

**SCHOOL READINESS : A PSYCHOPEDAGOGIC
STUDY OF CHILDREN FROM A
DEPRIVED COMMUNITY**

By

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DURBAN

DECLARATION

I declare that:

**"School readiness : a psychopedagogic study of
children from a deprived community"**

has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or at another university, and that it is my work and that all sources and material used or quoted have been indicated, recognised and acknowledged.

S. R. Naidoo

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January 1994

DURBAN

DEDICATION

This dissertation

is dedicated to

Mr. V.A. Rama, my maternal uncle

and

Jay, my wife and daughters Tharasham and Manisha

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SUMMARY

The aim of this study was:

- * to describe the life-world of pre-school children from a deprived community from a psychopedagogical perspective; and
- * to determine in the light of findings obtained certain guidelines according to which accountable support could be instituted in order to meet the needs of pre-school children from a deprived community.

As introduction a psychopedagogical perspective on pre-school children is given. Education as a true human activity which finds its expression in the relationship between adult and child is examined more closely. From a psychopedagogical perspective the deprived child finds himself in a situation of dysfunctional education mainly because he goes through life with inadequate assistance and guidance of a responsible parent or adult. This results in the psychic life of the pre-school child being under-actualized. The lack of responsible adult intervention and accompaniment, which is based on the pedagogical principles of love, trust and authority, results in the deprived child forming relationships within his life-world which are inadequate for his emancipation. The child from a deprived community fails to constitute a meaningful life-world.

It would appear that poverty together with environmentally disadvantaged conditions such as overcrowding, insufficient personal, financial and social resources, discrimination and deprivation, all interact with each other, resulting in under-actualization of the psychic life of the pre-school child.

Research literature has shown that parents of children from deprived communities were in no position to provide their children with any assistance, guidance or support. In most instances parents themselves have had little or no formal education. Families live in overcrowded homes with no electricity and proper sanitation. In most cases both parents work, leaving very early in the morning and returning late in the afternoon. The children are left on their own with hardly any control over them.

In the light of the findings of this research, the following was recommended:

- * That bridging module readiness classes should be established for children turning five years of age and that professionally qualified educators should be placed in charge of these children;
- * that educational programmes for parents, teachers, school management staff, pupils and social workers should be organised to meet the varied needs of both parents and children especially from deprived communities; and
- * that pre-schools should be established, registered, fully financed and controlled by the State with clearly formulated aims which are not only achievable, but are also in accordance with the realisation of the ultimate aim of education, namely, adulthood.

OPSOMMING

Die doel met hierdie studie was:

- * om die leefwêreld van preprimêre kinders uit 'n minderbevoorregte gemeenskap vanuit 'n psigopedagogiese perspektief te beskryf; en
- * om in die lig van bevindinge, sekere riglyne te bepaal waarvolgens verantwoordbare steun daargestel kan word om aan die behoeftes van pre-primêre kinders uit 'n minderbevoorregte gemeenskap te voldoen.

Ter inleiding word 'n psigopedagogiese perspektief oor preprimêre kinders gegee. Opvoeding, as 'n egte menslike aktiwiteit wat gerealiseer word in die verhouding tussen volwassene en kind, word meer noukeurig ondersoek. Vanuit 'n psigopedagogiese perspektief bevind die minderbevoorregte kind hom in 'n situasie van disfunksionele opvoeding hoofsaaklik omdat hy sonder voldoende hulp en die leiding van 'n ouer of volwassene moet klaarkom. Dit lei daartoe dat die psigiese lewe van die preprimêre skoolkind ontoereikend geaktualiseer word. Die gebrek aan die betrokkenheid en begeleiding van 'n verantwoordelike volwassene wat gebaseer is op die pedagogiese beginsels van liefde, vertroue en gesag, lei daartoe dat die minderbevoorregte kind verhoudinge binne sy leefwêreld ontwikkel wat vir sy selfstandigwording onvoldoende is. Die kind vanuit 'n minderbevoorregte gemeenskap slaag nie daarin om 'n betekenisvolle leefwêreld te skep nie.

Dit wil voorkom asof armoede met gepaardgaande nadelige omgewingstoestande soos oorbevolking, onvoldoende persoonlike, finansiële en sosiale bronne, diskriminasie

en minderbevoorregting almal op mekaar inwerk sodat dit lei tot die ontoereikende aktualisasie van die preprimêre kind.

Navorsings-literatuur wys daarop dat ouers van kinders vanuit minderbevoorregte gemeenskappe nie in staat is om aan hulle kinders hulp, leiding of ondersteuning te verleen nie. In die meeste gevalle het ouers self min of geen formele onderrig gehad nie. Gesinne woon in oorvol huise sonder elektrisiteit en behoorlike sanitasie. In die meeste gevalle werk albei ouers. Hulle verlaat die huis baie vroeg soggens en keer laat die middag terug. Die kinders word sonder toesig gelaat en feitlik geen beheer word oor hulle uitgeoefen nie.

In die lig van die bevindinge van hierdie ondersoek, word die volgende aanbeveel:

- * dat oorgangsmodule gereedheidsklasse gestig word vir kinders wat die ouderdom van vyf jaar bereik en dat professioneel-gekwalfiseerde opvoedkundiges in beheer van hierdie kinders geplaas moet word.
- * dat opvoedkundige programme vir ouers, onderwysers, die skoolbestuur, leerlinge en maatskaplike werkers georganiseer word om aan die behoeftes van beide ouers en kinders vanuit veral minderbevoorregte gemeenskappe te voldoen; en
- * dat preprimêre skole deur die Staat daargestel, geregistreer, gefinansier en beheer word, met duidelike geformuleerde doelwitte wat nie net bereikbaar is nie, maar ook in ooreenstemming is met die verwesenliking van die uiteindelijke doelstelling van opvoeding, naamlik volwassewording.

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

From the moment of birth the child finds himself in a complex world. He needs to orientate himself towards physical objects, people and concepts. For a meaningful and effective orientation the child requires educational support and explanatory teaching (Vrey, 1984:10; Van Niekerk, 1990: 4-8).

As the child's primary educators, parents must teach their children thinking skills before they go to school. According to Barge and Adler (Burger, 1993: 51) many parents do not pay much attention to the development of their children's thinking and allow them to fritter away their energies, to acquire habits of loose and incorrect thinking, at the very time when they stand most in need of careful education. It is the first years that count most. It is during these years that the child should be taught to observe accurately to think correctly.

According to Burger (1993: 51) the three ways in which the thinking of pre-school children and their total cognitive development can be stimulated are:

- * mediated learning;
- * bridging (transfer); and
- * developing metacognitive skills.

According to Engelbrecht and Lubbe (1981: 3) every person is a product of interaction between hereditary and environment. Enroute to adulthood the child's becoming, maturation and learning commence soon after birth and are influenced by environment and their interaction. As a result of the interaction, particularly with his parents, the child acquires habits, language, customs, traditions, ideas and attitudes. The child's first and foremost educators are the parents and it is with the family that the child receives his first language experience. The foundation for his development, maturation and learning is laid at home (Behr, 1989: 1; Van Niekerk, 1990: 6; Berger, 1981: 15).

Derbyshire (1991: 11) points out that entering school for the first time is one of the greatest and happiest events in the life of the child. Learning problems can stem from the child being not school ready at the time of school entrance. A child with learning problems starts his schooling career with a deficiency.

According to Pretorius (1988: 40) a deprived child or one with less opportunities means that there is some deficiency in his educational environment which restrains him in his adequate becoming. Environmental deprivation is not a phenomenon peculiar to South Africa alone. In the fifties United States of America developed teaching programmes to raise the environmentally deprived child's aspirations and improve his performance. In 1962 the Education Policies Commission of the National Education Association proposed that the federal government should make a greater financial contribution so that the various states could ensure adequate education for all Americans (Plunkett, 1985: 534).

In pursuance of the request by the South African Cabinet in 1980, the Human Sciences Research Council recommended a new policy whereby:

- * the potential of all inhabitants of South Africa can be actualised;
- * the economic growth of South Africa can be promoted; and
- * the quality of life of all South Africans can be improved.

1.2 ANALYSIS OF THE PROBLEM

According to Nel and Urbani (1990: 4) the educator must have faith that the child is educable within the society which the school serves. Of equal importance is his trust in the social order within which he educates.

