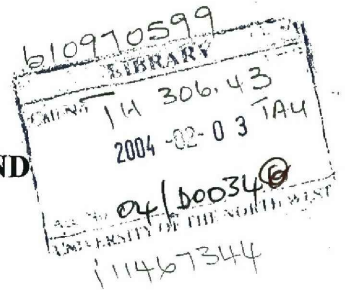


(I)

**REASEARCH TOPIC: FACTORS THAT IMPINGE ON
THE POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS: A
SOCIO ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE**

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**DEGREE: M. A. LIFE SKILLS AND
COUNSELLING**



**SUBMITTED IN FULFILMENT OF THE
REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF
ARTS LIFE SKILLS AND COUNSELLING**

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

UNIVERSITY OF NORTH WEST



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DECLARATION

I declare that the dissertation for the degree of Life Skills and Counseling at the University of the North West has not been submitted by me at this or any other University, this is my own work and all the materials contained herein have been duly acknowledged


G.B. TAUSE (Ms)

DATE: 06 OCTOBER 2003

(III)

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother Lucy and my two sons Phila and Sisa. My mother has been a source of inspiration and has also instilled the value and significance of education. All her family members dearly love her.

(IV)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I would like to appreciate the advice and help offered by my supervisor Professor Anderson. I also acknowledge the support of Tebogo, Masego, Ruth Gaebee for her assistance in typing the document, my friends and colleagues who inspired me to work very hard.

A special thanks is owed to Justice Pitsoe who offered me motivation and helpful critical evaluation.

I would also like to thank God for giving me wisdom and for giving me a wonderful, loving and supportive mother.

Lastly the project would not be a success without the cooperation and participation of the respondents.

ABSTRACT

This was a descriptive study based on identifying and assessing factors that impinge on the potential development of learners.

A probability sample of 50 learners was selected from 5 high schools in the Mafikeng District in the North West Province.

A questionnaire identifying and assessing factors that impinge on the development of learners was designed and administered by the researcher.

The literature reviewed identified the following factors as detrimental to the potential development of learners: lack of parental involvement, lack of finances, attendance and lack of resources.

Strategies such as community support groups, up to date technology in schools to be provided by the department of education and parental involvement strategies were also revealed in the literature study.

It was hypothesized that lack of parental involvement and lack of finances accounts more on the potential development of learners. The result obtained correlated with the hypothesis that lack of parental involvement of learners and lack of finances are the major factors that impinge on the potential development of learners.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa is in a state of dynamic social, economic, political, and educational change, which has been brought about by factors within its borders, and by the outside world. The learner who is affected by a socio-education crisis has a right to special treatment and education. Society must be willing and able to provide opportunities for functional education. Community education is an example of how education and society could work together to facilitate the child's empowerment, and help him attain adequate personal and contextual competence.

However to facilitate personal and contextual empowerment, the provision of education should be structured so that it becomes not only relevant, but also meaningful to learners.

Indicators of potential for change within the learner himself would include his own volition and motivation to change his behaviour and to attain personal and contextual maturity, his state of health, his insight into his own abilities and

interest, his willingness to co-operate with educators and the school system as a whole.

It is one of the purposes of the present study to highlight how education is affected by some other factors, which the study needs to identify. Education could thus be allowed as means to empower the child, that is to enhance his capacity as an individual and as a member of society so that he can improve his own life and affect more control over his own development.

On the other hand dysfunctional education refers to an inadequate educational relationship between the child and educator as a result of which there is disharmony in learners development towards adulthood.

However the extent to which the South African society can be changed is through educational therapy, which can be defined as the mobilisation of the structures and factors that are available for effective positive change enabling the learner to attain personal and potential development which also aims at establishing harmony between learners and their social and educational setting.

Furthermore learning as a process is influenced not only by the educator, the techniques used, the classroom setting, and the formal or informal to be taught, but also by the child's ability, motivation, interest in the subject matter, readiness to learn, retentiveness, values and attitudes relationships with the educator, feelings about self, relationship with peers and background experiences.

Also of importance are the environmental pressures for learning, the time allocated for learning, family support for learning and the atmosphere of the school and classroom. Children's learning experience also differ because of Socio-economic status.

1.2. OBJECTIVES

The following objectives in relation to potential development of learners are of interest in the present study.

- To establish significant factors which impinge the potential development of learners.

- To measure the effects of Socio educational factors on the potential development of learners.
- To measure the attitude of learners towards school, occupational future and healthy living.
- To establish whether there are strategies that can be implemented to develop learners potential.

1.3. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The study focuses on dysfunctional schools. According to many researchers there is a crisis in schooling. Both the public and educators are concerned about evidence indicating failure of schools to meet expectations.

However, it is also true that it is expected of schools to solve some problems that have their roots in the societal institutions. As the embodiment of potentiated openness and intentionality, the child is in a continuous interaction with his environment, to which he assigns meanings.

As education is viewed as a prerequisite for the attainment of personal and contextual competence it follows that, as the provider of education society is a co-determinant of the extent and quality of eventual adulthood.

Therefore the structure and dynamic of society determine the quality of education offered to children. By the same token the quality of the education offered to the child affects the extent and quality of his participation in society.

A high failure rate amongst learners at school has been an issue of concern now of late. It has also been an educational department's major task to deal with it and thus other schools are labelled as trapped or dysfunctional.

The present study would identify some factors, which are affecting the potential development of learners, and possible remedies that could help to alleviate the problem.

1.4. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

According to the present study, there are factors that are detrimental to learner's potential development. The main concern and idea of the study is to

bring on board such factors so as to challenge the existing education policy and come up with options and recommendations .Of vital importance again is to highlight how learners are affected by the Socio-economic factors. The present research also aims at providing relevant information that could help schools to become more functional.

1.5. HYPOTHESIS

The present study would test the following hypothesis.

- A significant number of parents are not involved in learners school work
- A high number of learners lack finances to pay for proper schooling.
- A significant number of learners lack self-motivation
- A significant number of learners are de-motivated because of their economic status
- A significant number learners lack resources

1.6. LIMITATIONS

The following limitations have been identified

- The researcher would limit the study by using respondents from 5 high schools around Mmabatho area.
- The research would not concern itself in taking into consideration ethnicity and culture in its study. The participants would be black students in the area of Mmabatho.
- The research is more of an explorative type in which no experimentation will be done.
- It will also be difficult to quantify a variable such as potential because human beings are complex in nature.

1.7. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

1.7.1 IMPINGE

To have an effect or influence on someone or something (Longman, 1987)

1.7.2 POTENTIAL

Possibility for developing or being favourably developed (Longman, 1987)

1.7.3 DEVELOPMENT

Growth or positive change in the structure, function or organisation of the individual social, cognitive, affective and physiological opportunities which will promote functionality (Le Roux, 1994)

1.7.4 FAMILY

The family refers to the smallest, most basic social unit in a society, united by blood relationship marriage or adoption. The composition may vary from a childless couple or single-parent family to a couple with their own and / or adopted children. The functional organisation of a family can vary from a matriarchal monogamy to a patriarchal polygamy (Le Roux 1994:11).

1.7.5 EDUCATION

Education is the system of teaching people. Education is the conscious and calculated process by which a person gains knowledge and understanding through formal and systematic study. Educational is also a vehicle by which norms, customs values and skills are transmitted from one generation to the next (Le Roux 1994:10)

1.7.6 SOCIAL

Social refers to human society, its organisation, or quality of life e.g. education or unemployment, (Longman, 1987)

1.7.7 ECONOMIC

This is connection with trade, industry and the management of money, (Longman, 1987)

1.8. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The research methods and procedures that were used to accomplish the purpose of the study are as follows:

1.8.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

Research design refers to overall plan which includes every aspect of a proposed research study from the conceptualisation of the problem right through to the dissemination of the findings (Grinnell, 1988:219). The descriptive design was used in this study. According to Reid (1984:7) a descriptive research design is the one which describes the characteristics of a population when the characteristics of interest are known.

As further noted by Reid (1984) it is used by investigators in order to make accurate statements about the characteristics of the individual situation. When using the descriptive approach the researcher does not manipulate any of the variables but instead, the researcher is interested in describing what is or what was (Bush 1988:68)

Since the present research is basically descriptive it will seek to identify the socio-economic factors impinging on potential development of learners.

1.8.2 METHODS OF DATA COLLECTION

According to Reid (1984:9) data may be collected through questionnaires, interviews observations of direct interaction and using available materials such as case records and stastical data. In addition literature review and experience surveys can be used to gather available data.

The following methods were implemented in gathering data:

1.8.3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of the literature can be defined as the systematic identification, location and analysis of documents containing information related to the research problem (Babbie, 1992:11) As such, it involves extensive and critical examination of publications relevant to the research project. Literature review focuses only on the information that have direct relevance to the present study.

By reviewing literature, the researcher accomplished two main goals that are identifying Socio-Economic factors that impinge on the potential development of learners and strategies that could be implemented to help schools function better encompassing Socio-Economic factors identified. Data was gathered by reading books, magazines and journals.

