CHAPTER 3
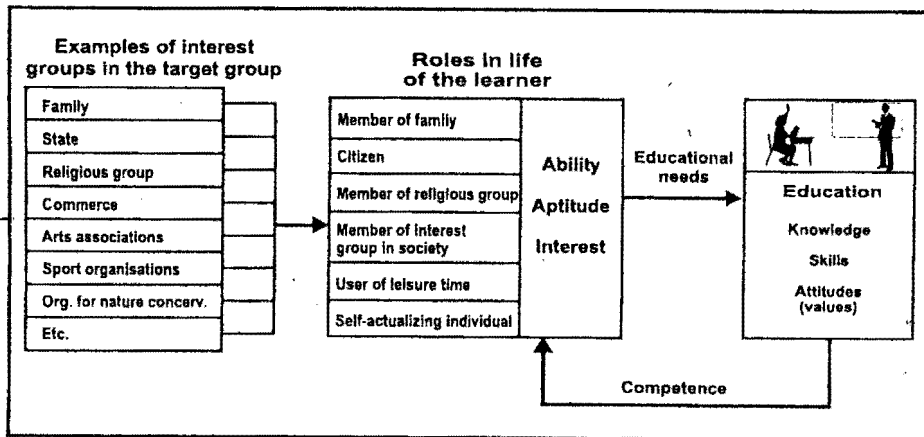
AN ANALYSIS OF THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF MINORITY GROUPS

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to analyse the educational needs of minority groups with regard to the focus of education and the educational institutions. The emphasis will be on the aim of education as being to equip the learners with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes to prepare the learners to be balanced individuals to fulfil their responsibilities in the community. Some of the important life-roles, as well as the competencies needed by learners to function effectively in these roles, are identified and discussed. The nature of education as the core activity of the educational institution is also discussed.

3.2 FOCUS OF EDUCATION

The education and training provided by the national education system should co-operate in the preparation of the individual to live a complete life in an attainable and sustainable fashion. This should be to the advantage of the different social groupings related to the individual as well as the broader community. The focus of education in particular should be to equip each learner with the required knowledge, skills and attitude to effectively fulfil his/her different roles in life. Steyn (1997a:12) identifies the following as the important life-roles for which the learner should be prepared (cf. fig 3.1).

FIGURE 3.1: The relationship between the interest groups, the educational needs of the learners and education

Examples of interest groups in the target group	Roles in life of the learner		Education
Family	Member of family	Ability	
State	Citizen		Education
Religious group	Member of religious group	Aptitude	
Commerce	Member of interest group in society	Interest	Knowledge
Arts associations			Skills
Sport organisations	User of leisure time		Attitudes (values)
Org. for nature concerv.	Self-actualizing individual		
Etc.			

Educational needs

Competence

Source: Steyn, 1997a

3.2.1 The role of the learner as a self-actualising individual

In this case the minority-group learner should be equipped with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes to function as an independent individual and to take responsibility to provide for his own needs. Murray (in Duminy, 1978:50) states that certain needs - some innate and some acquired - form the basis of motivating the learner to self-actualisation. Since these needs start in the family and the cultural group to which the learner belongs, it becomes clear that the values and characteristics of the minority group will be important in self-actualisation. These values will determine the ideals the minority-learner will strive for in self-actualisation.

Canfield (1992:24) notes that educators intuitively know that when children feel better about themselves, they do better at school. The simple fact is that some children from minority groups are not receiving enough positive, nurturing attention from adults, either at home or at school. He further states that to raise the self-esteem of learners, one needs to start with the school staff. If educators have a low self-esteem, they are likely to pass it on to their minority-

67

group learners. At all times educator-learner interactions should be positive, validating, affirming, and encouraging. This could be achieved by, for example, the educator using extra materials such as films and video-tapes to present perspectives to minority-learners. Many of these sources contain rich and powerful images of the experiences of being an ethnic-minority member and will thus boost the self-acceptance of minority-learners.

Phelan and Davidson (1993:44) argue that when the learner acquires competence in school settings, positive self-esteem and a good self-concept are often the result. In turn, this could lead to competent school performance. In contrast, lack of acquiring competence in the school setting by learners from minority groups leads to a negative self-esteem and poor self-concept. This in turn leads to poor school performance, and possibly alienation and dropping out. One condition feeds another, which in turn continues to feed the first.