School readiness presupposes a certain degree of development and maturity. The requirements of the school for the beginner are compared with the child's personal image to ascertain whether the child is ready for school (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988: 202). Poverty is the basic contributory factor of a deprived community. Many of the lower income families live in crowded, run down dwellings with little or no furniture and inadequate heat or plumbing. The jobs most readily available to the poor provide low income and little or no opportunity for advancement. Poverty often causes despair, frustration and lack of interest. Many of the children acquire the same feelings of helplessness that their parents have developed (Kapp, 1991: 186).

If the adult who is regarded as the more responsible person, does not ensure that the conditions for adequate education are satisfied, the child is affectively, cognitively and normatively neglected. "Neglect of duty" by the adult due to his

failure in implementing the educative task results in the fundamental pedagogical structures being inadequately realised (Van Niekerk, 1990: 11).

According to Vrey (1984: 20-25) successful experiences in the home lead towards the development of a good self-concept as an attitude of confidence in preparation for school. School readiness starts at birth. Although there is a difference in meaning, school readiness and school maturity are often used interchangeably. The quality of the home environment and parental involvement have an influence on the child's readiness for formal schooling. Before the child enters the school, parents as primary educators ought to have been actively engaged in preparing him for school. Child psychologists like Gesell (1978) and Vygotsky (1987) are of the opinion that a five year old child is in a stage of relative tranquillity and uniform growth and development. But at the age of six years the child becomes restless and eager to learn. In order to cope physically with the challenges of formal schooling the child needs to have (Derbyshire, 1991: 400-410):

- * muscular co-ordination as in the use of a pencil;
- * the necessary manual skills as in the handling of a pair of scissors;
- * the necessary stamina to perform certain physical tasks;
- * a healthy constitution; and
- * normal sensory functioning.

As soon as the child is school ready a completely new outlook to the world manifests itself. The child is keen to know about things and to explore and

discover. His attitude to the world changes from a psycho-affective to a gnostic one. The child wants to explore, orientate and choose his place in his life-world. The child's readiness for school is seen in the cognitive and affective aspects like his attitude to things around him, his desire to learn, his ability to attend to tasks without excessive fluctuation and his participation in formal learning. If the educator and the child do not communicate adequately, his upbringing is inadequate and this results in an inadequate actualization of the psychic life of the child (Van Niekerk, 1990: 9; Griesel, Louw & Swart, 1986: 79).

The distressful educational situation results in experiences filled with unfavourable meanings for the child such as feelings of stress, tension, anxiety, insecurity, helplessness, uncertainty and loneliness. The child's level of becoming is not the same as his attainable level. Van Niekerk (1990: 9) states that guidance towards the actualization of the child's psychic life is inadequate. The dysfunctional upbringing is the result of the inadequate actualization of the child's psychic life and the educator's inadequate support. The child is thus impeded in his development towards adulthood (Van Niekerk, 1990: 109; Pilling & Pringle, 1978: 38).

Ter Horst (1980: 26) has identified several factors responsible for the anxiety and the confusion in the child regarding his educational situatedness. He lists deprivation, anti-authoritative education, lack of love, underestimation, permissiveness, poverty, authoritarian education, hunger, inconsistency, disorderliness, indoctrination, poor housing, illness, exaggerated ambition, setting very high or very low standards and lack of motivation as factors that contribute to the perplexity in the child.

The neglect of the physical, social and affective aspects of children from a deprived community contribute to their negative educational situatedness (Sonnekus, 1985: 129). This dysfunctional education results in social decline, juvenile delinquency and a high rate of drop-outs in society (Engelbrecht & Lubbe, 1981: 24).

1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem that will be investigated in this study concerns school readiness relating to children from a deprived community. This would be viewed from a psychopedagogic perspective. In essence this study will investigate the following:

- * the inadequate self-actualization of the psychic life of pre-school children from a deprived community; and
- * the life-world of pre-school children from a deprived community as it reveals itself in their relations with themselves, parents, peers, things and ideas and God.

1.4 ELUCIDATION OF CONCEPTS

Certain basic and relevant concepts will be defined for the purpose of clarity:

1.4.1 School readiness

According to Vrey (1984: 80) school readiness refers to the total readiness of the

child to benefit by formal education. It is the stage when the child is cognitively, socially, physically and emotionally ready for formal schooling. Readiness refers to the child in his totality who has achieved a level of independence in his relationship that enables him to meet the requirements of school with the least amount of stress, anxiety and insecurity.

1.4.2 Deprivation

According to Terminology Committee (1984: 8) a deprived person is a person whose psychic, physical, emotional or social needs are unsatisfied for reasons beyond his control. It also refers to a child who has been prevented from leading a normal home life.

1.4.3 Dysfunctional education

If any of the pedagogic relationships of trust, understanding and authority is absent, it will result in a dysfunction in the dynamics of the education situation (Van Niekerk, 1990: 9). Dysfunctional education is characterised by a distorted appearance of the essences of education. Dysfunctional education refers to the child who under-actualises his psychic life and an adult who provides inadequate guidance and an environment which impedes authentic education.

1.4.4 Child neglect

According to Terminology Committee (1984: 57) child neglect refers to the inadequate care of the child which may retard or adversely affect his growth or development.

1.4.5 Family

A family is a primary social group consisting of parents and their offspring. According to Fullard (1981: 92-93) the following characteristics are applicable to a family in most societies:

- * a family consists of persons connected by blood, marriage or adoption;
- * the members of the family live together in one household;
- * the members of a family interact and communicate in their social roles in accordance with the norms and values of their society; and
- * the family forms and maintains a subculture derived from general culture around it.

1.4.6 Life-world

According to Vrey (1984: 15) life-world is the Gestalt of the individual person's meaningful relationships. The life-world of the child includes all the people, objects, ideas, systems, forces, attitudes, norms, self and everything to which he attributes meaning and which he therefore understands.

1.4.7 Pedagogic neglect

Pedagogic neglect is encountered if the participation of an adult in the dynamics

of education is insufficient or inadequate and consequently the essential meaning of education is not fulfilled. This is so because the child is not involved in an intimate relationship with the educator in his becoming towards adulthood. When an educator and a child do not communicate adequately, then all the acts of upbringing are performed inadequately. The pedagogic actualization of the psychic life of the child is inevitably inadequate (Van Niekerk, 1990: 9-11).

1.4.8 Actualization

According to Van den Aardweg and Van den Aardweg (1988: 9) actualization is the state when an individual has attained the goal he has set. Actualization is achieved when certain learning material has been consolidated in the cognitive structure and is realistically represented. It describes the fulfilment of goals.

1.4.9 Culturally disadvantaged

Individuals having their own culture and functioning adequately within such a culture are disadvantaged if obliged to function within another culture setting. Such persons are termed as "culturally deprived", "culturally disadvantaged", "culturally deviant", "culturally different" or "bi-cultural". Children whose cultural background is different from that of the dominant society in which they are forced to live are culturally disadvantaged. This results in a negative impact on the motivation and attitude on children to learn (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg, 1988: 55).

1.5 AIMS AND VALUE OF THIS STUDY

The aims and value of this study are as follows:

- * to describe the life-world of pre-school children from a deprived community from a psychopedagogical perspective; and
- * to determine in the light of the findings obtained, certain guidelines according to which accountable support could be instituted in order to meet the needs of pre-school children from a deprived community.

1.6 METHOD OF RESEARCH

Research in respect of this study will be conducted by means of a literature study of relevant literature.

In addition to the research literature, informal interviews will be conducted with authoritative persons such as psychologists, pre-school teachers and principals, social workers, junior primary school teachers and principals regarding this phenomenon.

1.7 FURTHER COURSE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 2 discusses psychopedagogics, the psychic life of the pre-school child and school readiness of children from a deprived community.

Chapter 3 investigates the life-world of the pre-school child from a deprived community.

Chapter 4 focuses on accountable support for the children from a deprived community.

Chapter 5 presents a summary and recommendations.

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CHAPTER 2

PSYCHOPEDAGOGICS AND THE PSYCHIC LIFE OF THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter one the problem concerning school readiness relating to children from a deprived community was clearly stated, key concepts were clarified and the research methodology was presented.

