perceptions of their physical environment and their academic self-esteem which also extended to the learners’ global self-esteem. “Schools are intimate places where youths construct identities, build a sense of self, read how society views them, develop the capacity to sustain relations and forge skills to initiate change. This is the context where the youth grows or shrinks” (Hendriks, 2008, p.5). According to the Best Practice Briefs (2004), the school environment reflects the physical and psychological aspects of the school that are susceptible to change and that provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning to take place. Palmer (1993) maintained that students are formed by the reading they do, by the views of self and world such reading presents.

It was interesting to note that the learners’ scores for specific self-esteem facets fell into the average category. Average levels of self-esteem for this sample were found on the general subscale of the CFSEI. These results suggest that these learners in general view themselves in a positive way and view themselves as worthy individuals. One of the primary functions of general self-esteem appears to be the compensation of weaknesses in specific domains. As Rosenberg (1982) stated that individuals have a tendency to value things they consider themselves to be good at and devalue those that they do not consider themselves to be good at. The findings of this study suggest that the learners who experienced school to be moderately stressful and not stressful obtained higher levels of general self-esteem than those who experienced school to be extremely stressful.
The results of the social self-esteem followed a similar pattern as the general self-esteem in that they fell in the average category. William James (1890) proposed that the social self is based primarily on one’s relationships with significant individuals and social groups which is the social self. The results suggest that these learners have good relations with significant others as well as the social groups they may belong to. These learners possibly have a sense of belonging and feel loved and accepted. Maslow (1987) maintained that psychological health is not possible if individuals are unaccepted, not loved and not respected by others and by themselves. Self-esteem allows people to face life with confidence, benevolence and positive attitude and thus able to self-actualize.

Personal self-esteem levels also fell in the average category. Personal self-esteem is the individual’s intimate views of own self-worth (Sasat et al., 2002). The results of this study reveal that the learners in this study hold favourable opinions of themselves. The levels of the learners’ personal self-esteem suggest that they take pride in themselves and evaluate themselves as capable individuals.

### 6.6.3 Self-Esteem and School Climate/Environment

The study found that the research participants have low total self-esteem. These findings are in line with previous research that suggesting that poor school environment has a negative effect on the self-esteem of learners. Apart from the negative effect on self-esteem, poor school environment affects the academic performance of learners negatively. The impact of the school environment on self-esteem therefore becomes important when considering the fact that research has highlighted a positive relationship between individuals’ perceptions of themselves and academic achievement (McEwen et al., 2007). Tableman (2004) states that students in schools with a better school climate have high self-esteem, high achievement and better socioemotional health.
A study by McEwen et al. (2007) indicated that students from newly built schools report the greatest improvement in their self-perception’s while students from refurbished schools reported the least improvement. The results also revealed that there is a relationship between the learners’ perceptions of their physical environment and their academic self-esteem which also extended to the learners’ global self-esteem. It has been found that learners with higher self-esteem are more likely to be successful in school and achieve more than children with low self-esteem. This relationship becomes stronger as learners progress to higher grades. The more positively learners feel about their ability to succeed, the more likely they are to maximise effort and feel a sense of accomplishment when a task is finished. On other hand, the more negatively learners evaluate their ability to succeed, the more likely they avoid activities in which there is uncertainty of success, the less likely they are to maximise effort, and the less likely they are to attribute any success or lack of it to themselves. Those with low self-esteem tend to have increased fear of failure (Berns, 2007).

Black education is characterised by poorly qualified teachers, inadequate physical resources and overcrowded classrooms (Lumadi, 2008). However, some schools in less affluent areas have been successful in meeting the needs of learners of colour (Young, 2009), some schools achieve impressive pass rates. For example, some under-resourced schools in the Eastern Cape reported a 100% matric pass rate (Matomela, 2010). Overall, the success of these schools demonstrates that Black learners attending schools in high poverty urban areas can achieve academic success (Young, 2009).