Education should therefore provide the minority-group learner with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to reach these values. If these characteristics of self-actualisation differ between minority and majority groups, the minority group would expect education to provide their learners with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to enable them to reach the highest level of self-actualisation.

3.2.2 The role of the learner as a member of the family

Learners from minority groups should be equipped with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes to meet their responsibilities as for example spouses, parents, children or grandparents in the household of the extended family. In the case study by Nieto (1991:263) it was found that good communication at home between children and parents have revealed that parents want their children to have a better chance in life, to do better than they (the parents) had done and to have the opportunity of a better career. Learners perceive their parents as loving and supportive. They generally like their parents and have great respect for them. Van Zyl, in Du Plooy **et al.** (1982:47), states that the uniqueness of the learner striving to be someone in his own right emerges all the more clearly from his social communion. The educative act is an attempt to give him awareness of the possibilities available to him for expressing his maturation. He is amenable to being educated and so he accepts his parents' aid as a means of achieving full maturity. He is desirous of being a useful participant in family activities that will give meaning to his own existence in communication with his cultural group/fellow-men. Levine (1992:27) argues that undermining the family responsibility for rearing and socialising its children will leave children without a reliable social support structure. These relationships

motivate the minority-group children's formal learning and connect them as contributing members to a community.

In the minority household culture is maintained through such activities as family rituals and traditions and artifacts in the home, not to mention the even more important underlying cultural values that help inform their attitudes and behaviours on a daily basis. Apprenticeship in the family (being the core element of each cultural group), and the consequent learning of culture, language and values, is a significant way in which learners receive and internalise the message that they are important and worthwhile. These things will enable learners from minority groups to take on a role in their families of mature and responsible adults (Nieto, 1991:240).

Education should therefore equip learners from minority groups with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to fulfil their responsibilities to strengthen the family as core of the cultural group.

3.2.3 The role of the learner as citizen of the state

Learners from minority groups should be equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitude to contribute to the welfare of the state and other levels of government in its different manifestations, and not to live off the welfare of the state. Learners must therefore prepare to be, for example, law-abiding citizens, informed voters, nature conservationists, economically self-providing individuals and positive ambassadors of the country. To be positive citizens of the state requires specific competencies. For this Lynch (1992:38) stresses that the education system of a country should strive:

- to foster clear awareness of and concern about economic, social, political and ecological interdependencies in urban and rural areas;
- to provide every person with the attitudes, commitments and skills needed to protect and improve the environment;
- to create new patterns of behaviour of individuals, groups and society as a whole towards the environment;
- to raise the legal awareness of young people;
- to deal with law-related problems and situations that are relevant to the lives of young people;
- to develop understanding of the role of law in society;
- to develop the skills to discover and use the law in real-life situations;

69

- to encourage an understanding of and respect for values that underpin the law, including concern for justice, social responsibility and the rights of others;
- provide learning experiences that give student the ability to view the world as a planet-wide society;
- avoid the ethnocentrism common in sharp divisions drawn between the study of 'us' and 'them';
- teach the inter-relatedness of human beings rather than simply identify uniqueness or differences; and
- recognise the likelihood of continued change, conflict ambiguity and increasing interdependence.

The provision of education should therefore prepare minority group learners to acquire the required competencies to meet these challenges.

3.2.4 The role of the learner as a career person

Education must provide the learners from minority groups with the required knowledge, skills and attitudes to enter a particular career path and proceed with the required training necessary for and relevant to a particular position. Responsible adulthood as one of the important aims of education to the learners of minority and majority groups is bound up with occupational life and makes the demand for an occupation essential. An adult is expected to reveal a dedicated attitude towards his work, which calls for occupational proficiency and loyalty. The occupational life of today makes exacting demands on the adult; it demands above all responsible awareness of a call in no vague way (Van Zyl, in Du Plooy et al., 1982:145).

Through his work man gives meaning and significance to the world, converts it to a safe living-space in which he feels sufficiently secure to respond with dedicated surrender to what he has achieved. With regard to the performance of his job, he is continuously subjected to the appeal that his achievements should be essentially meaningful. The young person that cannot be brought to a responsible task acceptance never experiences a strong awareness of a call that is a fundamental condition for a positive orientation towards the future. The minority-learner's prospect of acquiring an identity of his own and a proud individuality is closely bound up with the orientation towards his future occupation. Man is not truly adult until his job is done, not merely for the sake of his personal importance and economic welfare, but also with the knowledge that the meaning of his being human as bound to time and space and participation in existence is partly determined by it (Du Plooy et al., 1982:145).