1.8.4 PERSONALLY ADMINISTERED QUESTIONNAIRE

Data lie buried deep within the minds or within the attitudes, feelings or reactions of men and women. An instrument that could be used observe beyond physical reach is the questionnaire (Mogotsi 1996:10). However Polansky (1976:66) a questionnaire is a common research instrument which comprises a series of questions that are filled by all participants in a given sample. In this

study a questionnaire consisting of 16 questions was developed administered by the researcher (see appendix 2).

The questionnaire was composed of demographic information question, multiple choice questions were allowed to choose one response from several alternatives and one open ended question.

1.9. SAMPLING

The present researcher will use a probability sample in order to obtain data and test several hypotheses under study.

Probability sampling is a method of selecting (or constructing) a subset, or sample, of units or elements from a population, a large set in such a way that each unit has known probability (chance) of being included in the sample.

For the purpose of the present study a sample will be drawn from high school learners around the Mafikeng district in the North West Province. A total of 50 respondents were used. Systematic random sampling was used to select respondents.

There are about 25 high schools in the Mafikeng district. A list of all the schools was done and an interval of 5 was used to choose 5 high schools. From each school selected 10 learners were chosen as a sample then ultimately $10 \times 5 = 50$ respondents were chosen.

A list of learners from an admission book was requested from each school chosen and an interval to select 10 learners was determined by a number of learners in a particular school.

1.10 DATA ANALYSIS

Statistics provide a tool to formalise and standardise procedures for drawing conclusions (Siegel, 1956). Statistical tests also determine how large observed difference must be before we can have confidence that they represent real difference in the larger group from which only a few events were sampled.

According to Behr (1988:12) descriptive statistics are procedures that are concerned with summarising or describing data. For the purpose of the present study data was mainly analysed by using frequency distributions.

Data describing the frequencies for all responses was arranged as frequency distributions in order to obtain information about the number of responses received. The responses according to each item were converted and values were interpreted.

1.11 PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY

The study is arranged as follows:

The present chapter is an introductory chapter. It outlines the purpose and research methodology of the present study. Chapter two (2) concentrates on selected literature that is relevant to the subject under study.

Chapter three (3) presents analyses of empirical data followed by the discussion of the main findings conclusions and recommendation in chapter four (4).

CHAPTER TWO

2. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

Several researchers have conducted studies based on the relation between socio-economic factors and development of potentials. It is of interest to the present study to verify previous findings and also highlight current issues. According to Pit Out, Smith, Windell and Steinmann (1990: 47) the educational situation is a social experience which is based on a relationship between people and which implies an encounter and association with other people. As further noted by Pit Out et al, as far as education is concerned the following implications for the child's individuality and sociality are of concern:

- Social education has to equip the individual to realise his personal purpose in life as a being who can act and decide on his own, who wants to maintain himself and who refuses to be dominated by the masses.
- The community is constantly changing and therefore education must prepare the individual child and make him competent to live in such a society and to serve as a useful member of that society.
- The child expects the school to prepare him for a vocation.

Besides having presented the general purpose of a school, Pit Out et al (1990) (1990:48) also highlights how human potentials are developed .As postulated by them they state that the child enters the world with a multiplication of abilities or talents which at birth are as yet only potentials to be actualised. Heredity and environment as factors play a role in the shaping of the child. Potentialities vary both quantitatively and qualitatively. Inherent in the condition of childhood is the idea of yet to be.

However as further noted by Pit Out et al. (1990), education introduces the child to the infinite diversity of human life and allows him to observe and seize the many possibilities open to him. As he advances, with fresh knowledge and skills the child creates more possibilities for himself. Every child has a limited potentiality. No human's potentials are unrestricted. The child as Pit Out et al. (1990) noted must be aware of his restraints and limitations.

2.1 The Child in Crisis

For the purpose of the present research the child who cannot perform due to some factors or barriers would be regarded as a child in crisis. The concept the "child in crisis" entails the following description by Le Roux (1990:82).

Broadly it describes children who have difficulty with their developmental and learning abilities.

It represents divergent views on whether personal or environmental factors are more important and ranges from emphasis on the child as a person through to views that emphasize the impact of the child's context (environment) to opinions where the emphasis is on the interaction between the child and his environment.

Given the description by Le Roux (1990: 82) it can be argued that a child who experiences developmental and learning difficulties fails to attain a satisfactory level of personal and contextual maturity. He fails to become a person he ought to become, in terms of the innate potentials. These difficulties make the child susceptible to developmental and learning problems and as a result in inadequate development of the self as a person in context environment. If these difficulties can be either eliminated or limited, the child's career of adequate development is increased because he is able to transform potentialities into realities successfully.

As further argued by Le Roux (1990: 82) the term child in crisis is indicative of a child who for various reasons, is unable to become the person he ought to become, a condition signified by a gap between the person he has become (the attained level of development) and the person he ought to be or could become (the attainable level of development). This gap as stated by Le Roux (1990: 83) manifests itself where a child experiences difficulties, which impede the realization of his full potential. According to Le Roux (1990) the condition is termed psychosocial discomfort, which suggests that the child's education and opportunities for development are offered in a way that impedes his ability to deal adequately with himself and his environment.

On the other hand Shea (1977) as quoted by Le Roux (1990: 83) defines the child in crisis as one who cannot or will not adjust to socially acceptable norms of behavior and consequently disrupts his own academic progress, the learning efforts of his classmates and this interpersonal relationships.

These children according to Shea (1977) in Le Roux (1990: 83) have difficulty in:

- **Accepting themselves as individuals who are worth of respect.**

- Interacting with peers in a constantly acceptable and personally productive manner
- Interacting with figures of authority such as teachers, instructors and parents, in a consistently acceptable and personally productive manner

It can be concluded thus far that in essence, that factors causing a child to be declared as the child in crisis are the child himself, his social and educational environment and the interaction between himself and the environment. The child in crisis should also be viewed holistically thus all dimensions including social, personal, political and economic factors should be used to define such a condition.

Up to this point through Pitout et al. (1990) two issues have been explained, that is what is a school and how human potentials are developed. What follows as the main contention of the topic under study is to highlight using various factors, which can restrict the actualisation of a child's potential as noted by various researches

As depicted by Pit Out et al. (1990: 48), the environment can be either conducive or detrimental to the actualisation of the potentiality e.g. health, security, facilities, poverty, family and immorality. Secondly as further noted by Pit Out et al. (1990) the pupil's innate disposition can be a determining factor. The kind, quality and quantity of abilities or talents in respect of intellect, temperament, physique etc with which the child has been endowed will determine his potential for development. E.g. a child having little or no talent for woodwork cannot be trained to be a capable and successful cabinetmaker. The innate disposition sets limits which education cannot exceed.

In support of what Pit Out et al. (1990) has noted especially on the innate disposition as an important factor in developing potentials, Du Preez (1998:9) denotes that whatever one sees, as human or normal fulfilment of potentials is one of the aims of education, which can be done through motivation. Westhuizen (1999) as quoted in Du Preez (1998: 9) states that the true motivation is derived from the Latin word *mover*, which means to set in motion. Hence according to Du Preez (1998:9) motivation refers to all the attempts of a manager to encourage

his subordinates voluntarily to achieve optimally. This implies that the co-operation of learners are essential for the completion of tasks and that teachers have to be thoroughly informed on the various methods whereby individuals can be motivated. As further explained by Du Preez (1998: 9), motivation is an on going process on every day task of the learners, to the extent that it has been said that education is nothing but motivation.

However motivation as defined by Behr (1975:8) is a psycho-physiological or internal process initiated by some need, which leads to activity, which will satisfy that need. As further noted by Behr (1975: 8) differences in motivation account for the fact that, for an example one child will work hard at many different tasks and will persist in the face of difficulty, while the other one will not. The example outlined by Behr (1975) denotes that some children are self-motivated especially as they need to achieve their goals. Extrinsic motivation is provided by the school system including parents. According to Behr (1975:9) through exhortation, rewards, and some punishment parents teach their children to approach challenging tasks with the idea of mastering them.

However the significance of home to children's school performance is well documented in some studies. Hendersen & Merritt (1968:101) indicated that children from disadvantaged homes failed in school because of lack of motivation. Booceck (1972: 32) suggested that socio-economic status is the most powerful predictor of school performance and this relationship is to be held no matter what measures of socio-economic status is used e.g. occupation of breadwinner, family income, parents education or some combination of these.

In identifying antecedents of academic self-concept, Song & Hattie (1984: 1269) found a strong positive association between socio-economic status and self-concept, particularly academic self-concept. Chapman et al. (1990: 142) suggested that self-concept is mainly a product of school academic performance and that any influence home background factors may have on it is likely to be derived from their effects on school achievement.

However besides the effects of self-concept on the potential development of learners there are various Socio economic factors that affect children's learning at school or potential development as the topic states. According to Grobler

(1998:16) the family is regarded as the basic societal relationship and is therefore primarily responsible for the education of the learner. The ethical caring function of the family is a vital part of the learners' education. As further noted by Grobler, (1998:16) the family however, normally lacks professional training in subject knowledge and didactic skills and is forced to acknowledge the school as a partner in the educational relationship. There are several issues that can be noted about families and their importance in the present study. Among others is parental involvement.