In this chapter, on the basis of available literature, psychopedagogics and the actualization of the psychic life of the pre-school child through experiencing which comprises feelings (pre-cognitive) and thinking (cognitive) will be discussed.

In order to study the life-world of the pre-school child from a psychopedagogic perspective it is important to give an exposition of the term "psychopedagogic perspective". Education is essentially the accompaniment or leading of a child by adults to adulthood, as the formal and ultimate or total aim of education (Du Plooy, Griessel & Oberholzer, 1982: 22-23; Van Rensburg, Landman & Kilian, 1981: 34).

Two individuals, namely the adult who knows the way the child has to go and the child as an adult-to-be who does not know, are involved in the latter's education

situation. The adult as an educator wants to transfer responsible adulthood to the child as beneficiary. He communicates with the child sacrificing his time and energy because he understands the child's situation in life, as one in which he still wants to find his way with the adult's help. The educator is attached to the adult-to-be as they are related to each other pathetically, intellectually and volitionally (Du Plooy & Kilian, 1984: 7).

Sonnekus (1985) and Oberholzer (1986 b) have shown how the categories and essences of Psychopedagogics, Fundamental Pedagogics and Didactical Pedagogics are interrelated and how they are concurrently actualised in the classroom situation. What then constitutes the unity of pedagogics as a science? The point of departure of all pedagogic part disciplines is the pedagogic situation. This means that the pedagogic situation and only the pedagogic situation is the aspect which unifies the part disciplines and perspectives into pedagogics and a science (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 2).

2.2 PEDAGOGICS AND PSYCHOPEDAGOGICS

The child makes known his intention to take part in his life-world from the very beginning of his existence. His participation continues until the end of his life. Because of the child's openness and directedness to the world from the beginning he is actively actualizing his given possibilities and this implies that he is busy changing. This becoming involves a progressive and continuous movement in the direction of the life-world of the adult. Becoming, as the necessary change which is taking place in the child's life-world, is directed to becoming a proper adult.

Consequently the child must and should become different. Since the child is a human being he is someone who himself will become (change). As given possibilities, the structure of his psychic life disposes the child to become grown up. Therefore, the child is able to take an active part in his becoming. A child, because of his essential nature, needs the help and support of the adult. Without correct and adequate upbringing the child cannot become a proper adult. The child's becoming an adult implies the necessity for education (Sonnekus, 1985: 47-48).

It is through learning that a human being finds himself in the world. The child learns because he wants to become. In becoming, the child reveals that as an individual he will learn. Learning by the child forms the basis for his becoming and changing because becoming cannot be actualised without learning. The child does not learn because he is being brought up, but rather, the child is brought up because he is able to learn. The relationship of upbringing between adult and child is evident by the adult's educative instruction and by the child's readiness to learn. Thus education, becoming and learning are meaningfully interwoven in so far as the child's becoming an adult is concerned (Du Plooy & Kilian, 1984: 7).

The child as an individual wishes to become an adult in accordance with his given psychic potential. However, he does not become an adult automatically. Integrally involved in this event are the purposeful involvement by the adult and the self-actualising initiatives by the child within the constraints of an environmental reality (Griessel, 1987: 10; Oberholzer, 1986 a: 77).

By his participation in the educational activity, the child indicates his willingness or his intention to become an adult. This demonstration manifests as a self-

actualization of psychic life in terms of the theoretical constructs of becoming and learning, as observed in "ways of becoming" and "ways of learning" (Sonnekus, 1985: 51).

Vrey (1984: 79) explains the act of becoming as meaning to "become someone".

Sonnekus (1985: 51) identifies the following interrelated modes of becoming:

- * exploration;
- * emancipation;
- * differentiation;
- * distantiation; and
- * objectification.

However, becoming is not to be separated from learning. Change will take place in the child's becoming only if he learns or has learned. The child becomes as he learns, and learns as he becomes.

Sonnekus (1985: 57) lists three important assumptions:

- * the child's psychic life is a totality, and it is actualised as a totality by the child in his relation to reality;
- * becoming and learning are modes of manifestation of the psychic life of the child-in-education; and

- * the actualization of the child's becoming and learning takes place within the framework of the situation of upbringing.

Langeveld (1974: 24) maintains that the child's ways of becoming through exploration, emancipation, differentiation, distantiation and objectivation can be used as psychopedagogic criteria to evaluate the child's success in actualising his psychic life. The modes can be used to evaluate not only the level of becoming on which the child finds himself, but also the effect or outcome of the child's educative instruction. In the child's becoming, his change becomes evident. The change comes about when the child relates to his world physically, socially, spiritually, emotionally and intellectually. Change can only come about when learning takes place. In order to learn and discover new ideas, the child must explore. Exploration takes place only when the child takes the initiative to do so (Sonnekus, 1985; Steyn, 1985).

The child expresses his desire to discover new ideas, unless there are inhibiting factors which prevent the child from learning. During early childhood the child explores through his senses of sight, touch, smell, taste and hearing. As he grows older he is able to think, attend, compare, analyze, perceive and interpret his surrounding (modes of learning). Thus the child becomes more and more independent, emancipating himself from the accompanying adult. This results in the child gradually becoming detached from the adult, thereby distantiating himself from him. Distantiation can only take place when the child feels confident about himself. Confidence in the child only prevails when he feels safe and secure (Van Niekerk, 1990: 23).

Unless safety and security are provided in the child's upbringing, he can never really distantiate himself from the adult. He then develops a complex of inferiority, feels insecure and never really actualises his psychic life. The confidence found with distantiation allows for objective thinking whereby the child refrains from viewing things from a subjective point of view. Objective thinking allows for differentiation whereby the child can distinguish between wrong and right, proper and improper. As a result of this manner of thinking or reasoning his becoming then becomes real and actual (Van Niekerk, 1990: 24). Sonnekus (1985: 57) describes the following essences of the child's psychic life:

- * experiencing or feeling;
- * willing or volition;
- * lived-experiencing; and
- * knowing and behaving.

The child's psychic life, therefore, manifests itself as a totality-in-function. This is evident in the child's becoming and learning (Van Niekerk, 1990; Sonnekus, 1985; Langeveld, 1974).

2.2.1 The pedagogic situation

The point of departure of psychopedagogics is the pedagogic situation. A psychopedagogic perspective must, therefore, develop from the pedagogic situation. This implies that categories such as experiencing, cognition, feeling,

perceiving, thinking etc. only acquire psychopedagogic status within the pedagogic situation. Outside the pedagogic situation they remain anthropological categories. Within the pedagogic situation they become psychopedagogic categories (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 10).

The matrix within which the pedagogic situation develops is the pedagogic relationship. The pedagogic relationship can be defined as a relationship between an educator and one or more educands formed with the specific aim of educating the child or children. The pedagogic situation develops within the relationship. The quality of the relationship has a direct influence on the success or otherwise of the education act. Conversely, the quality of the relationship is also influenced by the success or failure of the education act (Van Niekerk, 1990: 9; Nel & Urbani, 1990: 11).

2.2.2 Pedagogic relationship

(1) Pedagogic understanding

To understand pre-supposes that one must have knowledge of that which one wants to understand (Van Niekerk, 1990: 11). Understanding implies thinking, in other words, the solving of a problem. This implies a phenomenological approach to that which one endeavours to understand. One will have to differentiate between essential and non-essential knowledge, then proceed to a refined analysis of that which is essential before one can arrive at an understanding of the nature of the relationships between the different essential characteristics of the situation with which one is confronted. In everyday life we rely heavily on intuition to

understand situations. Intuition operates on the precognitive level; it is an essence of sensing (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 11). Sensing is described by Straus (1978) as the grasping of meanings on the pre-cognitive level. It supplies the stable supportive base for perceiving. Intuitive understanding means that as long as the senso-pathic moment of perceiving remains stable, we accept that we understand and will proceed to act according to our interpretation of the situation. When the senso-pathic gets disturbed, doubt will undermine our feeling that we understand and we will then seek for the reason for our doubt (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 44). Once we have identified it, the problem to be solved will be to fit the aspect about which we have doubted sensibly into its correct place within the network of relations which form the structure of the situation which we face.

The foregoing means that if the realisation that we do not understand does not affect one's feeling, one will not regard it as a problem and one will not even try to understand.