According to Lynch **et al**. (1994:280) work is simbiotic with family life in a situation where it is a separate area of human experience and endeavours. It provides meaning to life, the means to material satisfaction and a healthy self-image as well as vocational and social identity. In many societies unemployment coexists with many vacancies. The matter between supply and demand is less than perfect. The loss of the means to achieve a vocational identity through unemployment or through inadequate fostering of such identity by schools represents a particular malfunctioning. This has adverse consequences for those people whose identities are already vulnerable due to disproportionate unemployment, discrimination and inappropriate curricular and learning experiences. It is not surprising therefore that the minority-group usually insists on own education provision in order to effectively engage in different careers.

Choosing a career - the field in which one would want to work - is one of the most important decisions in one's life. It is also one of the most difficult. There are many careers to choose from, and many different ways of becoming qualified for them. Unlike many decisions a career choice should be a well-considered affair. It is a process, not an event, and the longer a decision on a career has been considered, the more sensible it is likely to be (Davis, 1985:21).

Minority-group learners will expect from the education system to equip them with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to be able to make sound career decisions.

3.2.5 The role of the learner as a member of a religious grouping

The religious groupings, of wide-ranging nature, expect from education to, at least, provide their members with the basic knowledge, skills and altitudes to be active members of that particular denomination. Some denominations will be content if their future members were provided with the required literacy for further teaching in the particular religion by the denominations themselves, while others will expect their members to be educated also in their particular confessional religion.

Lynch (1992:30) is furthermore of the opinion that learners need to become familiar with the major religious and ethical traditions and to know what their common features and points of difference are. This implies that the learners must be equipped to deal rationally with controversial and sometimes highly sensitive issues where judgements are often located between 'goods' rather than between 'good' and 'evil'.

According to David (1993:187) religion remains at the heart of most cultures. In their ideal form, religions incorporate a total world-view and have been, and in many cases continue to

be, the powerhouse of civilization. The teachings of the major world faiths have been pivotal in the development of human societies. They represent the human need to seek meaning and to base life on principles perceived as having been revealed or uncovered in the religious quest. The search for meaning remains an essential human characteristic. Those involved in the quest are entitled to be given access to the answers some people have found to the perennial questions about human existence in the world.

Vine (1994:197) is of the opinion that extensive and well-informed public debate is essential before democratic decisions could be sensibly taken on the proposal to exclude confessional religious instruction from the curriculum of all state-supported schools. According to him this will be tantamount to asking members of the ethnic minority to adjust its ideology in a dominant majority direction, or to accept the religious and culture-specific moral instruction as a matter for families and sub-cultural communities, rather than for a compulsory educational system.

Man is a religious being and the principled basis and culmination of education is embodied in his religion. According to Vine (1994:198) a person's religious inclination is enshrined in his daily tasks and attitude towards life. For Christian parents, for example, all educative tasks, like sports and book- reading, form part of their religion. They therefore expect the education system to take into account their religious beliefs.

3.2.6 The role of the learner as a member of different societal groups and the associations in the community

It is natural to find different groupings in the community, ranging from cultural groups to those groups with specialist interests. The role of these societal groups is also important because it plays an organising and developmental role in the community. Extracurricular and out-of-school activities seem to contribute to the development of important skills, including critical thinking and leadership qualities. These extracurricular activities could include cultural and religious activities. The feeling of belonging seems to be one of the benefits of taking part in extracurricular activities. This implies that minority-learners, on the basis of valued cultural societies, will have typical educational needs that will not be the same as those of the majority group. Nieto (1991:238) is of the opinion that activities outside school, including religious and cultural organisations, support learners in their academic success. Rather than detracting from their success by taking time away from homework or other school-related activities, such involvement seems to help young people positively by channelling

their creative and physical energy. He continues to state that one important way for learners to support their academic success is to seek involvement in school-related and other activities that help fill their need to belong and to use their time in productive ways. Such activities help to round out the experiences of learners so that they lead fuller and more realistic lives that are not focused solely on academics.