2.2 THE RATIONALE FOR PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

According to Wolfendale (1992: 7) there is a list of combinations of initial premises underlying parent-teacher and parent-professional projects.

- All parents care about their children's welfare and well-being. There is sufficient evidence that the tiny minority of parents who appear not to care are those who at times are overwhelmed by stressful life-events, financial pressures, and whose own experience of schooling was not positive enough for them to overcome fears and anxieties about school and teachers.

- Parents want to do what they believe to be in their child's best interest. Teachers and other professionals have capitalised on this latent good will when inviting parents to be participants in projects.
 - Parents want to co-operate. This fundamental premise lies at the heart of many joint endeavours though the reality is that at any one time parents may be reluctant to make a commitment or find the time.
 - Parents will respond to invitations to participate in school activities if they can see the benefit thereof to their children.
 - Parents and teacher skills complement one another. The evidence is that when parents and teachers bring joint enterprises there is a set of different complementary skills, perspectives and insights.
 - Parents often have vital information and insights concerning their children.
 - Involvement of parents should include decision- making and not simply information giving.
 - All parents have a right to be involved and to contribute
- Wolfendale (1992:7)

2.3 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN SCHOOLS

Taking into consideration the rationale of parental involvement involving parents will provide the following benefits as also noted by Wolfendale (1992:57)

- Giving children a more effective learning environment, made possible through an increased adult pupil ratio.
- Providing school with extra personnel and human resources
- Giving parents new insights and understanding about their children, as they build bridges between home learning and school learning.
- Providing school with parents who are knowledgeable about school.

2.4 KEEPING PARENTS INFORMED

There are some ways that parents can be contacted in schools. Parents need to be kept informed about school business as well as children's progress.

According to Wolfendale (1992:72) there are several methods that parents can be contacted.

2.4.1 NEWSLETTERS

Newsletters are an increasingly common means by which schools keep parents informed of school development plans and activities and also sometimes solicit their involvement and support.

2.4.2 PARENTAL ACCESS TO RECORDS

Recognition of parent's right to information was built into the 1981 Education Act, which guarantees parents the receipt of the draft and final statement of needs as well as the professional reports (medical, educational, psychological) on which the statement of their children's behavior is based.

2.4.3 MEETINGS IN SCHOOL

Having meetings with parents at school has been an ongoing strategy for some years. It is still working presently because the purpose is of course information exchange.

2.4.4 HOME VISITING

Home school liaison is the form of teachers visiting parents at home has been a feature of many of the parental involvement projects education focus. The

school may choose a format whereby a parent liaison teacher can be chosen for visits or class teachers visiting parents at home to address behavioral problems of learners.

One of the most important ingredients in a child's success in school is the degree of parent involvement in the education process of the child. As stated by Grobler (1998:16) parental involvement in the management of the school has the following implications/advantages.

- A balance of power is a characteristic of successful schools.
- Parents can place pressure on the school in respect of appropriate standards.
- The various parent bodies create better communication channels between parents and the school.
- Learner's behaviour and academic achievement improve as a result of parental involvement.
- Parental involvement leads to better school attendance by learners.

Still on parental involvement Pit out et al (1990:124) postulate that the child is not motivated to learn e.g. when his parents show no interest in the schoolwork. This is true because from observation most children at school who are performing poorly reported that they did not live with parents and those who are living with them report that parents do not ask them about schoolwork mostly because they are not educated themselves. With the same breath according to Ballatine (1997:79) the family background accounts for more than one-half of the variation in educational attainment.

2.5 FAMILY STRUCTURE

A breakdown in family structure in many instances have been caused by amongst others the absence of parents, due to the migrant labor system and long distances that many have to travel to their place of employment with result that they return home late at night. Given the demands of fair employment parents are rarely in a position to pay adequate attention to the education of their children. Children succeed in a large part because of their family background and what parents do to support their children in their education.

As further highlighted in Ballatine's (1990:80) findings social class position can become a form of cultural capital leading to different schooling experiences. The cultural capital of middle and upper class children for instance those with educated mothers provides useful resources for educational experiences whereas that of the lower classes provides resources of the lower classes not valued by dominant social institutions such as education. As noted by Ballatine (1990:80) the family and student aspirations for the future are another aspect of the influence of class, racial or ethnic background. Thus parents who set high standards and have high aspirations for their children are considered by Ballatine (1990) more likely to have high achieving children.

Coleman's research as quoted by Ballatine (1990: 80) states that the effects of environment far outweigh the effects of social programs on achievement of learners. Another extensive study by Christopher Jack also as quoted by Ballatine (1990: 80) indicates that family characteristics are the most variable in a student's school environment. In support of the above notion Pit Out et al. (1990: 34) state that the home is the primary educational institution; it also provides a central and fundamental educational background. A well-balanced

healthy family life and good parents are the corner stones of teaching and education in school and in adult life.

As further postulated by Pit Out et al. (1990:34) the family life consists of two components characterised by the following aspects:

Aspects of the first components are:

- Parents have a responsibility and duty towards the child. The child is absolutely dependent on the protection, care and guidance of his mother and father.
- Providing for the child's material needs in a atmosphere of loving care
- Transmitting socio-cultural norms and values
- Maintaining an atmosphere of security, sociability, sympathy, freedom and love.

The aspects of the second component are:

- The child learns the essence of good social conduct as reflected in the love and responsibility of members of the family for each other and their dependencies on others

- The child acquires the following virtues in home – co-operation, unselfishness, conscientiousness, orderliness, neatness and devotion.

On that note as Pit Out et al. (1990: 34) believe, children are not left to grow without guidance, doing as they please or as nature dictates. Education is seen as essential for the actualisation of the child's nature. As the family and home environment have been outlined as very important in developing a potential child, there are several factors as depicted by different researchers that provide information on failure of this basic institution. This would be another dimension of the present study, which carries vital facts.

The following are the primary factors that according to Pit Out et al. (1990:34) accounts for family failure.

- Because parents have to work far from home, other people have to take over their responsibility. Children grow up without adequate parental support whereas the absence of fathers may lead to feminism –homosexuality and rejection of authority by especially boys.

- Urbanisation and squatting which result in poor housing conditions
- Modern conditions contribute to the disintegration of ultimate family relationships. Each member pursues his own interest elsewhere and home becomes a mere resting place
- Unwanted children, divorce, unhappy families because of domestic violence

Beside the above mentioned factors as noted also by Pit Out et al. (1990: 124) environmental factors sets limits to education. An unfavourable social setting, the presence of indolence, poverty, immorality and unemployment, which can affect the child adversely, will counteract the good work of the school. As further noted, the child comes into contact not only with his parents and educators; the environment is also an important influence in extending or limiting the child's education.

The following as noted by Pit Out et al. (1990: 124) are examples of socio-economic situations that under severe conditions may limit education:

- The child is not motivated to learn e.g. when his parents show no interest in his schoolwork

- The child's self-concept is undeveloped when he is never praised or rewarded
- Under privilege environments may result in a social or anti-social behaviour and bad habits.
- The level of achievement of parents who are unemployed is low and children of these parents experience fear and insecurity
- The most important one is the culture of poverty

2.6 POVERTY

According to Meir (1994:20) assessment results especially school leaving results have been an emotional issue for many years in South Africa. As maintained by Meir (1994) there is a relationship between results and other environmental factors particularly socio-economic factors. As further stated by Meier (1994) since the 1970's the black youth has been growing up in precarious circumstances and has been socialized into a culture of poverty, violence and degeneration in which feelings of security and values such as discipline, respect for life and authority could not develop.

As Meier (1994) noted again is that poverty often starts a vicious cycle. A low income usually means poor housing. Low-income groups usually have large

families, which results in lack of privacy, the absence of a learning environment and inadequate sleep - deprivations that engender tension. Meier emphasized his argument by stating that children who are fatigued, hungry and suffering from health problems such as malaria or diarrhea cannot learn effectively and are not teachable even if all other factors affecting quality are improved, such learners cannot be fit as they should. Their attendance will be poor; they will fall behind the rest of the class and in the end they will drop out of school.

As culture of poverty is noted important, before getting a detailed discussion, according to Le Roux (1994: 28), poverty designates a social grouping with low socio-economic and cultural levels, social and economic status. As quoted in Le Roux (1994: 29) William (1993) it represents the cause of culture of poverty in the form of a cycle. He is of an opinion that educational deprivation is an immediate result of development deprivation in a culture of poverty.

Also according to Le Roux (1994: 31) poverty is one of the greatest problems that South Africa is facing. Findings by Heyneman (1992) as quoted by Le Roux (1994:35) are that about 25% of the black population in South Africa live

below the proverbial breadline. Various reasons are cited from this situation as quoted by Caplan (1990: 9) in Le Roux (1994) that these situations are because of the legacy of white privilege and black social deprivation, history of Bantu education, underdevelopment of black townships, long term retardation of economic growth, deepening recession and mass unemployment, political domination and violent repressions. Le Roux (1994: 34) also denotes education in a poverty culture which is hampered by lack of order in the milieu, a day to day or short term orientation towards time, a powerful peer-group influence, a limited language code, primitive communication, low intellect, insecurity, poor orientation towards school and clashes between the value orientation of the family and the school.