It is obvious that in the pedagogic situation we cannot rely wholly on intuitive certainty and intuitive doubt. On the other hand to always reject intuitive certainty will undermine the educand's trust in the educator. The educator will then have to be over inquisitive and the educand will feel that the educator does not trust him. What does the educator have to know to understand within the pedagogic situation? (Van Niekerk, 1990; Nel & Urbani, 1990; Straus, 1978).

(a) Essential nature of Man

The educator needs to understand the essential nature of Man. This does not mean

that he has to have a doctor's degree in philosophy or education or that his mental potential must be far above average. Knowledge and understanding of Man rests on common sense. This common sense is the outcome of a well-balanced education and usually operates on the intuitive level (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 12).

(b) Cultural society

The educator needs to have knowledge and understanding of the cultural society in which he lives and in which he educates his children. Education means, *inter alia*, to lead a child into a cultural society. You lead him to discover facts, principles, norms, values, customs, etc. which to some extent differ from culture to culture and even from different social groups within the same culture (Luthuli, 1982; Cemané, 1984). Once the essential characteristics of mankind have been actualised in the life of an educand, he will be able to orientate himself within any group where the characteristics are accepted as fundamental structures upon which the society rests (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 13).

According to Van Rensburg (1992: 34) modern technology has made possible a relatively easy movement of individuals between societies within cultures and between different cultures. It is problematic for anyone to ever understand the intricate, often very sensitive and sacred aspects of alien societies or cultures. Unsympathetic actions from outsiders can easily (and have in the past) result in violent reactions from individuals and often from nations as a whole. This is, however, not an insurmountable obstacle. We have numerous instances of blacks, born into very poor families, belonging to archaic culture areas who were nevertheless educated by their parents to become highly successful people within modern societies. What is the secret? The parents neither knew nor understood

the modern societies. The secret most probably lies in the fact that the parents had a common sense (intuitive) understanding of the essential characteristics of Man. They obviously did not try to force their children into a mould created by dogma. An adult emanating from such a mould would only be successful within a society which operates according to the rules of that specific dogma (Du Plooy, Griessel & Oberholzer, 1982: 156; Griessel, Louw & Swart, 1986: 173).

(c) Functioning of a school

It is of great value if parents have knowledge of and understand their children as school children. This is often very difficult especially in rural black societies where many parents have never been to school and may tend to base their interpretation of the function of the school on traditional life and world views (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 13; Luthuli, 1982).

This places additional responsibilities on teachers. School, also schools in the most remote rural areas, are centres representing the modern scientific-technological society within the special cultural society which it serves. It is the task of the school to lead their pupils into modern society without separating them from their families. Teachers must not only understand the families of their pupils but they must actively endeavour to bring the school to the families. They must help the parents to understand their children as school children (Cemane, 1984; Fullard, 1981).

(2) Pedagogic trust

The key to the understanding of trust is faith. One can only trust a person if one

has complete faith in him. Faith always appears within a relationship. Faith is lasting, firm and consistent. It embodies the sensible, the valuable and the truth for the one who has faith. It is dynamic and a fulfilment of the demands emanating from what the person who has faith sees as the "good order". Faith forms the foundation for trust. It ensures security, consistency and safety to the person who trusts (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 14).

Pedagogic trust shows numerous dimensions. The educator must have faith that the child is educable within the society which the school serves. Of equal importance is his trust in the social order within which he educates. If his faith in any of the two wavers the pedagogic situation will be weakened. More important, however, is the child's faith in the educator and this depends on the educator's trustworthiness. A child has expectations of "his world" which, although still very much founded in the present situation, are also to a large extent future directed. A well educated small child has a diffused, still naive but complete faith in his educator. His orientatedness is equally undifferentiated and unrefined. As a child grows older and his psychic life develops within the pedagogic situation, his orientatedness becomes more differentiated and refined (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 76). Enough evidence exists to prove that the psychic life of a pedagogically neglected and deprived child develops unsatisfactorily and that his orientatedness remains relatively undifferentiated and unrefined (Van Niekerk, 1990: 11). The crux of the problem seems to be the underdevelopment of the feelings which are not only attenuated but mainly directed at satisfaction on the sensory level.

The well educated secondary school child (adolescent) loves his parents unreservedly - the bond of love between them has grown through the years. He

is grateful for the security they have given him and for the assistance they have rendered in his explorations (Vrey, 1984: 23).

Because of his differentiated and refined orientation (including feelings and cognition) he is able to move to a vantage point outside the family from where he can observe and evaluate his family. His horizon has expanded in directions outside that of his parents and in some instances his horizon has expanded far beyond that of his parents. The parents are no longer in a position to assist the adolescent in all aspects regarding his orientation. The well educated adolescent has a good knowledge of the socio-cultural world in which he has to orientate himself. He has a good although largely intuitive understanding of his own potentialities and of that of his parents. Does this mean that the adolescent's trust becomes qualified and that he can only partially trust his parents as educators? No. His trust remains complete. His trust now rests on his faith that his parents will not venture into (for them) the unknown and try to force decisions on him which he refuses to accept. The pedagogically neglected and deprived child will neither love nor trust. It is even doubtful if he can hate. Behaviour which may seriously harm others may often emanate from lack of feelings of either love or hatred (Van Niekerk, 1990: 16).

In the school situation the phenomenon of "conditional trust" is a reality. Many teachers are not unconditionally trusted as educators by all pupils. If a teacher proves to be an expert in his subject pupils will respect him for that. If he also proves to be a dedicated educator they will also trust him with many existential problems which they know their parents cannot solve (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 14-15).

(3) Pedagogic authority

Pedagogic authority differs from all other forms of authority. It has its roots in love which in the case of teachers shows a triangular foundation.

(a) Love for children

First is the educator's love for the child. An educator who does not love children, or who stands neutral or feels animosity toward a specific child or children can never be entrusted with pedagogic authority (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 15).

(b) Love for the subject which he teaches

Second is love for the subject which the teacher teaches. This implies that he must have enough knowledge of his subject to teach children and not confuse them (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 16). It is further maintained that the parent, when intervening in the life of his child, basically teaches that child. It is of little value if a child's actions or attitudes are condemned without teaching him what is correct. It is imperative that the parent should have knowledge of those aspects in respect of which he intervenes in the life of his child. If he does not have knowledge he must either get knowledge or call in the help of a specialist in the relevant field. Without this knowledge he cannot accept pedagogic authority (Van Niekerk, 1990: 21).

(c) Love for his culture

The third is love for the culture in which he educates his child. In today's fast

changing modern societies this can pose a problem to the educator. Aspects of culture which may have been regarded as sacred twenty years ago, may today have disappeared (Rossouw, 1990: 61-64). More and more so-called fundamental aspects of life and world views upon which different cultures rest become purified and accepted over an ever widening spectrum of cultures. Differences in life styles disappear (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 16).

An educator (parent or teacher) is not vested with pedagogic authority merely on account of his status as parent or teacher. He is vested with pedagogic authority on account of the fact that he represents pedagogically acceptable principles, norms and values (Du Plooy & Kilian, 1984: 124-129).

2.3 THE PSYCHIC LIFE OF A PRE-SCHOOL CHILD IN EDUCATION

A pre-school child's psychic life shows a categorical structure. The categories of the psychic life of a child are anthropological categories. It is only when they are placed within the context of the pedagogic situation that they acquire status.

The psychic life of a child is composed of the following three clear but inseparable interrelated structures (Nel, 1988: 6-10):

- * feeling;

- * cognition; and
- * action.

2.3.1 Feeling

Heller (1979: 7) maintains that to feel means to be involved in something. Feeling is thus the intrinsic factor in acting, thinking, perceiving, etc., and may be regarded as a fundamental characteristic of the intentionality.

Feelings are characterised by (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 23-24):

- * active feelings which refer to being actively involved; and
- * reactive feelings which refer to being reactively involved on the secondary level.

Feelings is a mode of cognition. It tells us of the importance of object, event or person has for each of us individually. Cognition through feeling is thus subjective.

Feelings may be classified as follows (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 26-34):

(1) Drive feelings

Drive feelings in their pure form are sensations. They are not directed at objects, events or persons outside a person. Examples include hunger, thirst, feeling ill,

feeling fresh and the sex drive. Drive feelings seldom ever appear in their pure form, e.g. the sex drive becomes an affect when a desire develops for a specific person.