All people belong to groups and institutions that shape their lives. People do not make a world of their own, but rather attend existing institutions already made and have to accommodate themselves in them. Every society organises itself and carries its work through social interaction that varies from one culture to another. Minority-group learners must be asked to think about the groups of which they are members, how they are shaped by those groups, and how they help to shape these groups. They need to know about the social web of their existence, about family life, about how governments function, about the informal social structures that surround them. They must also discover how life in groups varies from one culture to another (Boyer, 1998:20).

Members of a particular minority group will require their learners to acquire those knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to contribute to the effective functioning of the cultural societies and associations they belong to.

3.2.7 The role of the learner as user of leisure-time

The children of minority groups must be equipped with the required knowledge, skills and attitude to spend their leisure-time in a positive fashion through for example the wide range of sports activities, hobbies, clubs and music. A research by Steinberg (in Nieto, 1991:236) revealed that participation in interscholastic athletics is more likely to enhance than interfere with high school learners' academic achievement. Such activities will detract minority-group learners from joining gangs or taking part in other detrimental activities in which they feel part of a "family". The following can be seen as goals for leisure-time (Lindhard, 1993:79):

- To relax and rest after work.
- To meet people and make new friends.
- To exercise and to keep fit.
- To compete in sporting games.
- To meet a future wife/husband.
- To improve your home.
- To make money for further studies or other needs.

- To study and to improve your opportunities.
- To have a good time.
- To worship and to pray.
- To help others.
- To enjoy a hobby.
- To enjoy nature.

Boyer (1998:20) avers that all people respond to the aesthetic. Dance, music, painting, sculpture and architecture are activities understood around the world. Art represents a social necessity that no nation could neglect without endangering its intellectual existence. Archaeologists examine the artifacts of ancient civilization - pottery, cave paintings, and instruments - to determine the attainments and quality of a culture.

The education system should therefore equip the learners of minority groups with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to utilise their leisure-time effectively.

3.2.8 Indicators

The following indicators can be deduced from the preceding paragraphs:

3.2.8.1   When the minority learner acquires competence in school settings, positive self-esteem and good self-concept is often the result. In turn this could lead to competent school performance (cf.par.3.2.1).

3.2.8.2   Undermining the family (being the core element of a cultural group) responsible for rearing and socialising its children, will leave children without a reliable social support structure. The relationship motivates the minority group children's formal learning and connects them as contributing members of a community (cf.par.3.2.2).

3.2.8.3   The education system should strive to encourage an understanding of and respect for values that underpin the law, including concern for justice, social responsibility and the rights of others (cf.par.3.2.3).

3.2.8.4   A minority-group learner that cannot be brought to a responsible task acceptance by occupational training apparently never experiences a strong awareness of a call

that is a fundamental condition for a positive orientation towards the future (cf.par.3.2.4).

3.2.8.5   Exclusion of confessional religious instruction from the curriculum of all state-supported schools will be tantamount to asking members of a minority to adjust its ideology in a dominant majority direction. It could also mean asking them to accept the religious and culture-specific moral instruction as a matter for families and sub-cultural communities rather than for a compulsory educational system (cf.par.3.2.5).

3.2.8.6   One important way for minority-group learners to support their academic success is to seek involvement in school-related and other activities that help their need to belong and use their time in productive ways (cf.par.3.2.6).

3.2.8.7   Participation in interscholastic athletics is more likely to enhance than to interfere with minority school learners' academic achievement. Such activities will detract these learners from taking part in detrimental activities (cf.par.3.2.7).

3.2.9   Competencies needed by learners

To function effectively in the different life-roles, the learners of minority groups need certain knowledge, skills and attitudes (which collectively could be called competencies) that can be briefly categorised as follows (Steyn, 1997b:63; Lindhard, 1993:198):

❑   **Communicative competencies**

The minority learner must acquire effective abilities in oral and written communication. For example, the minority learner must be good at spelling; he must rarely look for words to express his meaning; he must write fluent language in a logical sequence; he must have the ability to listen well and understand quickly. The minority-learner must be shown these competencies in the mother tongue as well as in the language of the majority group.

❑   **Numerical competencies**

The learners of minority groups must be able to execute numerical manipulations required in the relevant areas of interest. For example, the learner must find algebra and arithmetic easy; he must be able to apply mathematics to science problems; he must be able to work quickly

and accurately with figures. Through numbers, each learner can increase the capacity to calculate and reason.