The result is a negative academic self concept which results in a relatively low level of drive, an accumulated scholastic backlog, diffuse personality structure, need for expression, creativity that is alien to the school situation, social awkwardness and being discontent in a school situation. These factors contribute to failure in school and frequently too early school leaving. A poor uncertain occupation future, in turn contributes to poverty and the cycle continues. Another study by Booysen (1990) as quoted by Le Roux (1994:35)

contends that the potential of children in a culture of poverty is inhibited by an un-supportive milieu. The danger of this situation is that pupils in a culture of poverty cannot adapt to wider society (Banks 1990) as quoted by Le Roux, (1994: 33). Moreover Le Roux (1994: 34) further indicated that parents rear their children so that eventually as adults they will be able to participate in society in a constructive way. This implies that parents must have the necessary knowledge and skills required in guiding their children towards proper adulthood. It is however generally accepted as Le Roux (1994) puts it that poverty culture parents are unable to rear their children effectively.

As quoted by Pretorious from Le Roux (1994: 207) educational neglect of children is one of the primary manifestations of a culture of poverty. As denoted by Elkin and Handel (1989) as quoted in Le Roux (1994: 34) the following specific inappropriate educational attitudes and actions are easily distinguished:

- Neglect of duties
- Instability
- Stringency

- Over-protectiveness
- Hard- heartedness
- Indulgence
- Rejection

Inadequate education manifest itself as indicated by Elkin et al. (1989) as quoted by Le Roux (1994) by the following aspects:

- A lack of affection and personal warmth
- A positional educational style
- Parents who are not child oriented
- Disturbed family relationships
- Parents who are socially mobile
- Offers limited opportunity for the child to realise his or her potential
- The child's own perception of his position in society which is inhibited and limited
- Children predisposed towards an attenuated and impoverished social life
- An unfavourable physical culture and social environment impede the child's education and development.

As quoted by Pretorious in Le Roux (1994: 30) supporting how culture of poverty effects on a young person, he stated the following attributes:

- Language deficiency
- A poor self-concept
- Ineffective style of learning
- Underachievement at school and social relationships
- Educational, cognitive, physical and social disadvantages
- Limited motivation
- Perceptual deficiency
- Scant creativity

In addition to the above attributes according to Le Roux (1994:31) the child who is inhibited by poverty often manifest the following attributes and behaviour patterns in a school situation. He or she is:

- Troublesome
- Lags behind academically
- Drops out socially

- Plays truant
- Has personality problems
- Is sensitive to any reference to his or her short-comings
- Has difficulty in concentrating
- Is an underachiever
- Displays behavioural problems
- Exhibits a low level of expectation regarding success, training in a future occupation and seems to have little ambition
- Associates with undesirable friends
- Is often neglected and untidy
- Is unpopular because of bad behaviour and poor achievement
- Constantly expresses anxiety in his or her contact with people

2.7 TRUANCY

According to Stoll & O'Keeffe (1989) as quoted in Le Riche (1995: 1) a truant is a girl or boy who might be absent from school altogether or from a particular lesson or lessons with or without parental knowledge. Furthermore as defined by Stoll and O'Keeffe (1989) as quoted in Le Riche (1995:1) truancy can be broadly defined in terms of blanket truancy and post - registration truancy.

"Blanket" truancy is the absence of a child from school per sé; this might be with or without the knowledge and/or the consent of the parent or guardian. The post registration truant registers at school but he or she may fail to turn up at a particular lesson or lessons during the school day.

2.7.1 PROBLEM OF TRUANCY

According to Le Riche (1995: 1) truancy is a multi-faceted problem that concerns teachers but also school governors, politicians, sociologists, psychologists, economists, the police, lawyers and of course parents and pupils themselves. It is a convoluted emotive, sensitive and highly controversial issue, which undermines our educational system. Furthermore, as maintained by Le Riche (1995: 1) the prevention requires a multi-professional approach and involvement of the pupil.

2.7.2 THE RATIONALE FOR COMPULSORY EDUCATION

As noted by Le Riche (1995: 3) in the UK all children have a right to full-time education from the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday up to the age of nineteen.

In South Africa children have a right to education from age 6 to 18. According to Le Riche (1995:3) truancy is a problem in the UK because education is compulsory and enforceable by law. As postulated by Le Riche (1995:3) compulsory education is common practice in Western countries, yet its justification continues to be a matter of some controversy. One justification is that education is in the interests of child welfare. Social justice also demands that compulsory education is necessary in order to compensate for apparent parental neglect. To add on as noted by Le Riche (1995:3), education also aims at developing the children's personality and talents, preparing them for active life as adults and fostering in terms of respect for basic human rights and respect for the child's own cultural and national values and those of others. At the same time it aims at the acquisition of basic skills such as those of literacy and numeracy, though experience shows that a child's physical presence in school does not mean that automatically he will achieve his goal.

Furthermore, as noted by Le Riche (1995: 4) compulsory education in school or in the home opens the individual to a wider range of ideas and beliefs than would otherwise be the case. Young people need to be educated to question the values of society; not passively accepting received wisdom as the norm, the

right or best way to behave or to live. Today's young people must be convinced that each of them has a positive, worthwhile contribution to make to the well being of society.

2.7.3 CAUSES OF TRUANCY

According to Le Riche (1995:4) poor attendance has been attributed to a number of reasons and factors; therefore blame cannot be placed solely on learners, parent or school for such a complex issue. The present research focus is on how societal factors such as the environment, unemployment and family structure is related to truancy. As noted by Le Riche (1995:5) truancy has also been attributed to possible personality traits, physical and psychological characteristics or poor educational attainment.

2.7.3.1 ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIETAL FACTORS

According to Le Riche (1995: 10) truancy is more prevalent in areas where there are shopping precincts, amusement arcades, run-down housing estates and where the unemployment figures are substantially above the national average. Furthermore children surrounded by urban decay often believe they are born to fail and therefore they have no hope or chance of succeeding in

examinations. They feel it is pointless going to school and have the "why bother syndrome".

As further stated by Le Riche (1995: 10) in areas where there is a high degree of long term unemployment, widespread poverty, poor housing, deprivation and disadvantage, a minority of young people may try to obtain some degree of excitement whilst truanting as a compensation for boredom. Holmes (1995) as quoted in Le Riche (1995: 10) argues that truancy rises when unemployment and poverty rises.

2.7.3.2 HOME FACTORS

Many teachers would argue from experience that truancy is more likely to occur in working - class children. This is particularly the case among those children who are from large families and living in poor housing and whose parents probably show little interest in education. According to Le Riche (1995: 10) there is a link between poverty and absenteeism and also revealed that families in poor housing with other generic problems were likely to have children who were persistent truants.

As further stated by Le Riche (1995: 10) some parents do not regard education as important as they have apparently managed to survive without it. The media, however, tries to blame truancy on weak parenting, lack of discipline and uncontrollable children. It portrays some parents as not knowing or even caring what their children are doing during the day. Checking up on children is considered to be a sign of responsible parenting and love.

2.7.3.3 PERSONAL FACTORS

According to Le Riche (1995: 11) the reasons for truancy can lie within the individual child as well as within the school or society. Some young people as maintained by le Riche are more predisposed to truancy than others. They may feel they cannot identify with the values and standards by which a school encourages and rewards pupils and they therefore regard them as failures, non-achievers or non-performers.

On the other hand as noted by Le Riche (1995: 11) a proportion of truants have been found to be inarticulate, slow learners and socially inept and school is therefore a demoralizing experience for them. Sometimes as noted by Le Riche (1995: 12) young people are loners, lack friends and feel insecure in the

school environment. Other traits, such as laziness and rebelliousness, can also characterize these pupils.

2.7.3.4 SCHOOL AND RESOURCE FACTORS

As postulated by Le Riche (1995: 12) the school itself is another contributory factor among the plethora of causes for truancy. Although without school a young person's development - personal moral or economic development is limited, it is not a happy place for some pupils. This may be due to their relationship with peers or with teachers or due to problems with the curriculum.

O'Keefe (1994) as quoted by Le Riche has a recent report on truancy in English Secondary Schools involving nearly 38.000 pupils in 150 schools. He found that the most common reason for playing truant among 14 and 15 year olds was dissatisfaction with the school curriculum, a dislike of particular lessons because they were boring or too difficult, or a dislike of certain teachers.

As also noted by Le Riche (1995: 13) when young people up and down the country are asked why they do not like school, many say it's boring. Pupil's degree of boredom may depend to a large extent on whether they regard the subject as interesting or perceive some value in what they are doing. They may get frustrated and angry if they do not understand the instructions in class.

A further contributing factor is that one of the greatest challenges facing educationalists today is to make schools rewarding and friendly institutions for everybody concerned. Good relationships between learners and educators and amongst the staff and pupils are essential in order that all are able to respond positively to education.