(2) Affects (Evaluating or accompanying feelings)

"Affect" refers both to a disposition and to a psychic-spiritual force to act. The disposition aims at affecting reality in the sense of making things happen, i.e. at changing situations. Affects form the basis of orientating (action). In order to understand the affect one must also understand both values and evaluative feelings.

(a) Values

Rokeach (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 28) defines values as follows: "... value is an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse code of conduct or end-state of existence. A value system is an enduring organisation of beliefs concerning preferable modes of conduct or end-state of existence along a continuum of relative importance".

In a learning environment, outside the home, the child is often faced with reality where cultural beliefs are replaced by brute facts. It is important to note that cognition, feeling, emotion, orientation and motivation are easily separated by abstraction. However, not a single one of these can function independently of the other. For a thorough insight into affectivity it is essential to follow Garbers' classification of the evaluative or accompanying feelings (affects) (Nel & Urbani, 1990).

(b) The affects (Evaluative or accompanying feelings)

(i) Physical or sensory feelings

These feelings are closely related to sense-impressions and are concomitant with smell, taste and touch. Sensory feelings acquire broader existential meaning as a person becomes older.

(ii) Social feelings

These feelings give content to relationships between persons, e.g. sympathy, love, compassion, egoism, jealousy, hate, etc. and are to a large measure rooted in cultural norms.

(iii) Intellectual feelings

Heller (1979: 115) maintains that "... there is no knowledge without feeling, there is no action without feeling, there is no perception without feeling, but all our feelings as 'feelings' either include the factor of cognition, goals and situations and only become relevant as feeling through interaction with these". Intellectual feelings are thus feelings experienced when something is comprehended.

(iv) Aesthetic feelings

These are feelings experienced during creative action, e.g. drawing, painting, acting, playing a musical instrument and dancing. Aesthetic feelings are more susceptible to temporary influences than any of the other feelings.

(v) Ethical or moral feelings

These feelings are aroused when something is experienced as good or bad and includes feelings of guilt, remorse and obligation. According to Nel (1988: 38) even these feelings can be culturally determined.

(vi) Religious feelings

According to Van Wyk and Van der Walt (1979: 120-121) these feelings are the most profound feelings affecting the very existence of the human being. These feelings accompany the relationship of man with God and the sublime, with all-connectedness, with the meaning or meaninglessness of existence. Examples include security, admiration, smallness, responsibility, respect, trust, honesty and dependence.

(3) Emotions

Thatcher (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 32) sees emotions as one of the three fundamental properties of the mind; volition and intellect being the other two. He defines it as: "A moving of the mind or soul; a state of excited feeling of any kind, as pleasure, pain, grief, joy and astonishment". According to Buitendijk (Nel & Urbani, 1990:32) emotions can be seen as a reaction from an object, event or person which has a symbolic meaning.

(4) Moods

A mood is a feeling of disposition lasting for a relatively long time and could be

either positive or negative. To a large extent it predisposes a person as regards his involvement in situations. Moods may have causes such as illness, rejection etc. or can appear without any apparent reason. Thus some individuals are more moody than others (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 34).

(5) Life feelings

Every person has a basic affective orientation towards life. Life feelings are more permanent in nature than moods. This "basic life feeling" forms an integral part of a person's character. The basic life-feeling is rooted in the nature of the child's experiences, especially from birth to about 6 years of age. A negative basic life-feeling can be changed through orthopedagogic intervention (Van Niekerk, 1990: 36-49).

2.3.2 Cognition

According to Nel and Urbani (1990: 40) the cognitive dimension can be divided into categories which are mostly referred to as intentionalities, i.e., perceiving, memorising, imagining and thinking. All intentionalities rest on a precognitive dimension or foundation, namely sensing. Sensing as a foundation must be stable for the child to learn.

(1) Sensing - perceiving

(a) Sensing

Straus (1978) describes sensing as the immediate communication between a subject

and his world, as a mode of experiencing on the precognitive level. Sensing is thus concerned with here and now because a person senses what he experiences momentarily, "now and here", and grasps its meaning immediately. Each moment of sensing is therefore unique and can never be repeated. Sensing is not a process inside a person but a mode of communication and is an experience of being unified with the world.

(b) Perceiving

Perceiving is interrelated with sensing, moving, memorising and thinking. Perceiving as a mode of experiencing is available to the child from birth. It is, however, subject to change which shows two dimensions namely physical growth and refinement gained through experiences. Although perceiving is an anthropological category, it is within the pedagogic situation that perceiving becomes a psychopedagogic category. This does not mean that the essential characteristics of perceiving change within the pedagogic situation because perceiving remains the first, immediate communication with the world. It is the foundation on which more complex and complicated experiences are built (Straus, 1978).

Nel and Urbani (1990: 54) contend that experience culminates in orientation. To be orientated means to understand. Even the most basic mode of experiencing, namely perceiving, should lead to a structuring into an orderly plan or pattern enabling the person to understand. Only then will perceiving have existential meaning. Perceiving also shows a close relationship to the affectivity.

Kidd and Rivoire (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 63-64) maintain that the affective system and the perceptual system do not exist as different systems in the infant. In the course of the child's becoming, affect and perceiving function more and more independently. This implies that affect does not destroy the basic laws of perception. Affect does have an influence on what is perceived, but does not alter the fundamental ways in which a person perceives. A well differentiated and refined affectivity will thus assist differentiated perceiving on the cognitive level. No person can ever be effectively uninvolved in what he perceives. The extent and nature of involvement is determined by the measure of cognitive control over the affectivity.

(2) Motoric or human movement

Movement is very important for the unfolding of the psychic life of the child. Straus (1978) states that sensing as such is bound to vital living movement, e.g. dance. Dance illustrates the unity of sensing and movement. Movement thus has a place in experiencing and therefore also in learning. The sensori-motor stage of development refers to the first 18 months of a child's life. Piaget and Inhelder (Vrey, 1984: 107) prefer the term sensori-motor intelligence. The sensori-motor intelligence succeeds, according to them in solving numerous problems of action such as reaching distant or hidden objects by constructing a complex system of action schemes and organising reality in terms of spatio-temporal and casual structures. They further maintain that during this period a child initiates all the cognitive sub-structures that will serve as a point of departure for the later perceptive and intellectual development, as well as a certain number of elementary affective reactions that will partly determine his subsequent affectivity. They

specifically mention that intelligence proceeds from action as a whole, that it transfers objects and reality, and that knowledge is essentially an active and operatory assimilation. The term "action" as used by Piaget and Inhelder (Vrey, 1984: 108) implies movement that constitutes a very important dimension of "action" (action means orientation). Only when the child reaches the stage of formal operation does reflective thinking begin to play a more important role in his life than physical action.

Nel and Urbani (1990: 49) contend that perceiving, acting and expressing are the three most important characteristics of a person's relations with everything that he is confronted with. According to Buitendijk (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 49) movements are hardly ever learnt for the sake of movement itself. Human movement always has an existential meaning. Each movement is interrelated to the entire network of relationships which exists between a person and his world. Buitendijk (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 49-50) notes that human movement is not the sum total of separate movement but a dynamic unity or Gestalt which is an expression of a relationship and which transcends the partial connections of physical processes. This means that human movements are to a greater or lesser degree qualified by a psychic-spiritual dimension.

Views on human movement can be summarised under the following headings (Nel & Urbani, 1990: 51):

(a) Moving

During early childhood years moving is the most important way of exploring, thus also of learning.

(b) Automatism

All human movements must be learned and become automatisms. Only when a movement has become part of the precognitive dimension of experiencing will it support experiencing.

(c) Dynamic unity

Human movement must form a dynamic unity or Gestalt and not the sum total of separate movements. This Gestalt is an expression of a person's total relationship within a situation. The nature of each human movement is determined by a goal which reflects the existential meaning of the present situation.

(d) Individual differences

The aptitude or talent for movement which reflects individual differences is determined by:

- * the physical processes necessary to perform movement; and
- * a psychic-spiritual dimension, e.g. an "ear for music" or "feeling" for spatio-temporal relationships when performing delicate manual work, etc.