□ **Social competencies**

The learners of minority groups should acquire the competency to function effectively in the community, especially in a multicultural community, and contribute to the establishment of a secure community. For example, he must participate in voluntary work of a helpful nature; he must be able to assess people's attitudes from their behaviour; he must possess the quality to be elected to a position of leadership.

□ **Economic-financial competencies**

The learners of minority groups should obtain the competency to contribute to a positive economic and financial environment. For example, these learners must be aware of economic opportunities such as bursaries or his parents' ability to pay for his education and be able to function in the economy of the majority group.

□ **Competencies in natural science and technology**

The learners of minority groups must understand the natural scientific basis of technology and must know how to apply technology in the relevant areas and be able to contribute to the establishment and development of technological applications. Here the learner must have practical abilities, for example, working with tools, reading and applying a wiring diagram or reading and applying a cooking recipe.

□ **Physical competencies**

The learner of minority groups must develop healthy physical and psychological abilities. These learners must be able to make an assessment of, for example, physical energy, drive, endurance, strength and weaknesses. Attention should be given to nutrition, health and all aspects of wellness. From ignorance learners might suffer from poor nutrition, addiction and violence. Learners should be encouraged to reflect sensitively on the mystery of birth and growth, to learn about body functions and thus understand the role of choice in wellness, to carry some of their emotional and intellectual learning into their relation with others, and respect a variety of life forms. Schools should provide learners with the knowledge, habits, and attitudes that will equip them for a fit and healthy life.

❑   **Competencies in the positive use of leisure time**

The learners of minority groups must acquire the ability to utilise leisure-time in a positive way. For example, they should not utilise their leisure-time by taking part in gangsterism, or alcohol and drug abuse.

❑   **Competencies to use nature positively**

The learners of minority groups must obtain the competency to use and conserve the natural environment in a positive fashion. They must, for example, be taught how to "green" their schoolyard. They must be given, for example, hand-held lenses, classroom aquariums and terrariums, lots of field trips, organic garden plots on the school grounds, butterfly gardens and trees. During the days of formal learning, learners should explore these issues by studying the principles of science by discovering the shaping power of technology, and above all, by learning that survival of this planet means respecting and preserving the earth they share.

❑   **Philosophical competencies**

The learners of minority groups should be able to live their particular philosophy of life positively, particularly in a multicultural society. Philosophical competencies include issues such as an approach to reality; a view of man; a conception of values; a moral code; and a conception of truth.

The following indicators can be deduced from the preceding paragraphs:

3.2.9.1   The minority group learner must acquire effective abilities in oral and written communication.

3.2.9.2   The minority group learner must be able to execute numerical manipulations required in the relevant area of interest.

3.2.9.3   The minority group learner should acquire the ability to function effectively and to contribute to the establishment of a secure community.

3.2.9.4   The minority-group learner should obtain the ability to contribute to a positive economic and financial environment.

3.2.9.5   The minority-learner must understand the natural scientific basis of technology, know how to apply technology in the relevant areas and be able to contribute to the establishment and development of technological applications.

3.2.9.6   The minority learner must develop healthy physical and psychological abilities.

3.2.9.7   The minority-learner must acquire the ability of positive usage of leisure-time.

3.2.9.8   The minority learner must obtain the ability with regard to the positive use and conservation of the natural environment.

3.2.9.9   The minority-learner should be able to live his particular philosophy of life positively, particularly in a multicultural society.

3.3   THE SCHOOL AND THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF MINORITY GROUPS

3.3.1   Introduction

Access to education, once a privilege, is now a right. Children in most countries must attend school between determined age limits. The school must therefore cater for large numbers of children that do not always come from similar backgrounds. This fact alone means that pressures of many kinds are endemic within the educational process. For many children the school is a natural continuation and extension of home life. Children of minority groups, however, often experience a sharp discontinuity between home and school. The discontinuity will remain as long as there exists a difference between home and school life; between the playground and the classroom. For minority-group children the discontinuity may constitute a cultural shock - the phenomenon one experiences on finding oneself in a foreign and unfamiliar context (Edwards, 1981:46). Such children may very well be the recipients of prejudice, especially if they were in some way physically distinguishable from others.