Nevertheless a school cannot be effective without the necessary resources to provide courses suitable for the varied ability range of the pupils. As maintained by Le Riche (1999: 4) most educators are aware that some truants are vulnerable young people and therefore are likely to become the victims of crime rather than the perpetrators. Such young people need smaller classes, more personal and tailor made courses which have been effected in some

mainstream schools, special education centers, truancy centers, off-site units, pupils referral units, intermediate education courses and support services.

2.8 UNEMPLOYMENT OF EDUCATED YOUTH

Many young people in South Africa are roaming the streets without jobs. This has been increasing from early eighties until today.

To attempt to diagnose the complex causes of this phenomenon in our country we will look at how developed countries have experienced this difficulty. However, it will be useful to look briefly at three sets of basic forces that converged in the 1970's and seriously upset the demand and balance of the employment equation.

2.8.1 DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS

According to Coombs (1985: 187) the 1970's saw a flood of aspiring young job seekers, products of the post war baby boom, pouring out of schools and colleges and into the labor market. In the special case of the United States and Canada, the flood had actually set in strongly during 1960's, ahead of Europe, because their baby boom had peaked somewhat earlier. This explains why

youth unemployment rates in North America had already reached 10% when the 1970's began and were much lower at the time in most Western European countries.

As further noted by Coombs (1985: 187) youth unemployment in the organization for economic cooperation and developed countries would have been even higher had it not been for the fact that a growing proportion of young people were extending their years of education beyond the compulsory level. Often their chief motivation was to improve their educational credentials so as to compete more effectively for the available scarce jobs.

2.8.2 ECONOMIC GROWTH AND STRUCTURAL FACTORS

The persistent rise in unemployment during the 1970's especially youth unemployment is attributable to the sluggish overall economic growth rates in the organization for Economic Cooperation and developed countries (Coombs 1985: 187). However as further noted by Coombs (1985: 187) also high an unemployment rate in these countries was a result of technological and structural maladjustment's in the economics and changes in their market places.

2.8.3 EMPLOYMENT MARKET STRUCTURAL FACTORS

As noted by Coombs (1985: 188) compared to more experienced adult workers especially males, young job seekers entering most labor markets found (and still find) the cards stacked against them placing them at a competitive disadvantage in bidding for available jobs. Furthermore, as noted by Coombs (1985: 188) an increasing number of youth was itself a handicap, but there were also a variety of built in institutional obstacles in the market place, including the general preference of employers for mature and experienced job applicants. From the employers point of view in Coombs findings inexperienced young recruits often translated into higher costs and risks for the work they performed taking into account the extra training cost involved, the legal minimum wages they must be paid and the substantial added costs of mandatory social security payments and other fringe benefits.

2.8.4 YOUTH ATTITUDES AND MORALE

The above factors clearly showed how unemployment has affected the youth in developed countries though through comparison from observation in South Africa it is still the case.

A survey of the Organization of Economic Cooperation and Developed countries (OECD) was done to this effect by Coombs (1985: 189). The survey came up with the following conclusions:

- The problem of unemployment among the least privileged youngsters stems from a lack of self-confidence and entrepreneurial spirit as well as lack of basic skills.
- As commonly believed these youths are restless and angry and they can best be characterized as increasingly apathetic and detached from their social environment, showing little interest in improving their own life prospects.
- They approach the labor market having already conditioned them to take as little advantage of existing opportunities as possible.
- Youth of middle class families are faced with the feelings of powerlessness and lack of control of their lives and may increasingly resort to socially deviant behavior.

These of course, are the kinds of problems that give schools a hard time and difficult to cope with even in the case of our country. Society tends to look more to the school to resolve these human problems than other social

institutions, including the family who so often feel unable or unwilling to deal with this situation.

2.9. DEMOTIVATION IN SCHOOLS

A recent research done by Hindle and Mdluli (1992) in South Africa in Kwa Zulu Natal Province was aimed to give initial attention to the rural education question. It was done to bring special focus to the problems encountered in schools in rural areas by teachers and to compile a picture of the circumstances within which they work.

A questionnaire was administered to teachers and two broad areas were examined. The first area, which is more relevant to the present study, covered the following aspects, teachers themselves, their involvement in education, the problems they encounter and the relationships that surround teaching and learning.

The responses of teachers to the questionnaire are summarized under the following headings:

2.9.1 RESOURCES

Shortages of resources included both physical (including schools and classrooms space) and human resources especially qualified teachers, as well as textbooks, learning aids laboratories and libraries. According to the findings by Hindle and Mdluli (1992: 54) teachers strongly asserted that there would be greater success if there were enough qualified teachers, classrooms, learning aids and accommodation for teachers.

2.9.2 ATTITUDES

High rates of absenteeism and a general neglect of schoolwork were identified as problem areas. It was also acknowledged that teachers were partly responsible for the poor attitudes among pupils, and that there was an overall lack of motivation from teachers.

2.9.3 RELATIONSHIPS

According to the research by Hindle et al. (1992: 54) parental involvement was also seen to be crucial in success and failure - a factor acknowledged internationally as being central. It was claimed by teachers that pupils would

be successful if there was a significant involvement of parents in school affairs and a concern for the progress of their children.

2.9.4 CURRICULUM

With regard to the instructional process, as reported in Hindle et al. (1992) findings, that most pupil's lacked effective learning and study skills and wished to be "spoon-fed". Pupils also according to teachers in this research were seen to lack confidence and to fail to interpret test and exam questions properly. Major problems were experienced with subjects like Mathematics and Science.

2.10 STRATEGIES THAT CAN BE IMPLEMENTED TO DEVELOP LEARNERS POTENTIALS

In helping the school system to meet its demands there are various strategies noted by researchers that could be implemented in schools.

2.10.1 DESIGN ACCURATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS TO HOLD EVERYONE ACCOUNTABLE FOR RESULTS.

According to Davies and Ellison (1999:198) the following strategies would help students and educators to improve poor performance:

- Implement a system of performance-based assessment tied to the new high standards for students.
- Design an incentive system for staff that links achievement by all students, including those whom we have historically failed, to real rewards and penalties.
- Design valid assessments for students of diverse language backgrounds.

Begin negotiating with the city's companies, colleges, universities and unions to assure that all students who meet the graduation standards are admitted to college or lured for a job.

2.10.2 SHRINK THE CENTRALISED BUREAUCRACY AND LET SCHOOLS MAKE MORE DECISIONS.

As Davies and Ellison (1999: 198) indicated in this new scenario, schools will make the important decisions around teaching and learning, and the central

office will set standards, assess progress, monitor for equity and act as a guide and provider of resources and support. Specific strategies include:

- Establish school councils to govern school-wide policies and resources.
- Organize schools into small learning communities of 200 to 500 students.
- Allocate decisions about resources to schools in a way that encourages efficiency and innovation and that promotes high achievement by all students in all schools.
- Develop a system of client - centered services and support.

2.10.3 PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH THE COMMUNITY SUPPORT AND SERVICES THEY NEED TO SUCCEED IN SCHOOLS

As also maintained by Davies and Ellison (1999: 199) community services and support systems can make the difference between success and failure. Children who are unhealthy, hungry, abused, and ill housed, ill-clothed or otherwise face problems outside the school will most probably not achieve high levels. Therefore services and support is needed to reduce the impact of these major barriers to learning. The school District will do its part, but so must the public and private agencies outside the school. Specific strategies include:

- Link students with health and social service agencies.
- Ensure that each school has an ongoing relationship with at least one community based organization.
- Recruit and match volunteers with schools.
- Conduct a campaign to prevent student pregnancies, and make sure that students who are pregnant or parenting have access to health and social services they and their children need.

2.10.4 PROVIDE UP-TO-DATE TECHNOLOGY AND INSTITUTIONAL MATERIALS.

Technology can fundamentally transform how schools and teachers serve students. Technology can also formally improve the administrative processes and procedures that support classroom learning.

As outlined by Davies and Ellison (1999: 200) specific strategies include:

- Provide all schools with the resources and support needed to have one computer for every six students.
- Transform libraries into technology resources centers.

- Conduct a comprehensive analysis and make a five-year recommendation of what technology and information resources will be needed to support student learning.

2.10.5 ENSURE ADEQUATE RESOURCES AND USE THEM EFFECTIVELY.

Adequate resources are common sense preconditioned to virtually all children achieving at high levels.

Specific strategies as noted by Davies et al. (1999: 201) are as follows:

- Aggressively improve efficiency and effectiveness in non-instructional areas.
- Investigate alternative financing opportunities such as sales, funds and funding debt.
- Aggressively pursue greater equity and adequacy of government resources and their distribution.
- Redesign teaching and learning so that the who, how, where and when are viewed as variables and student achievement remain the content.

11 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT STRATEGIES

The parents from a poverty culture should be involved in the school as parents, as a learner and as a individual who offers his/her services to the school (Pretorius et al.1990) as quoted in Le Roux (1990: 72). As noted by Le Roux (1990: 72) thus parental involvement can be realized in the form of home visits by teachers, interviews with parent's school visits by parents, parental guidance, adult education and informal education.