(3) Memory

The basic assumption of psychopedagogics is that experiencing is an act. In the case of memory the question of whether we deal with an act of a person or something within a person, becomes more problematic. Sonnekus (1985: 126-129)

uses the term memorising which he classifies as a cognitive mode of learning. According to Piaget and Inhelder (Vrey, 1984: 109) memory is a form of actualization involving the conservation of the entire past or at least of everything in a subject's past that serves to inform his present action or understanding. The psychic life of a child is a unity of which memory is thus only an essential characteristic or, more descriptive, it is the mode of actualising the psychic life. Nel and Urbani (1990: 76) support this view and state that memory is closely interwoven, not only with the cognitive modes of experiencing, but also with the precognitive ones and with the affectivity. Memory is often equated with learning. Even the learning of skills is regarded as a form of memorising. Memorising or remembering is, however, not learning but it does fulfil an all important supporting role in learning. Memory has been described as a mode of actualising the psychic life. This implies that memory is not only reproductive but also productive in nature (Nel & Urbani, 1990; Vrey, 1984; Sonnekus, 1985).

Exploration and emancipation do not disappear when a person remembers. A person more often than not, remembers because he wants to understand his present situation to be able to act, to solve problems, in other words to reconstitute his situation. A child wants to understand the meaning of a specific situation for his emancipation and while remembering, constitute his inner life-world (Nel & Urbani, 1990; Vrey, 1984).

Nel and Urbani (1990: 83-85) unambiguously indicate the relations between memory and the other modes of experiencing. These relations can be summarised as follows:

* *Perceiving and sensing*

a person perceives selectively. Memory is one important factor which determines what a person perceives.

* *Imagining*

Images are not always true imitations of reality. Images can be created in efforts to establish sensible links between aspects which ostensibly need to be linked in order to reflect a sensible unit.

It is, therefore, very clear that it is not possible to study memory in isolation, for instance, from sensing, perceiving, imagining, thinking, etc.

2.3.3 Language acquisition by the pre-school child

No child is born with linguistic knowledge. Linguistic acquisition is a continuous process which proceeds from the simple and undifferentiated to the complex (Todd & Hefferman, 1977: 79).

(1) Undifferentiated sounds

The first undifferentiated sound produced by the child is the cry after birth. In early childhood language is preceded by gestures to convey certain messages to parents and others. Speech is an inborn tendency to communication which has spontaneous expression without stimulus from outside (Vrey, 1984: 126).

(2) Babbling

According to Vrey (1984: 127) undifferentiated sounds are succeeded by a spontaneous babbling. Sounds are spontaneously repeated in all possible variations.

(3) Function of language

As a social being the individual longs to communicate with his fellow-men. Though other forms of communication exist, most communication takes place through the use of the language. To a very large extent learning depends on the mastery of the language. Language can be regarded as a fundamental condition for the total development of man. School activities and the child's whole mental development require skill in language. (Vrey, 1984; Moodley, 1992).

(4) Language acquisition

The child is born with speech organs and a nervous system which provide for the use of the language. Within a very short space of time the child uses a wide range of sounds. Very quickly the initial utterances are converted into meaningful speech. Though the child is endowed with innate possibilities, he discovers language by imitation. Speech is an extremely subtle and complicated co-ordination of lips, tongue, teeth, palate, jaws, cheeks and breath control. The child understands the language before he speaks it (Vrey, 1984; Damast & Mellet, 1985).

(a) Imitation of tone of voice

The tendency to imitate is present in the child. As the child grows older the babbling sounds become increasingly intelligible because he gains better control over his speech organs. By about nine months he can repeat one or two simple words with relatively pure articulation. As soon as the child has mastered the

hearing-imitating activity he begins to acquire a vocabulary. The meanings of words are learnt by hearing them in relation to concrete things, circumstances and emotions (Kapp, 1991; Travers, 1982).

(b) Naming things and people

Towards the end of the first year the child begins to use his first words meaningfully. The symbolic level of language is reached when the child begins to assign names to things and people. Most children start with the general and gradually proceed to the particular and more specific (Vrey, 1984: 128).

(c) From understanding of language to use of complex sentences

The child understands the language he hears long before he can speak it. During their second year most children can identify objects in a picture. From the age of two to three years they can even understand oral instructions. Children first respond to gestures only, then to gestures together with language, and finally to language alone (Vrey, 1984: 248-249). Usually the first articulated sounds are merely expressions of the child's emotions. A single word can convey the meaning of a whole sentence. Between one and a half to two years, most children use two words correctly, thereafter three words, etc. Then he begins to communicate his thoughts in words. An important incentive to speech is the child's realisation that he can make others to act when he makes his needs known (Vrey, 1984; Kapp, 1991; Van Niekerk, 1990; Mwamwenda, 1989).

2.4 SCHOOL READINESS

In a child's becoming and learning the adult has a specific role to play. School entry is seen as one of the main events in the life of the child and therefore it is important that he is ready for it. His readiness for formal learning, as it appears in the school situation, forms the basis for the way in which the child becomes involved and gives meaning to the formal learning situation and exercises an important influence on the future course of his learning and becoming (Kapp, 1991: 185; Dipasquale, Moule & Flewelling, 1980: 4; Vrey, 1984: 80).

Early educationists like Pestalozzi, Froebel and Montessori had paid attention to school readiness. Some of the more recent researchers, namely Kapp (1991:185), Dreyer (1980: 47) and Van Niekerk (1990: 43) also focussed their attention on school readiness. Moore and Moore (Derbyshire, 1991: 186)) define school readiness as follows: "Early childhood education must take into account the development of the child's brain, vision, hearing, perception, emotions, sociability, family and school relationships and physical growth".

Van Niekerk (1990: 162) says that school readiness is concerned with the child's views and attitudes to the formal learning demands and is thus the result of education.

Vrey (1984: 88) emphasises that school readiness is dependent on the child's level of becoming and development and not so much on is chronological age.

School readiness can be described as a preparation or a state of preparation for

undertaking new activities such as those which feature in the school situation. Different circumstances, experiences, events and factors intrinsic and extrinsic to the child himself, play a role in school readiness. In this regard there are intrinsic factors such as interest, motivation, experience, personality and intelligence, and extrinsic factors like family history and environmental factors (Kapp, 1991: 187; Sibisi, 1989; Govender, 1989).

Johnson and Myklebust (Kapp, 1991: 266) claim that school readiness is not a global or unitary concept but that children show differing levels of readiness for different types of cognitive or learning activities. The pre-school years according to Chapey (1986: 4) are "the wonder years" and are the most important years in the child's life, when great changes occur regarding all aspects of becoming and development. The importance of these years for the gradual preparation of the child for school entry is also emphasised by writers. Reilly and Hofmeyr (1983: 3) state that "... school readiness is a gradual process which begins at birth and which is dependent on both upbringing and development". Because school readiness commences at birth, it is important to know the developmental periods before school entry. The different stages are (Kapp, 1991:187):

- * the baby phase from birth to 1 year. This phase is characterised by the co-ordination of the child's sensory and motor skills, which constitute an important step toward school readiness;
- * the toddler phase from 1 year to 3 years. During this period of the child's life many changes occur. He becomes increasingly independent as he can now walk and do things for himself, thus

gradually expanding his life-world. The development of the language and gross motor movement is prominent during this phase and serves as an important precursor for readiness to enter school later; and

- * the pre-schooler (3 - 6 years). This phase sees further growth taking place with regard to fine and gross motor skills, language and thought and the refinement of the skills mastered in the previous phases.

2.4.1 The responsibility for school readiness

As the child is someone who wants to be somebody, he opens himself to and learns from others. A child who finds himself in the midst of a stimulating educational situation where favourable circumstances are created for learning, is being prepared for school readiness systematically and persistently. Park (1986: 128) rightly claims that school readiness does not just happen on its own and can never be left to chance. It is the task of educators, parents and teachers to prepare the child gradually and deliberately for school entry (Park, 1986; Purkey, 1990; Berger, 1981; Govender, 1989).

(1) The family

Preparing the child to be school-ready is seen as one of the most important educational functions of the parents at home (Chapey, 1986: 4). According to Van Niekerk (1990: 163) it is something that can be achieved wherever parent and the

child are together in a loving situation. By supporting the child pedagogically and by providing a living space of safety and security, a willingness to unlock reality is created for the child (De Jongh, 1987: 1). All that is required for school readiness in the family is daily activities of life such as playing, drawing, conversation, movement and music and it is thus merely an intensified application of everyday living (Van Niekerk, 1990: 163).