3.3.2   The educational institution as an organisation

An organisation can be defined as the framework in which human actions are directed and coordinated. A formal authority structure is established by grouping and ordering the activities in sections and subsections (Theron, 1992:4). Basson, Van der Westhuizen and Niemann

(1991:597) argue that an educational institution can be accepted as an organisation because of the following features:

- An organisation is characterised by a certain composition and structure.
- An organisation is oriented towards aims and objectives.
- An organisation makes use of certain methods to realise its objectives, such as differentiated tasks and management.
- An organisation is characterised by the continuity of events in an organisation.

Theron (1992:2) refers to an organisation as a formal structure with two clearly identifiable dimensions. These are a people-dimension that relates to the different interpersonal relations within an organisation and a task-dimension that points to the task-oriented actions of a group of people and that must always focus on an accepted common goal. When these structural elements of an organisation are applied to the school as an entity, it becomes clear that the school does in fact comply with the definition of an organisation. The school is an orderly, organised structure that functions according to a hierarchical authority structure, and is one in which people with a common goal are grouped together. The school has a unique task, namely effective teaching and learning, as well as formative education. In this respect the school must never be dictated to and manipulated by external forces. The reason for this is that the school has a unique task and character and therefore maintains its sovereignty (the principle of sovereignty in its own sphere). This explains the closed character of a school, a characteristic of this type of organisation that is equally important for effective community service (Theron, 1992:5).

3.3.3 Characteristics of an educational institution

Every school is a small organisation within the larger education system. Its primary goal is formative education. Educational institutions are the main agents of socialisation and for that reason it is in schools where in a sense culture is "manufactured". There are certain characteristics or structural elements that give a school its unique nature and character. The following structural elements of the educational institution increase the potential of providing effective learning situations with regard to minority groups:

❑ **The educational institution is a convergence of educators and learners**

To identify with and relate to a particular educational institution, the minority group should be able to identify with and relate to the learners and educators of that educational institution.

79

The learners should be able to relate to the educators, because acceptance of the educator by the learner increases the effectiveness of education and because educators are often regarded as role models for learners. It must be noted that professional educators that are equipped with subject-related and professional knowledge run the school. Therefore, there is requisite preparation that all educators should have. However, for those educators entering schools comprised heavily of minority-learners, more than minimal preparation is necessary; they need essential preparation. According to Hill (1989:2) this includes to:

- be prepared to teach educationally under-prepared learners;
- develop a second-language skill;
- develop street language;
- be aware of cultural and ethnic history;
- use ethnic literature in teaching whenever possible;
- examine and understand intercultural differences or idiosyncrasies;
- find a mentor.

These are some of the requisite skills, attitudes, and behaviours that educators need to exercise prior to and during their interaction with minority-learners. According to Maree (1998:85) research throughout the world has shown that a competent, caring educator in each class is a much more important success factor than a low learner-educator ratio. Excellent educators can implement teaching methods that cater for diversity, supporting academically "weak" children while extending and challenging the academically strong. A focus on excellent educators and better teaching methods could actually lead to an improvement of quality in the classroom as learner-educator ratios rise.

Learners should also be able to relate to each other, because the educational institution is an interpersonal, social institution. The higher the number of learners from a minority group in a particular educational institution, the higher the possibility that learners from the minority group, and the minority groups themselves, will identify with that educational institution. This is the result of the coherence, intimacy and security learners experience and the fact that fewer learners are marginalised (Klausky, in Steyn, 1997b:28).Furthermore, the justification of the school's existence depends on the interest of the learners. The nature, abilities and characteristics of the learners as well as the demands that life make on them determine the boundaries and possibilities of the school.

❑ Effective education is dependent on relevant curricula and syllabi

Curricula and syllabi refer to the learning content through which the learners should be prepared for their roles in life. The minority group will expect the learning content to effectively prepare their learners for their roles as members of a minority group. The relevance of the curricula and syllabi to the needs of the minority group will therefore increase the level to which the minority group can identify with and take ownership of a particular educational institution. The primary aim of the school is to satisfy the teaching and learning needs of a specific group of young people.

The curriculum should address individual differences and similarities. It should include contradictions of the groups to which the learners belong and should provide accurate information about various ethnic, handicap, gender or social-class groups about whom the learners hold stereotypes. Teaching the exceptional and culturally different should emphasise helping learners to acquire cognitive skills and knowledge. A school's curriculum should have units or courses about the history and culture of a minority group. It should also teach how the group have been victimised and has struggled to gain respect, as well as about current social issues facing the minority group (Grant & Sleeker, 1989:51).