In researching the exceptional academic performance of low socioeconomic learners of colour, three distinct approaches to exceptional achievement arose (Morales & Trotman, 2004). These included the inordinate degree of familial resistance that the learners face and their approaches to that resistance; the value and importance of post-school goals and
ambition; and the presence of effective cross gender mentoring relationships. For the purposes of this study, the term ‘resilience’ is an umbrella concept referring to coping.

The intricate link between self-esteem, academic performance and coping behaviours may explain the high academic success of some Black learners in schools characterized by the low availability of resources. According Tableman (2004) the school climate/environment reflects the physical and psychological aspects of the school that are susceptible to change and that provide the preconditions necessary for teaching and learning to take place. The classroom is not only an educational arena but a powerful social context in which the psychological adjustment of learners can be affected (Juvonen & Wentzel, 1996). A caring school climate is associated with higher self-esteem and self-concept. An effective environment promotes a sense of belonging and self-esteem (Tableman, 2004).

The results of this study and the presented literature suggest that a well-resourced school is good necessary for the learner’s learning and for self-esteem.

6.3.4 Relationship between Coping Orientation and Self-Esteem

The final primary objective of this research was to investigate the relationship between the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools. No significant relationship was found between the coping orientation and self-esteem. However, the results suggested that the learners who obtained high sense of coherence mean scores also obtained high scores on self-esteem, while the learners who obtained low scores on sense of coherence also obtained low scores on the self-esteem measure. Based on the results presented in Chapter 5, high sense of coherence levels are better explained by high self-esteem levels and low sense of coherence levels are better explained by low self-esteem levels. In a study conducted by Neuner et al. (2011), findings revealed overall well-being, self-esteem, and school-related well-being were significantly
positively associated with higher sense of coherence. The findings of this study suggest that
the sense of coherence affects the cognitive appraisal outlined by Lazarus and Folkman
(1984). The learners with high levels of sense of coherence and self-esteem cope better with
stressors. Learners in the present study with high sense of coherence levels and high self-
estime levels experienced school not to be stressful and others experienced school to be
moderately stressful. In addition, these learners perceived that they would perform better if
enrolled in a resourced school. Sense of coherence and self-esteem appear to act as a buffer
against stress.

6.4 Contribution of this Study

It is common knowledge that the delivery of a high quality, well-resourced educational
service to learners enrolled in state schools in the Eastern Cape has ground to a halt and this
lack of service delivery has now become a pervasive problem. South African education has to
a large extent failed to meet the academic needs of Black learners. Previous studies have
highlighted that self-esteem and resilience do play a role in academic performance
(Baumeister et al., 2003; Berns, 2007; Mwamwenda, 2004). Despite the many challenges
facing learners in under-resourced schools, many learners have overcome such challenges
and achieved academic success.

Instead of focussing on the ills; emphasis was placed on salutogenic concepts such as
maintain that psychologists need to recognize the importance of positive affect in the midst of
stress and difficulties, and learn how people cope under stressful or challenging
circumstances. By exploring and describing the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black
learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools this study contributed to the knowledge
base of the salutogenic paradigm.
The Eastern Cape is well known for poor schools and poor performance and the value of this research further lies in the fact that this is the first study that has aimed to explore and describe the coping orientation and self-esteem of learners in under-resourced state schools in the Eastern Cape schools. Optimistically, this research would generate information that could assist schools and the Department of Education regarding how the learners cope and how this coping could be reinforced.

Coping orientation is about mobilising resources and the discussion of self-esteem provided in Chapter 3 could be helpful in understanding its role and contribution to a healthier life. As a result, awareness of the role of effective coping and self-esteem as presented in the literature may lead to effective coping behaviours.

6.5 Limitations of the Research

A number of limitations to this research have been identified. These limitations are related to the research design, the sampling method, the measures utilized in the study and finally the period when the study was conducted.