(2) The Pre-school

Although the pre-school is not a place where formal teaching occurs, it makes an important contribution to the child's initial school readiness. The aim of the pre-school is not to replace the home but to supplement it in order to facilitate the child's gradual transition from childhood to adulthood. A pre-school offers the child the opportunity, in an informal manner, to gradually develop on a physical, cognitive, linguistic and affective-social level (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983: 124; Lehobye, 1978; Sibisi, 1989; Vrey, 1984: 70).

2.4.2 Criteria for school readiness

The criteria for school readiness refer to the physical, perceptual, cognitive, linguistic, affective-social and normative requirements with which the child should comply in order to be successful in the school situation. These are:

(1) Age

In South Africa it is legally stipulated that a child can be admitted to school if he turns six on or before 30 June. Several writers (Vrey, 1984: 88;

Kruger, 1983: 28) are of the opinion that chronological age cannot be used as a measure for school readiness. Park (1986: 316) shows the relationships between mental age, chronological age, IQ and school readiness by pointing out that the child who is not yet six and a half years should have at least a mental age of a six and a half year-old child. This implies that the I.Q. of a five-year-old should be at least 130 and the five-and-a-half-year-old's I.Q. be at least 118, to have a mental age of six years and be considered as school-ready (Kapp, 1991: 193).

(2) Physical

A child who enters school and experiences the following problems may possibly not be ready for school (Park, 1986: 128-129):

- * not physically healthy and strong enough to cope with the demands of a long school day;
- * physical and sensory impairment;
- * inadequate co-ordination to kick and catch a ball, etc;
- * not trained to use the toilet and still has the appearance of an infant; and
- * not having the fine motor skills required to cut with a pair of scissors, etc.

(3) Perceptual

The child who is legally compelled to attend school but is not yet ready for it, sometimes shows one or more of a variety of visual and auditory perceptual

disorders. This can include problems with auditory and visual discrimination, analysis and synthesis as well as sequence and memory (Vygotsky, 1987: 319).

(4) Cognitive

Although it can be expected that the child will grow cognitively in his school career, certain cognitive demands are still made of the school beginner. A child who enters a school should have a reasonable understanding of the association between cause and effect, copy figures like circles, squares, as well as be able to identify colours (Burger, 1993; Vygotsky, 1987; Fabian, 1985).

(5) Language

The child who on school entry does not possess a reasonable vocabulary, cannot express himself clearly through language and is also limited in his understanding of the spoken language is probably not ready for the formal learning situation (Kapp, 1991; De Lange, 1990; Naidoo, 1991).

(6) Affective-social

The child who still shows the following shortcomings regarding his affective-social life, is probably not yet ready for school (Vrey, 1984: 69-71):

- * inability to share the teacher's attention with a group of other children;
- * is still dependent on his mother and he does not want to be separated from her;

- * still prefers to play alone;
- * lacks self-confidence and self-esteem;
- * unable to make relatively simple decisions; and
- * not in a position to exercise control over the expression of his emotions.

(7) Normative

The child who is still unable to accept discipline, finds it very difficult to differentiate between proper and improper and has little knowledge of good manners, is probably not ready for school (Burger, 1993: 52).

2.4.3 The deprived child

According to Terminology Committee (1984: 54) a deprived person is a person whose psychic, physical, emotional or social needs have remained unsatisfied for reasons beyond his control.

(1) Identifying the deprived child

(a) The necessity for timely identification

Every child wishes to become someone himself, and to learn. All children who have sufficient personal and intellectual potential will therefore learn adequately,

provided that they are affectively ready and willing to learn and also provided that there are no serious handicaps, e.g. regarding their sense of hearing, sight, etc. "Adequately" means that the child acts, performs and attains achievements within the limits of what is regarded as pedagogically normal for his specific age group (Van Niekerk, 1990: 69). The teacher furthermore knows how most effectively to activate children's learning and development potential in the situation of a lesson. He is also aware of the instances in which these potentialities are under-actualised. Every child sooner or later has to contend with greater or lesser problems regarding his learning and or development. Most succeed in handling these problems well. Yet it is clearly necessary to keep a watchful eye in order to recognize those children who are unable to cope (Van Niekerk, 1990: 69-70).

Identifying the symptoms is in many respects actually the simplest aspect of the teacher's task. The real problem is rather to find what lies at the root of the child's behaviour and to determine how the educator will rectify the matter. It is very important to identify a problem at the earliest possible stage in order to diminish the vast wasteland which usually lies between the identification of a specific problem and rectifying or at least partially neutralising it. Being very observant definitely shortens the period and lessens the seriousness of the effect of the problem on the child. The teacher, therefore, should not fail regarding this straight-forward and important aspect of his complex task of identifying the deprived child (Van Niekerk, 1990: 71; Naidoo, 1991; Vygotsky, 1987).

(2) The advantageous position of the teacher

The sooner the deprived child is identified the more optimistically one may hope

to rectify his dysfunctional educational situation, and also fill the void in his learning and development. The child who finds his way blocked on the affective level cannot learn as he ought to. Conversely the child who cannot learn as he should is affectively labelled by his failure. The teacher is in a position to take instant note of a child's inadequate mode of learning or personal actualization because of his intimate involvement with the pupils in his class on a daily basis. The child in fact makes himself conspicuous by the way in which he acts, reads, spells, responds to questions, writes and does his mathematics (Van Niekerk, 1990: 70; Govender, 1989; Kaplan-Sanoff and Yablans-Magid, 1981).

Mays (Van Niekerk, 1990: 70) states that since all children go to school, schools seem to be the obvious place where early detection of troubles of various kinds can begin. The medical practitioner is intent upon noticing symptoms revealing the underlying causes and thereafter administering treatment which cause the symptoms to vanish. He is fully qualified and equipped to perform his duty professionally. The teacher is equally well equipped to guide the child professionally with regards to his development, to detect deficits, to determine the causes and to initiate steps for the correction of the situation (Singh, 1992; Schmidt, 1976).

Most of the school-going children these days spend more hours with their teachers than they do with their parents in an educationally active way. One is justified, therefore, in expecting the teacher to know his pupils intimately. It is an accepted fact that the majority of fathers and a very large percentage of mothers return home from work well after five-o'clock. In the limited time available it is often not possible to engage in any educationally meaningful conversation because each one is caught up in his own activities, be it homework, social commitment, a

programme on television, etc. (Padayachee, 1992; John, 1993; Hurlock, 1979; Berger, 1981).

According to Mays (Van Niekerk, 1990:71) teachers should become diagnostically alert. They need to become sensitised during their training periods to signs and manifestations of maladaptation and also, in a general way, to become more sympathetic to the special needs and problems of stress prone youngsters. Furthermore the teacher who is an expert in his field as an educator works more systematically than the average parent in order to really get to know the child. He is familiar with the direct lines of approach and also what he should be on the look out for.

(3) Identifying the deprived child impeded in his development

To every teacher who is alert, the deprived child intimates very clearly by means of specific symptoms that he is in direct need of educational support. Obvious symptoms are frequent absenteeism from school, theft, uncontrolled behaviour, crying, telling lies, temper tantrums, fighting, refusing to participate in everyday classroom activities, lack of concentration, daydreaming and sudden decline in performance in tests. Some "indicators" of the child's dysfunctional education situation are, however, not so easily noticeable. The teacher should also be sensitive to tell-tale signs like never wanting to take part in extramural activities, bed-wetting, associating only with younger children, failing to make friends and keeping to himself (Van Niekerk, 1990: 73; Govender, 1989; Hurlock, 1979).

(4) The task subsequent to identification

The teacher must guard against any extreme reaction concerning a deprived child, especially with regard to seriously deviant behaviour. The child's conduct should always be seen in the proper perspective, because such children generally suffer badly from poor interpersonal relationships. D'Evelyn (Van Niekerk, 1990: 73) states that children do not feel right about themselves and their relationships to others are poor. Those are the children who are rejected, dominated by others, deprived, jealous or resentful, who have been over-indulged, who have physical deficits, who have suffered prolonged illnesses, or who are mentally retarded. As soon as the deprived child has been identified, aid should be rendered immediately. It is, therefore, imperative for the teacher to carefully reflect on his future course of action. The child's intellectual abilities should furthermore be assessed individually by an orthopedagogue or an orthodidactician, who may on the grounds of what he discovers, decide that a thorough orthopedagogical analysis of the case is necessary. When the child has been identified as a child suffering from a problem the teacher is forced to explore all accessible areas of the child's personality actualization in his educational situation (Van Niekerk, 1990: 73-75; Singh, 1992).