Lynch (1986: 85) identifies five criteria for the selection of learning experiences, including the fact that the curriculum should:

- be international in its choice of content and global in its perspective;
- reflect the variety of social and ethnic groups in contemporary history in the visuals and information conveyed by children;
- convey accurate information about racial and cultural differences and similarities;
- present individuals from different minority groups as individuals with every variety of human quality and attribute; and
- allow other cultures and nations to have their own validity and be described in their own terms rather than in the majority terms.

❑ Effective education is dependent on language

If there is harmony between on the one hand the medium of instruction, languages used and taught and the symbols used in the particular educational institution and on the other hand the mother tongue of the minority group, its language and symbols, the level of identification

with a particular educational institution will be increased. The home language is regarded as best for educating a child.

Language is an important part of culture. As with culture, language is learned, it is shared, and it evolves and changes over time. It is a forceful instrument for giving individuals, groups, institutions, and culture their identity. Through language people share and exchange values, attitudes, skills and aspirations as learners of culture and as makers of future culture. If a given community of speakers finds it necessary to maintain a language because it satisfies spiritual, social, intellectual, technical, scientific, economic or political needs, the chances of the particular linguistic community surviving are greatly enhanced (Baptiste, 1990:23).

The deliberate use of language policies for purposes of creating a national identity and fostering sentimental attachment is usually not desirable. Rather, language policies ought to be designed to meet the needs and interests of all segments of the population effectively and equitably, thus fostering instrumental attachment from which sentimental ones could emerge. A sense of national identity is more likely to develop from a functional relationship within a society than from of deliberate attempts to promote it (Lynch **et al.,**1994:224). Linguistic borders result when communication between the learners' world (home and school, peer group and home) is obstructed, not because of language differences *per se*, but because one group regards another group's language as unacceptable and inferior. The very act of learning English as a second language is a cultural variation, but it does not necessarily create distress for children. A conflict ensues when children, limited in English proficiency, are taught all of their academic curriculum in English in such a way that their native language and culture are invalidated (Phelan & Davidson, 1993:58).

❑   **Effective education occurs in suitable facilities**

The type of education facilities at a particular educational institution and especially the aesthetic appearance of the facilities will increase the level of identification if it is in harmony with the culture of the minority group. Specific identifiers will for example be the type and level of artfulness and neatness of the facilities (De Witt, 1998:16).

In all developing countries there is a significant shortage of physical facilities and particularly of classroom space that meets universal standards. Buildings that are well cared for, with an attractive garden, and neat sporting facilities, make learners proud of their school. It is pleasant for them to spend a large part of their waking hours in such an aesthetically pleasing environment. One could therefore safely say that, even if the appearance and attractive-

ness of the school building and all other facilities for which a schools must make provision are "external", they have a positive and a direct effect on the work of educators and the attitudes and performance of learners. It must also be noted that aesthetics should also relate to what is valued by the particular minority group. On the negative side, however, uncared-for, substandard buildings, litter-strewn premises, toilets that are not in good working condition, and dirty classrooms in need of painting, have a negative effect on both educators and learners. This type of environment does not create a sense of pride among those who work or are taught there. It also leads to an educationally unacceptable, negative, counterproductive vicious cycle (De Witt, 1998:19).

Effective educational management also implies effective building management. It must be ensured that the entire building, both inside and outside is kept in a good, aesthetically pleasing condition. Aspects such as heating, ventilation, proper lighting, cleaning services and security arrangements should also receive attention. This also applies to all sporting facilities, stadiums and storerooms on the school premises (De Witt, 1998:20).

❑ **Effective education is dependent on effective management of the educational institution**

The management of the educational institution refers to the activities characterised by authority, relationships and different individuals. The following are necessary for the minority group to identify with the specific educational institution. The way in which authority is realised in the actions and relationships typical to the management should relate to the culture of the minority group, while those persons responsible for the management should also be acceptable within the culture of the minority group. This correlates with the modern tendency to provide parents and local communities with more responsibilities regarding the control and management of schools. This includes finances, the appointment of educators, admission of learners, the compilation of the school curriculum as well as the choice about which school the children should attend (Pretorius, in Steyn, 1997a:29).