The current study was quantitative; participants were provided with forced choice questionnaires and the researcher aimed to understand two specific constructs and these were not introduced by the research participants. This was a limitation in that learners were not provided an opportunity to express their opinions as they were provided forced choice questionnaires.

A non-probability sampling method was used and because of this the results cannot be generalised to the entire population and this renders the sample unrepresentative of the sampling population. The study consisted of a small sample size and an unequal representation of the male and female research participants.
There is a concern about the validity of self-report measures. These are susceptible to individuals responding dishonestly and they measure subjective constructs. The dishonest responding was evident on the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory where a number of learners faked high self-esteem levels. Despite this, on interpretation of the results the lie scale score was taken into consideration. Concerns have been raised about the reliability and validity of some subscales of the social subscales of the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory. Brooke (1995) has raised concerns about claims that the test is reported to be culture friendly and yet it may not be as there is no research to validate this claim. Battle (1992) maintained that the measure was reliable and valid.

Another limitation arose from the structure of the biographical questionnaire and the grammar. The biographical questionnaire could have included questions regarding how the learners cope in under-resourced schools. This information would have enriched the data as it would have provided a more detailed description of the coping orientation of the learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools.

In addition to the above concerns, these measures were not initially developed for the South African context; however these have been used on a large number of research projects within South Africa. The Orientation to Life Questionnaire 29 Item developed by Antonovsky has no standardised normative data. Hence, there are no standardised norms that are appropriate to the sample in this study with which to compare the findings of the current study.

Even though information was obtained regarding the school context of the participants, it is believed more information would have been beneficial as this would aid in understanding the school environment of the learners. In addition to this, data collection was conducted during the nationwide strike in 2010 which limited the time of data collection. Concerns also
arose about the safety of the researcher when visiting the schools and this again limited the time to collect data.

6.6 Recommendations

Based on the limitations of the current study, as discussed in the previous section, the following recommendations for future research are suggested. These recommendations are presented in order to add worth to future studies.

It is recommended that future research makes use of measures in a language that the research participants can fully comprehend. Additional to this, the questionnaires can be in more than one language, with larger and more representative samples, so that the results can be more generalizable to the larger population of learners in under-resourced schools in the Eastern Cape.

Combining qualitative and quantitative research will enrich the data obtained and provide a better understanding of the learners enrolled in under-resourced schools. This could be valuable in understanding the challenges faced by the learners and how they are coping.

In future it will be important to have measures that explore the authenticity of the self-esteem of research participants. Psychology seldom makes use of measures that measure authentic responding.

Exploration of the living conditions and tough family responsibilities of the learners is another recommendation. A psychological programme is developed in assisting the learners cope in these environment as research suggest that a harsh school environment lacking resources has a negative effect on learners’ self-esteem.
6.7 Conclusion

This study attempted to explore and describe the sense of coherence and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. This study also investigated the relationship between the coping orientation and self-esteem of the sample in this study. The findings of this study revealed fairly high levels of sense of coherence suggesting a good coping orientation and use of effective coping strategies when confronted with a stressor. The findings obtained from the Culture Free Self-Esteem Inventory Results revealed that learners enrolled in under-resourced state schools in the current sample obtained low mean scores on total/global self-esteem; and average general, social and personal self-esteem.

Correlational analysis was performed in order to investigate the relationship between the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced schools. No significant relationship was established between coping orientation and self-esteem. The researcher found that learners with high sense of coherence scores were likely to have high self-esteem scores.

Despite the limitations encountered in this study, recommendations have been made for future research and it is thought that this study will make a contribution in understanding the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners in under-resourced state schools.
REFERENCES


Eriksson, M. (2007). *Unravelling the mystery of salutogenesis, the evidence base of the salutogenic research as measured by Antonovsky’s Sense of Coherence scale*. Helsinki, Finland: Folkhälsan Research Centre.