Pretorius (1996) as quoted by Le Roux (1990: 72) offers the following guidelines for the realization of effective parental involvement in the school.

Have visits undertaken by a representative of the school.

Parents are invited to the school and guided toward more effective parenthood so that they can share the responsibility for the child's education.

Parents must support school activities

Parents are informed about and given guidance regarding the learning problems of their children.

Snyman (1990) as quoted by Le Roux (1990: 74) also supports the notion by Pretorius (1990) as quoted in Le Roux (1990:74) that through parental

guidance, parents from a poverty culture can be molded, guided and educated, so that they can perform basic parental functions. These functions include family instructions, family care of the poverty - culture child and adequate education and support. Parental involvement is subsequently linked to community school services and also to family programs. This is because parents often believe that the school should be solely responsible for guiding their children through the learning process.

12. SUMMARY

This chapter examined the factors that impinge on the potential development of learners. From the literature reviewed, the major factors that influence the potential development of learners are parental involvement and poverty. The literature study has also indicated strategies that could be implemented to develop learners potential such as community support services, availability of resources to learners and providing up to date technology to learners and parental involvement strategies.

CHAPTER THREE

3 PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on presentation and analysis of data. The analyses of data is conducted through statistical inferences and use of frequency tables. According to Anderson, Sweeney and Williams (2003 : 14) a major contribution of statistics is data from a sample that can be used to make estimates and test hypothesis about characteristics of a population. However, Anderson et al. (2003 : 4) also defines a frequency distribution as a tabular summary of data showing the number of frequency of items each of several non-overlapping classes. Therefore the investigation of factors that influence or impinge on potential development of learners was conducted using 50 respondents from 25 high schools in the Mafikeng district in the North West Province.

3.2 DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Table 3.2.1 Frequency distribution of sex

	Frequency	Percentage
Males	28	56%
Females	22	44%
Total	50	100%

The majority of the respondents are males as compared to females. Nevertheless gender does not have any significant effect in the present study.

Table 3.2.2 Frequency distribution of age

	Frequency	Percentage
14 - 16	13	26%
17 - 20	30	60%
21+	7	14%
Total	50	100%

A high number of respondents fall in the ages of 17 - 20 followed by ages between 14 - 16 and lower number in the age of 21 and above. The above figures imply that most of the respondents are in their adolescent years.

Pie chart used to show respondents religion.

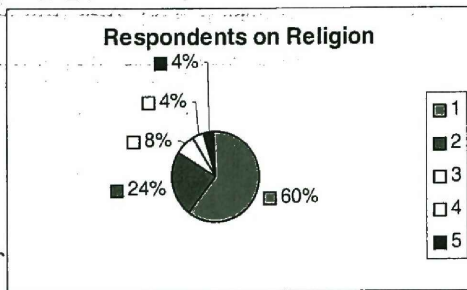


Figure 1

Do not attend church 60%

Roman Catholic 24%

Charismatic 8%

Protestant 4%

Seventhday 4%

Most of the respondents as presented in the pie chart do not attend church. The majority of those who attend church are Roman Catholic with 24%. Those who attend other denominations are in the minority. According to Haralambos (1984 : 25) religious belief influence a person's behaviour. In this instance, responses of students especially with regard to their performance at school is likely to be influenced by the values advocated by their religious affiliation.

Table 3.2.3 Frequency distribution of Grades of learners

	Frequency	Percentage
Grade 10	16	32%
Grade 11	20	40%
Grade 12	14	28%
Total	50	100%

All the respondents in this study are at high school level of study. This is because the sample was deliberately drawn from Grade 10, 11 and 12. According to Kirby (1992 : 158) high schools are one of the institutions in the society attended by most young people .

Table 3.2.4 Frequency distribution of caretakers of learners

	Frequency	Percentage
Parents	34	68%
Grandmother	8	16%
Single Parent	5	10%
Guardian	2	4%
Other (Aunt)	1	2%
Total	50	100%

The majority of respondents (68%) are living with their parents at their homes. Those who live with their grandparents constitute 16% of respondents. Few respondents have either single parents or Guardians living with them.

Table 3.2.5 Frequency distribution of occupation of Parents

	Frequency	Percentage
Domestic	15	30%
Professional	13	26%
Clerical Services	6	12%
Pensioner	6	12%
Other (Unemployed)	10	20%
Total	50	100%

The occupation of most respondents fall under low-income group and also a substantial number of respondents indicated that their caregivers are not employed. Those who have care givers who are professionals constitute 26% and is significantly a lesser number.

Bar graph representing number of children in families of respondents

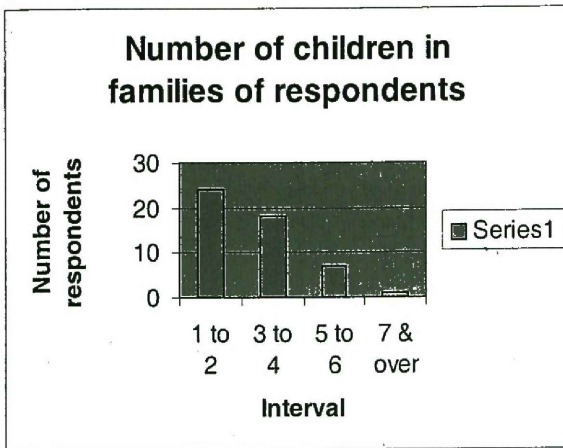


Figure 2

As indicated in figure 2 majority of families of respondents have a few number of children ranging from 1 - 4 children in a household. A lower number of families have got large families having children from 5 - 7 in the household. The number significantly reflects that families are small.

Bar graph representing number of children attending school

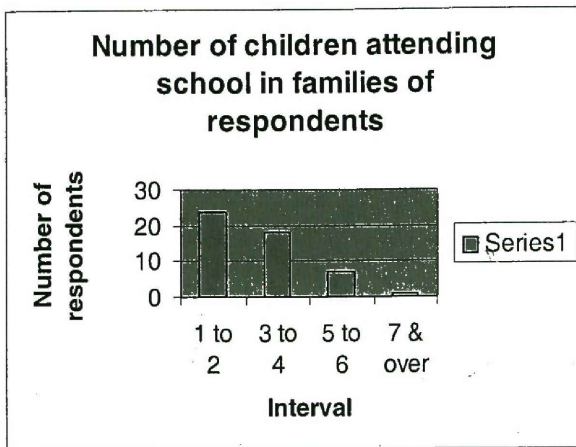


Figure 3

Indicated by the bar graph most of the respondents families are small and majority of families have small number of children still attending school.

Table 3.2.6 Frequency distribution table of accommodation occupied by families.

	Frequency	Percentage
Self built house	39	78%
Rented house	4	8%
Bond	4	14%
Farm House	3	6%
Other	-	-
Total	50	100%

A high number of respondents as indicated by table 3.2.6 live with their families in self built houses. This could be that Mafikeng area is predominantly composed of villages and people thereof prefer to build houses for themselves. 78% live in self built houses. Few 8% live in rented houses, whereas 14% live in Bond houses. Housing is a socio-economic factor and obtained results from investigation are satisfactory because families of respondents have accommodation.

Table 3.2.7 Frequency distribution of number of rooms in homes of respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
1 - 2	11	22%
3 - 4	12	24%
5 - 6	11	22%
7 - 8	12	24%
Other (10)	4	8%
Total	50	100%

As shown by table 3.2.7 a significant number of houses of homes of respondents have a few rooms that is 1 - 2 rooms 22%, 3 - 4 rooms 24% and 5 - 6 rooms 22%. The table also indicated 7 - 8 rooms 24% more than 10 rooms at 8%. As indicated by the obtained results housing seems to be satisfactory because families of respondents have their own accommodation.

3.3 INVESTIGATION OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT AS ONE OF FACTORS THAT IMPINGE ON POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The researcher has hypothesized that lack of parental involvement in school matters significantly impact on learners potential development. Parents have a legitimate role to play in the education of their children. They need to be involved to a large extent in school matters. According to Chapman, Frouman, Aspin (1995) parental involvement in school affairs increases the likelihood of confidence and general good performance in their school work. Parental involvement in school affairs was investigated by looking at support from providing necessary clothes for the school, food, home work monitoring and providing conducive environment for studying in homes. The following tables present respondents responses on involvement of parents in their education.

Table 3.3.1 Frequency table of type of clothes respondents wear at school

	Frequency	Percentage
Full Uniform	43	86%
Part of Uniform	7	14%
No Uniform	-	-
ordinary clothes	-	-
Other	-	-
Total	50	100%

The majority of respondents (86%) indicated that they do have uniforms as part of school prospectus. A lower number 14% indicated that they only have part of the uniform and this could detrimentally affect their self-concept and also hamper their potential development. According to Louw (1991 : 246) adolescent years are characterised by identity crises and building of self image. It is important therefore that learners should feel good about themselves at all times.