A productive partnership in schools between educators, parents, learners and the education authorities is difficult to achieve if parents or educators are apathetic, or if they are hostile and suspicious of each other. There are cases at some educational institutions, for example, where educators refuse to meet governing bodies, because they believe parents want to interfere in the running of the school. In other schools it is difficult to convene a quorum at a parents' meeting to take crucial policy decisions. Schools that cannot overcome apathy and past antagonism will continue to flounder (Maree, 1998:84).

To be able to manage the school effectively as an organisation, the school management must perform certain management tasks such as planning, organising, policy-making, control, leading, decision-making, motivation, communication and other daily actions within certain management areas. Effective school management can therefore be regarded as all the management tasks performed by the school manager in co-operation with his or her managers. The school manager, the top management team and the school's educators function in certain management areas that are aimed at allowing productive and effective teaching and learning to take place so that the school can realise true formative education in every respect (De Witt, 1998:22).

Van der Linde (1994:359) says since the school is society's major socialisation agency, although not a primary responsibility of the school, education should help depolarise a hostile society. In their task as educators, the principal and especially the educators, should be able to minimise miscommunications. Educators in their leadership task should censor offensive language and insensitive racial remarks. The rights and responsibilities of every learner should be recognised. Learners should have their say in classroom policy. A sound policy for the school and classroom is of the utmost importance. The school climate is especially significant. Learners should be able to talk about and be proud of their school, their books, their playing fields and their educators. The school manager should also use group dynamics and role playing to eliminate social inequality, prejudice and discrimination. According to Van Schalkwyk (1991:205) it is just as important to train school managers as it is to train educators. School managers should also be able to recognise and understand conflict in order to handle it. Therefore school managers must be trained in conflict management.

Maree (1998:84) argues that management is about making things happen, in the way they are meant to, in order to achieve clear objectives. Good management in education is more important than more money. She says international experience has shown that countries spending proportionately less on education produce better results through management.

❑ **Effective education is dependent on effective administration of the educational institution**

The key concepts with regard to identification of the minority group with the administration are the organisational structure and liaison arrangements. If the organisational structure relates to that of typical organisations and institutions of minority groups, the latter would identify more with the educational institution. Furthermore, it is important that the correct type of liaison arrangements between the educational institution and the minority group are

provided in order to ensure a high level of identification and ownership by the minority group (Steyn, 1997a:18).

The effective functioning of formal organisation such as a school has certain requirements. It implies that activities within the organisation should be run in the most effective way possible. Efficacy requires that the various tasks to be carried out should be identified and executed. Suitable and adequate action by the school principal must create the necessary structures and determine the essential procedures and means for efficient functioning (De Witt, 1998:25).

Administrative activities should be recognised as one of the key dimensions of a formal organisation such as a school. To make a meaningful contribution to achieving the set objectives, administrative affairs should be purposefully organised. In view of the overall purpose and its attendant objectives, it should be carefully determined what the administrative activities are that have to be completed. Such activities and their attendant procedures should be directly linked to the most effective way of achieving this purpose. They should be efficacious with regard to time, cost and manpower (Van der Westhuizen, 1991:456).

From the foregoing discussion, the following indicators can be deduced.

3.3.3.1   To identify with and relate to a particular educational institution, the minority group should be able to identify with and relate to the learners and educators of that educational institution.

3.3.3.2   In an educational institution the learners should be able to relate to the educators, because acceptance of the educator by the learner increases the effectiveness of education and because educators are often regarded as role models for the learners.

3.3.3.3   The relevance of the curricula and syllabi to the needs of the minority group will increase the level to which the minority group can identify with and take ownership of a particular institution.

3.3.3.4   Language policies should be designed to meet the needs and interests of all segments of the population effectively and equitably.

3.3.3.5   The type of education facilities at a particular educational institution will increase the level of identification if it is in harmony with the culture of the minority group.

3.3.3.6   Parents and local communities must be provided with responsibilities regarding control and management of schools, also regarding finances, appointment of educators, admission of learners and compilation of the school curriculum as well as the choice about which school children must attend.

3.3.3.7   It is important that the correct types of liaison arrangements between the educational institution and the minority group are provided in order to ensure a high level of identification and ownership of the institution by minority groups.

3.4   SUMMARY

This chapter dealt mainly with two aspects of the process of education, namely the focus of education as being to provide the learner with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to prepare them for different life-roles in society and the nature of education as the core activity of the educational institution. In the next chapter an analysis of the educational needs and the relevant determinants in the education provision of the Griquas will be discussed.