Neuner, B, Busch, M. A., Singer, S., Moons, P., Wellmann, J., Bauer, U., Nowak-Göttl, U.,


Curriculum: Studies on Outcomes-Based Education in South Africa (pp.231-245).
Johannesburg, South Africa: Juta.


APPENDIX 1
Appendix 1

Research Procedure

The research proposal will be submitted to the Department of Psychology, Faculty Research and Technology Innovations (FRTI) and to the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University for approval. Once the research project is approved at all these levels the Department of Education will be approached for permission for the research to be conducted at schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole. The Department of Education will assist in identifying under-resourced schools (see appendix C and D). Permission will then be obtained from the school principal (see appendix E and F).

The researcher will visit the school to inform grade 12 learners about the nature of the study and how they can participate. If the learners are willing to participate, the consent form (see appendix B) will be explained to them and they will be asked to take it home for parents or guardians to sign it as an indication that they understand and agree to the conditions of the study. The learners will also be given a cover letter (see appendix A) with information about the research project which they can take home to parents. Testing sessions will be arranged with the identified participants and the school. The researcher will administer the Culture-Free Self Esteem Inventory, the Orientation to Life Questionnaire (SOC-29) and ask the learners to complete the biographical questionnaire. There is no known risk of harm being caused to the participants by their involvement in the study.
Dear Research Participant

I am currently completing my Masters degree in Clinical Psychology at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and need to complete a research treatise as part of the requirements for the degree.

The aim of this research is to explore and describe the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced schools. The area of self-esteem (the perception the individual possesses of her worth) and coping/sense of coherence (a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring, though dynamic feeling of confidence that (a) the stimuli deriving from one’s internal and external environments, in the course of living, are structured, predictable and explicable; (b) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli; and (c) these demands are challenges, worthy of investment and engagement) has been researched among learners and also the availability of resources in the schools. The coping orientation and self-esteem has been found to play a role in academic performance. The state of the school has also been also found to play a role in the academic performance of learners. More specifically, research has found that lack a of or inadequate resources in schools does affect the academic performance of learners negatively; however some learners enrolled in under-resourced schools have been performing well despite the challenge of a lack of resources in the school.

If you choose to participate you will be required to complete the following three measures:

1. A Biographical Questionnaire
2. Orientation to Life Questionnaire (SOC-29)
3. The Culture Free Self Esteem Inventory

The Department of Education and your school principal has given permission for this research project to be done, your participation will remain voluntary, and you have the right to withdraw at any time. Confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained at all times.

The findings of the study will be made available to the Department of Education, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s Library and different channels that promote self-esteem, coping orientation and academic performance. A copy of the research findings will be made available to your school.
If you have any questions prior to your participation or at any time during the study, please do not hesitate to contact me on 041 504 2075. Please note that I will collect the consent forms the day after you receive them from your parents/guardian to sign consenting that you may participate in the study.

Your participation will be greatly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

Zimbini Ogle
Psychologist in Training

Prof Greg Howcroft
Psychologist and Supervisor

Ms Ottilia Brown
Psychologist and Supervisor
**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

---

### RESEARCHER’S DETAILS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Title of the research project</strong></th>
<th>The Coping Orientation and Self-Esteem of Black Learners Enrolled in Under-resourced State Schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Principal investigator</strong></td>
<td>Zimbini Ogle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Supervisor</strong></td>
<td>Prof G Howcroft, Ms O Brown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Address</strong></td>
<td>P.O Box 77000. Psychology Department. Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University Port Elizabeth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Postal Code</strong></td>
<td>6000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Contact telephone number</strong></td>
<td>041 504 2570</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### A. DECLARATION BY OR ON BEHALF OF PARTICIPANT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>I, the participant and the undersigned</strong></th>
<th>(full names)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ID number</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>OR</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>I, in my capacity as</strong></td>
<td>(parent or guardian)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>of the participant</strong></td>
<td>(full names)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ID number</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