Table 3.3.2 Frequency distribution showing home-work monitoring

	Frequency	Percentage
Yourself	30	60%
Parents	11	22%
Grand Parents	2	4%
No Monitoring	1	1%
Other (Friends	4	8%
Total	50	100%

The above table shows that a high proportion of respondents do their home-work on their own. However the table also indicates that few parents are involved in helping their children to do their home-work at home. The above results affirms the hypotheses that majority of parents do not take their role in knowing what could be problems of their children and help them in areas where they have difficulties.

Table 3.3.3. Frequency distribution table of study place of respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
Do not study	15	30%
None	20	40%
School	12	24%
Library	3	6%
Total	50	100%

A sufficient number of respondents has indicated that they do not study. These results raises a concern nevertheless tables to follow would unfold what could be the problem. A significant number however from the same table indicated that they do their home-work at home. Comparing the results obtained in table 3.3.2 and those in 3.3.3 it can be concluded that though the respondents have indicated that they do study at their homes, they study without parents supervision.

Finally, these findings revealed that parents do not play their significant role in helping their children to attain their educational goals.

- 3.4 As one of the objectives of the study was to measure the effects of socio-economic factors on the potential development of learners the investigation of resources available to learners was conducted.

The following tables presents the availability of resources to the respondents.
Table 3.4.1 Frequency distribution table of learners having breakfast before going to school

	Frequency	Percentage
No breakfast	10	20%
Sometimes	27	54%
Always	12	24%
Often	1	2%
Other	-	-
Total	50	100%

A significant number of respondents indicated that they sometimes have breakfast, while others indicated that they do not have breakfast altogether. Few indicated that they always have breakfast. As reflected by obtained results the indication is that most respondents go to school without energy derived from food which of course is a negative factor and could probably have a major effect on learners.

Table 3.4.2 Frequency distribution of learners having lunch at school

	Frequency	Percentage
No lunch	10	20%
Lunch box	9	18%
Pocket Money	29	58%
Other (Friends)	2	4
Total	50	100%

The majority of respondents 58% indicated that they have pocket money for lunch though there is no clear indication on how they spend the money. Even though the number of those who do not have lunch is lower there is a tally when comparing the results obtained in table 3.4.1 with table 3.4.2 indicating respondents going without breakfast. The results proves and significantly indicates that a great number of respondents do lack the necessary daily balanced diet.

Table 3.4.3 Frequency distribution of factors generally making schooling difficult as indicated by respondents.

	Frequency	Percentage
Long distance	15	10.4
Educators absenteeism	14	9.7
Lack of Electricity at home	10	6.9
Lack of books	10	6.9
Lack of Pocket Money	10	6.9
Library facilities not available	8	5.6
Shortage of facilities (Home)	13	9.0
Shortage of facilities (School)	13	9.0
Disruption at School	10	6.9
Lack of Discipline measures at school	10	6.9
Lack of concentration because of hunger	15	10.4
Motivation from Parents	10	6.9
Noise at home	6	11.2

The above table summarises the indicators of difficult schooling circumstances as gathered from the open ended question given to respondents. From the indicators mentioned by respondents, the most pressing problems according to the above table are: long distance to school (10.4), shortage of facilities at home (9.0), shortage of facilities at school (9.0), lack of concentration because of hunger and absenteeism of teachers (9.7).

3.5 DE-MOTIVATION OF LEARNERS WAS ONE OF THE FACTORS INVESTIGATED TO HAVE AN INFLUENCE ON LEARNERS POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

The following tables were used to assess factors that make respondents to be de-motivated to learn. De-motivation is negative attribute that comes as result of factors affecting psychosocial functioning of people.

Table 3.5.1 Frequency distribution of attendance

	Frequency	Percentage
Always	38	76%
Sometimes	12	24%
Irregular	-	-
Total	50	100%

There is clear indication from the above table that respondents are attending with high percentage 76%. Only a few respondents 12% are sometimes not at school. The results obtained are satisfactory because they suggest that respondents are generally interested in schooling though 24% in the same table indicated that they are sometimes not attending school.

Table 3.5.2 Frequency distribution table of distance between school and home

	Frequency	Percentage
500 - 2 km	13	26%
3 - 5 km	16	32%
6 - 7 km	8	16%
8 - 10	8	16%
Other (15 - 20)	5	10%
Total	50	100%

The indication from the above table indicates that majority of respondents are very far from their schools. This is clearly indicated by a significant number of learners falling between 3 - 20 km away from schools. Referring to table 3.5.1 p 12 a significant number respondents 76% attend school regularly. The figures corresponds with obtained results in table 3.5.2 indicating that majority attends school though very far from schools. There is clear indication from this table that generally attendance seems to be satisfactory.

Table 3.5.3 Frequency distribution table of mode of transport to school

	Frequency	Percentage
Walking	36	72%
Taxi	6	12%
Family Car	2	4%
Bus	6	12%
Private arrangement	2	4%
Total	50	100%

The figures as indicated in the table significantly show that most learners are walking to school even though table 3.5.2 has indicated that most of them are very far from school.

Table 3.5.4 Frequency distribution table of time spend to get to school by respondents

	Frequency	Percentage
10 - 30 min	12	24%
31 - 45 min	16	32%
46 - 60 min	9	18%
61 - 90 (1hr)	2	4%
Other (2hrs)	6	12%
(5 min)	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Majority of learners are spending a lot of time to get to school whereas a few of them are near their school. With regard to motivation the results obtained show that respondents are interested to attend school though there are factors mentioned in table 4.4.3 which make their schooling difficult. The results obtained in this section also suggests that even though they are factors impinging on potential development, respondents are not de-motivated to continue attending school.

3.6 THE INFORMATION BASED ON RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO LEARNERS WAS ALSO OF INTEREST IN THE STUDY.

In the following tables respondents were asked to give information so as to assess whether learners have resources available in order to enrich their learning. Resources specifically such as books, Library, Laboratory, electricity and proper classrooms were basic resources that were investigated.

Table 3.6.1 Frequency distribution on how respondents accomplish their books

	Frequency	Percentage
Cannot afford books	7	14%
Parents buy books	11	22%
Books handed at school	32	64%
Total	50	100%

The results obtained from the table shows that books are mostly handed out at school. The table also shows that 22% of parents of respondents take part in supporting their children with school material. From the table there is an indication that 14% of parents of respondents cannot afford buying books for their children, therefore studying for them are made extremely difficult.

Table 3.6.2 Frequency distribution on time spend by respondents doing their home-work

	Frequency	Percentage
No time to study	8	16%
30 min - 59 min	10	20%
60 min - 89 min	13	26%
90 min and more	19	38%
Total	50	100%

The majority 38% spend considerable time doing their home-work. This corresponds with table 3.5.1 on (p61) that a great number of learners show great interest in their educational achievement. From the same table 16% of learners indicated that they do not have time to study at all. The results corresponds with table 3.3.3 on (p57) which indicated that 30% of respondents do not study. The results obtained in this table substantially reflects that respondents from their families as indicated by table 3.4.3 on (p 60) with these indicators, shortage of facilities at home 26% lack of electricity at home 20%, lack of concentration because of hunger 30% lack noise at home 20% and lack of motivation from parents.

Table 3.6.3 Frequency distribution table of resources and the one's available/ not available in schools of respondents.

	Available		Not Available	
	Frequency	Percentage		
Library	30	60%	20	40%
Laboratory	30	60%	20	40%
Electricity	50	100%	50	100%
Proper Classrooms	50	100%	50	100%

The indication from the above table shows that 40% of schools lack libraries and laboratories, for the rest it seems that proper classrooms and electricity are available at schools and conducive to school work. The results obtained from this table are not satisfactory because Libraries and laboratories are essential resources that need to be available for learners to attain their educational goals.

3.7 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the analysis of data conducted to determine the factors that impinge on the potential development of learners.

Major findings of the empirical investigation are: Lack of parental involvement emanating from the following factors revealed in the analysis:

- Majority of Parents do not assist their children with their school work.
- A significant number of parents do not motivate their children in the school-work.

Lack of Finances

The analysis of data revealed that majority of learners are poverty stricken because of lack of the following:

- Lack of food at home and at school.
- Majority of parents are domestic workers and a number of them are unemployed and pensioners.

CHAPTER FOUR

4 MAIN FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The main purpose of this chapter is to review the findings emanating from literature, empirical research and to discuss conclusions drawn from them and to provide recommendations.

4.2 MAIN FINDINGS

The main findings discussion is categorised into four main aspects

- Parental involvement
- Lack of finances
- Attendance
- Resources

4.2.1 PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT

With specific reference to the study lack of parental involvement was investigated and analysed based on financial support that parents are expected to contribute in schools, providing clothing, food and assisting their children with their school –work. It was hypothesised in the study that a significant

number of parents are not involved in their children's educational achievements. Although it has been indicated from the analysis that 68% of respondents live with their parents, however, the results obtained in data analysis confirmed the hypothesis that a significant number of parents are not effectively involved in their children school work.

The investigation was confirmed by 14% of parents who cannot afford to buy learning materials for their children because a high number (64%) indicated that books are handed at school and only 22% is able to buy learning materials for their children.

Furthermore a significant number (60%) of respondents have also indicated that they do their home-work at home without assistance of their parents only 22% indicated that they are monitored by their parents when doing their home-work.