### A.1 HEREBY CONFIRM AS FOLLOWS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>I, the participant, was invited to participate in the above-mentioned research project</strong></th>
<th>(full names)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>that is being undertaken by</strong></td>
<td>Zimbini Ogle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>from</strong></td>
<td>Department of Psychology/Faculty of Health Sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.</strong></td>
<td>(full names)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td><strong>Aim:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td><strong>Procedures:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td><strong>Risks:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td><strong>Confidentiality:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td><strong>Access to findings:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td><strong>Voluntary participation / refusal / discontinuation:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td><strong>No pressure was exerted on me to consent to participation and I understand that I may withdraw at any stage without penalisation.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Participation in this study will not result in any additional cost to myself.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| A.2 | **I HEREBY VOLUNTARILY CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE ABOVE-MENTIONED PROJECT:** |
| Signed/confirmed at | on 20 |
| Signature of participant |
| Signature of witness: |
| Full name of witness: |
Dear participant/representative of the participant

Thank you for your/the participant’s participation in this study. Should, at any time during the study:

- an emergency arise as a result of the research, or
- you require any further information with regard to the study

Kindly contact Zimbini Ogle at telephone number 041 504 2570
To whom it may concern

RE: Request for permission to conduct research in schools

I am currently completing my Masters degree in Clinical Psychology at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and need to complete a research treatise as part of the requirements for the degree which needs to be submitted in October 2010.

The aim of this research is to explore and describe the coping orientation and self-esteem of Black learners enrolled in under-resourced schools. The area of self-esteem (the perception the individual possesses of her worth) and coping/sense of coherence (as a global orientation that expresses the extent to which one has a pervasive, enduring, though dynamic feeling of confidence that (a) the stimuli deriving from one's internal and external environments, in the course of living, are structured, predictable and explicable; (b) the resources are available to one to meet the demands posed by these stimuli; and (c) these demands are challenges, worthy of investment and engagement) has been previously researched among learners as well as the availability of resources in schools internationally.
The coping orientation and self-esteem has been found to play a role in academic performance. The resources of a school has also been found to play a role in the academic performance of learners. More specifically, research has found that a lack of or inadequate resources in schools does affect academic performance of learners negatively; however some learners enrolled in under-resourced schools have been performing well despite the challenge of a lack of or inadequate resources in the school.

I would like to request your permission to approach under-resourced schools whose learners perform well and ask learners to participate in the research project.

Learners who consent to participate in the project will be requested to complete the following three measures:

1. A Biographical Questionnaire
2. Orientation to Life Questionnaire (SOC-29)
3. The Culture Free Self Esteem Inventory

Copies of these measures are attached along with a copy of my research proposal, letter to research participants and consent form, letter to the school principal and consent form.

In order to prevent or minimize any disruption in the normal teaching routine, the researcher will consult with the school principal regarding the most appropriate times of informing the learners about the proposed study.

Participation in this study is voluntary; confidentiality and anonymity will be maintained at all times.

The findings of the study will be made available to the Department of Education, the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University’s Library and different channels that promote self esteem, coping orientation and academic performance. A copy of the research findings will also be made available to the school.

Should you have any enquiries, please do not hesitate to contact me on 041 504 2075/071 427 2844 or zimbinio@gmail.com.
Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Zimbini Ogle
Psychologist in Training

Prof Greg Howcroft
Psychologist and Supervisor

Ms Ottilia Brown
Psychologist and Supervisor
Dear School Principal

RE: Request for Permission to Conduct Research at your School

I am a Clinical Psychology student enrolled in the Masters programme in the Department of Psychology at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University. As part of the programme I am required to submit a dissertation in October 2010. I therefore need to conduct research/study. The research/study I wish to conduct is titled: The Coping Orientation and Self-Esteem of Black Learners Enrolled in State Under-resourced Schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

The Eastern Cape Department of Education has granted me permission to approach a school for the research/study. I hereby ask for your permission to conduct the research at your school. The research/study has been approved by the Faculty Research and Technology Innovations (FRTI) and by the Human Research Ethics Committee of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU).

The study aims:

- To explore and describe the coping orientation or sense of coherence of Black grade 12 learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.
- To explore and describe the self-esteem of Black grade 12 learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.
- To investigate whether there is a relationship between coping orientation or sense of coherence and self-esteem of learners enrolled in state under-resourced schools in the Nelson Mandela Metropole.

This study will contribute to the already existing body of knowledge of coping orientation and self esteem of learners in under-resourced school. It will contribute significantly to the South African educational context with information on how to assist under-resourced schools perform better with what the learners already have. It will create the realization of the importance of coping orientation and self esteem on academic performance.

The research will be conducted through the use of self-report questionnaires administered to the grade 12 learners. Each participant will be requested to complete a Biographical Questionnaire, the Orientation to Life Questionnaire (SOC-29) and the Culture-Free Self-Esteem Inventory. Permission will be sought from the
learners and their parents prior to their participation in the research. Only those who consent and whose parents consent will participate. All information gathered will be treated with confidentiality and the school and the learner will remain anonymous in any written reports. Participants may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. The participation of the school is voluntary. If a learner may require support as a result of their participation in the study, they may be referred to professionals who may be able to assist them.

Once your consent to approach learners to participate in the study has been received, the researcher will visit the school to approach the learners at a time arranged by the school which will not interfere with the school’s operation. The researcher will give consent forms to learners who would like to participate in the study and request the learners to get their parents’ permission. The researcher will again arrange a time with the school for data collection to take place whereby the learners will complete the self-report questionnaires.

Please find the attached copies of the Consent Form which needs to be signed by the learner and the parent or the guardian, the Research Participant Letter and the Letter of Approval from the Eastern Cape Department of Education to approach a school.

If you require any further information, please contact me via email: zimbinio@gmail.com or via telephone on 041 504 2570 (office) or 071 427 2844 (mobile).

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely,

Zimbini Ogle
Psychologist in Training

Prof Greg Howcroft
Psychologist and Supervisor

Ms Ottilia Brown
Psychologist and Supervisor
BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Please answer the following questions

1. Please write your age in the block provided:

2. Do you belong to a religious affiliation?
   Yes  No

3. How would you describe your health?
   Poor  Good  Excellent

4. Are you involved in extracurricular activities?
   Yes  No

5. I live with: (Please place X over the applicable answer):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Both parents and siblings</th>
<th>Both parents, siblings and extended family</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mother, siblings and extended family</td>
<td>Dad, siblings and extended family</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mother and siblings</td>
<td>Father and siblings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relatives</td>
<td>Alone</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
   If none of the above, please write in the provided block

6. Are your parents employed? (Please place X over the applicable answer)
   Yes  No

   If yes please write as requested below.
   Please write father’s occupation:


Please write mother’s occupation:


7. How do you pay school fees?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I do not pay school fees</th>
<th>I have a bursary</th>
<th>My parents pay</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If none of the above please explain


8. How do you get to school? (Please place X over the applicable answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walk</th>
<th>Taxi</th>
<th>Bicycle</th>
<th>Transport arranged by school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


9. Who pays for your school related matters (transport, anything that involves school)?


10. Who does home chores? (Please place X over the applicable answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I</th>
<th>Siblings</th>
<th>Parent</th>
<th>Domestic Worker</th>
<th>I, siblings and parent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

11. Do household chores create tension between school schedules and the desire for education? (Please place X over the applicable answer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>


12. Please rate your school performance in comparison to your classmates using the table with scores below

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 and below</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
13. Do you feel that you would perform better than you are performing now if your school was not under-resourced?
   Yes  No

14. What is the number of learners in your class?

   .........

15. How stressful do you experience school? (Please place X over the applicable answer)

   Not Stressful  Moderately Stressful  Extremely Stressful