There is no clear indication why parents of respondents in the study are not involved in their children educational achievement, an assumption that could be drawn from data gathered and analysed which corresponds with the

obtained results of lack of involvement of parents could be that parents lack sufficient funds because analysis of data revealed that majority (60%) of respondents parents are domestic workers, 20% of parents are not employed and 12% are pensioners.

In South Africa in particular domestic workers fall under a low income group of workers with little or without formal education hence analysis of data has revealed lack of parental involvement because of especially lack of finances. With regard to lack of monitoring because of lack of formal education by parents, according to Pit Out et al. (1990) parents who are not educated usually are unable to help their children with their school- work, or at times show no interest in what is done at school.

As further maintained by Pit Out et al. (1990) children from such families are likely not to be motivated to learn because their parents do not show interest in their school work.

The present study has also confirmed lack of motivation from parents by 30% of respondents who indicated from an open question from the questionnaire

that there are not motivated to learn because of their parents disinterest. Although it was not clearly indicated why their parents are not motivating them the results obtained in the analysis of data corresponds with the above findings by Pit Out et al (1990).

4.2.2 LACK OF FINANCES

One of the socio-economic factors investigated in the study was availability of food to the learners. Data gathered and analysed with regard to food is that a significant number of respondents indicated that they did not receive a balance diet because obtained results indicated that 20% do not have breakfast while 54% indicated that they sometimes have their breakfast. With regard to lunch 20% indicated that they do not have lunch while 18% indicated that they bring along their lunch boxes.

Furthermore 30% of respondents indicated that poor concentration at school because of hunger is one of the factors making their schooling difficult. The obtained results with regard to food are not satisfactory because learners need food in order to have healthy minds and to be able to perform at school.

4.2.3 ATTENDANCE

It was hypothesised in the study that a significant number of respondents are de-motivated to learn. The hypothesis has been disconfirmed because 78% of respondents indicated that they are always at school.

However though attendance seem to be satisfactory it was revealed in data gathered and analysed that majority of respondents (72%) walk long distances from home to schools out of 72%, 30% of respondents have indicated that long distance makes their schooling difficult.

On the other hand from the study conducted by Le Riche (1995) truancy and dropping out at school are related to long distances that learners have to walk. It is important therefore that distance as negative factor that impinge on potential development of learners be addressed by the Department of Education with serious consideration.

4.2.4 RESOURCES

It was of interest in the present study to investigate whether learners have necessary resources such as books, libraries, laboratories, proper classrooms and electricity available to them.

It was hypothesised in the present study that a significant number of learners lack resources such as books, libraries and laboratories in particular. The obtained results revealed that 40% of respondents do not have libraries and laboratories at their schools.

With regard to classrooms and electricity data analysed show satisfactory results by indicating that all (100%) respondents have proper classrooms and electricity at their schools.

Results obtained with regard to resources such as books, libraries and laboratories which are not available to respondents corresponds very well with poor study attitudes revealed by a significant number of respondents.

The indication was revealed when investigating time spent on studying. A significant number (30%) of respondents indicated that they do not study at all while only 38% spent a reasonable time doing their school work.

As indicated above when discussing attendance it was revealed that 78% of respondents attends school regularly which shows that respondents are eager to learn what they need is support from parents and the Department of Education by availing resources that learners need in order to attain their educational goals.

4.3 SUMMARY

Having identified the socio-economic factors that impinge on potential development of learners the present study would like the existing Department of Education to address dysfunctional schools and low performance of learners, bearing in mind the socio-economic factors that different schools encounters.

It has been a tendency of the Department of Education in the past to generalise low performance, yet there are factors that could significantly impact on other schools performance in particular.

4.4 RECOMMENDED RESEARCH AREAS

Some statistical techniques have been used in this report to help in investigating factors that impinge on potential development of learners. To re-affirm the conclusion and outcomes of the present study, it is recommended that a larger data set be used and the results be compared with the findings in this study. It is recommended also to design a questionnaire directed to the respondents/parents so as to correlate data and findings from both samples.

It is also recommended that a Likert - type of data be used to assess weights of these variables on the factors that impinge on potential development of learners.

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APPENDIX A

**UNIVERSITY OF NORTH WEST
PRIVATE BAG X2046
MMBATHO
2735**

DEAR RESPONDENT

We are conducting a research on factors that affect the potential development of learners. Responses will enable us to identify socio-economic factors that are detrimental to the success of learners. The information provided will help in improving the learning environment and to enlighten the Department of Education about the problems encountered by learners. You are not allowed to write your name. The information provided is confidential.

Thanking you in advance

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'G. B. Tause', written over a series of horizontal dotted lines.

G. B. TAUSE (Ms)

APPENDIX B

FACTORS THAT IMPINGE ON THE POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT OF LEARNERS: A SOCIO-ECONOMIC PRESPECTIVE

INSTRUCTIONS

Answer all the questions
Tick x in an appropriate box
Do tick more than one x in a box
Specify where asked to do so
Your honest response is important to us

SECTION A DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1 AGE

14-16	
17-20	
21+	

2 SEX

MALE	
FEMALE	

3 RELIGION

ROMAN CATHOLIC	
PROTESTANT	
CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT	
SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST	
OTHER SPECIFY	

3 PRESENT GRADE

10	
11	
12	x
OTHER SPECIFY	

4 WITH WHOM DO YOU STAY

PARENTS	
GRAND PARENTS	
SINGLE PARENT	
GUARDIAN	
OTHER SPECIFY	

5 OCCUPATION OF A PERSON TAKING CARE OF YOU

DOMESTIC WORKER	
PROFESSIONAL	
CLERICAL SERVICES	
PENSIONER	
OTHER SPECIFY	RETIRED

6 NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN YOUR FAMILY

1-2	
3-4	
5-6	
7+	

7 NUMBER OF CHILDREN ATTENDING SCHOOL IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD

1-2	
3-4	
3-4	
5-6	
7+	

4 DO YOU HAVE BREAKFAST BEFORE GOING TO SCHOOL

NO BREAKFAST	
SOMETIMES	
ALWAYS	
OFTEN	
OTHER SPECIFY	

5 WHAT DO YOU HAVE FOR LUNCH

NO LUNCH	
LUNCH BOX	
POCKET MONEY	
FEEDING SCHEME	
OTHER SPECIFY	

6 WHICH TYPE OF CLOTHES DO YOU WEAR AT SCHOOL

FULL UNIFORM	
PART OF THE UNIFORM	
NO UNIFORM	
ORDINARY CLOTHES	
OTHER SPECIFY	

7 HOW REGULARLY DO YOU ATTEND SCHOOL

ALWAYS PRESENT	
SOMETIMES ABSNT	
OFTEN ABSENT	
IRREGULAR	
OTHER SPECIFY	

8 WHERE DO YOU STUDY

DO NOT STUDY	
HOME	
SCHOOL	
LIBRARY	
OTHER SPECIFY	

8 WHICH TYPE OF ACCOMODATION DOES YOUR FAMILY OCCUPY

SELF BUILT HOUSE	
RENTED HOUSE	
BOND HOUSE	
FARM HOUSE	
OTHER SPECIFY	

9 HOW MANY ROOMS ARE THERE IN YOUR HOME

1-2	
3-4	
5-6	
7-8	
OTHER SPECIFY	

SECTION B FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ASSESS SELF CONCEPT AND MOTIVATION OF LEARNERS

1 APPROXIMATELY HOW FAR IS YOUR SCHOOL FROM HOME

500M-2KM	
3-5 KM	
6-7 KM	
8-10 KM	
OTHER SPECIFY	

2 WHICH TYPE OF TRANSPORT DO YOU USE TO TRAVEL TO SCHOOL

WALKING	
TAXI	
BUS	
FAMILY CAR	
OTHER SPECIFY	

3 HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE YOU TO GET TO SCHOOL

10-30Min	
31-45Min	
46-60Min	
61-90Min	
OTHER SPECIFY	

9 WHO MONITORS YOUR HOME -WORK

YOUR SELF	
PARENTS	
GUARDIAN	
GRAND PARENTS	
NO MONITORING	
OTHER SPECIFY	

10 APPROXIMATELY HOW MUCH TIME DO YOU SPEND PER DAY TO DO YOUR HOME -WORK

NO TIME TO STUDY APPROXIMATELY	
30Min	
60Min	
90Min	
OTHER SPECIFY	

11 HOW DO YOU ACCOMPLISH YOUR BOOKS

CANNOT AFFORD ANY BOOKS	
PARENTS PAY FOR BOOKS	
BOOKS ARE HANDED OUT AT SCHOOL	
OTHER SPECIFY	

12 WHAT KIND OF FACILITIES ARE AVAILABLE AT YOUR SCHOOL

	AVAILABLE	NOT AVAILABLE
LABORATORY		
LIBRARY		
ELECTRICITY		
PRORER CLASS -ROOMS		
OTHER SPECIFY		

13 MENTION ANY FACTORS WHICH MAKES YOUR SCHOOLING OR STUDYING DIFFICULT

1

2

3

4

5