(5) Neglect and abandonment

According to Abhilak (1992: 80) neglect and abandonment of children is unfortunately extremely common in South Africa. Much of this is due to socio-political problems which beset our land, the breakdown of family life and the precipitation of many young people into parenthood without any preparation. Their

children end up in institutions, many of which are understaffed. Hence, while the children are protected, fed and cleaned, they receive little or no stimulus emotionally or intellectually. Such children lack motivation when they reach school age and perform inadequately or drop out of school to become delinquents or a burden to society. With no family support and no opportunity to improve their lot, many become involved in petty crime (Winship, 1988: 95; Naidoo, 1991).

Neglect is a far more pervasive problem than physical abuse, occurring in twice as many cases according to Pelton (1980). Neglect is strongly related to poverty. Zalba (1983) defines neglect as the "chronic failure of adults to protect children from obvious physical danger and to provide them with the materialistic necessities of life". Pelton (1980) points out that one of the most common forms of neglect leading to death is that parents leave young children alone. He stresses the link between poverty and neglect and says that concrete services should be offered to the poor in the form of providing proper housing, day creches, subsidise food and satisfactory sanitation. Reducing the stresses of poverty will have a very strong impact on parent's behaviour, thereby obviating the need to remove so many children to institutions (Abhilak, 1992: 81).

Young (Winship, 1988: 97) points out that there is a difference between neglect due to ignorance and neglect due to cruelty to children. Neglectful parents welcome social worker's assistance. Schmitt (1981) says that neglect can be due to living in very poor conditions, with children having little or no food, inadequate clothing and or shelter. Such children are generally dirty and are shunned by their peers.

Berger (1981: 39) holds the view that the most satisfactory parents are the biological ones. They, better than anyone else, can provide all the needs of the child. The child in turn cares for the parents more than he would care for anyone else. In order for the child to grow both physically and mentally into a responsible, mature individual, he needs a warm supportive nurturing environment, which would enable him to fulfil his potential to the fullest possible extent. The human child is born helpless, and perishes if he or she is not nourished, protected, soothed and stimulated by an older person capable of producing such care on a continuing basis.

Faulty socialization of children is considered the root cause of family malfunctioning or disorganisation. This is so because of the contention in Western society that the nuclear family bears the main responsibility for rearing and educating the young. Although other institutions such as schools, churches, youth centres, neighbourhoods and social groups share these functions, the converging evidence of research in the fields of education and the child's education points to the family as the central socialising agent. The concept of family disorganisation implies that the family is unable to act as socialising agent (Cook & Bowles, 1980: 228-229; Abhilak, 1992: 97; Jones, 1982: 21).

While deprivation may occur with different frequencies, and in different forms in all communities be they rural or urban, simple or complex, Western or non-Western, there are individuals who do not measure up to their society's standards of a good parent (Korbin, 1981: 9). Society has conferred on parents unqualified rights in respect to their children. The burden of proof is never on the parents to prove their fitness, but on the State to prove that parents are unfit. Good

parenting does not come naturally or instinctively, but has to be learned. Daily living with boisterous children demands a great deal of time, energy and inner resources, which even the most placid of parents can never hope to command at all times (Lally, 1984: 274; Abhilak, 1992: 102).

Environmental deprivation is by no means a phenomenon confined to South Africa alone. During the fifties attempts had been made in the USA to develop teaching programmes with a view to raising the environmentally deprived child's aspirations and improving his achievements. In 1962 the Education Policies Commission of the National Education Association proposed that the Federal Government in America should make a greater financial contribution to enable the various states to ensure adequate education for all Americans (Plunkett, 1985: 534).

(6) Relation between teaching, education and development

Education is seen as the most important avenue through which the child's background, environmental or otherwise can restrain him to such an extent that he is unable to succeed in satisfying the demands made on him by the school. Poverty and its accompanying problems are often general factors responsible for inadequate education as a preparation for school entry. Parents cannot offer the child a world that reflects the life pattern as presented by the school. According to Farmer (1982: 109) parents in the lower socio-economic groups are unable to create a stimulating environment for their children to receive formal education/instruction. Children deprived of the opportunity and those from a culture where experiences are inadequate, are not inferior, but should certainly receive a greater measure of special help and consideration so that they may be in a position to benefit optimally

from the modern educational system which is embedded in a Western technologically orientated society (Kapp, 1991: 124-125; Govender, 1989).

2.5 DYSFUNCTIONAL EDUCATION AND THE DEPRIVED CHILD

If any of the pedagogic relationships of trust, understanding and authority is absent from the pedagogic situation, it will result in a dysfunction in the dynamics of the education situation, i.e., dysfunctional education (Van Niekerk, 1990: 9). Dysfunctional education is characterised by an attenuated or distorted appearance of the essence of education. Such education lacks both coherence in its manifestation, e.g. disharmony and functionality in its outcome, e.g. not realising the aim of education. In terms of its constituents, dysfunctional education points to a child who under-actualises his psychic life, and an adult who provides inadequate guidance and an environment which impedes authentic education (Van Niekerk, 1990: 9-10; Sonnekus, 1991: 138-139; Kagan, Mussen, Conger & Steyn, 1980: 215).

2.5.1 The child

The educative dialogue between the adult and the child enables the child to learn. Learning only takes place when the child also actively involves himself intellectually through sensing. By involving himself the child pays attention to the content in question by way of perceiving, thinking, imagining, memorising and beholding, then only learning takes place. Destabilisation of the sensing mode of learning results in anxiety, uncertainty, insecurity and ignorance on the part of the child. The child's learning potential realises inadequately. This is evident in the classroom situation when the child is ridiculed by the teacher because of poor

academic performance. Likewise the child inadequately becomes if he cannot explore, emancipate, distantiate, differentiate and objectivate efficiently. This becomes evident in children over-protected by parents as they never really "grow-up" to be independent (Burger, 1993; Van Niekerk, 1990; Vrey, 1984; Lerner, 1985).

2.5.2 The adult

Dysfunctional education is also evident when the adult fails to guide the child into responsible adulthood. The adult must educate the child in totality i.e., provide the child with all three levels of education, namely cognitive, affective and normative dimensions of education. Failure on the part of the adult is evident of such educational errors as neglect, rejection, over-protection, excessive demands, inadequate exercise of authority, unfavourable comparison, and insecurity (Burger, 1993; Van Niekerk, 1990; Vrey, 1984; Kempe & Kempe, 1982; Schmitt, 1981).

2.5.3 The environment

The environment within which the child is reared may not be conducive enough for adequate self-actualization of the psychic life of the child. Van Niekerk (1990: 26) cites factors like the size and composition of the family, parents' health and social environment. Ter Horst (1980: 26) mentions poverty, poor housing, deprivation, hunger, lack of love, illness, disorderliness and setting too high or too low a standard for the child. Sonnekus (1985: 12) also refers to matters such as the physical care of the child (diet, health and hygiene), social well-being (enough friends and social activities) and affective neglect (over or under protection,

inconsistency of educational attitudes, marital problems and broken marriages). When the child is reared within such environment, dysfunctional education may result (Pawl, 1984: 264; Garbers, 1980: 14-16).

In dysfunctional education, and educational backlog becomes evident. There is a deadlock in the dialogue between the adult and the child, resulting in a stressful situation that warrants intervention so that the child can be supported towards what he ought to be. When this situation is evident, the child's level of development (attained level or is) does not coincide with his attainment level (attainable level or ought to be). In other words there is a gap which Van Niekerk (1990: 44) refers to as a developmental lag, between the child's actual level of development and his possible level of development. The possible level is the level where the child is supposed to be at that particular stage of development, while the actual level is under-actualization in all modes of becoming and learning and the child's progress towards adulthood is hampered or interfered with. Although the child has potential of reaching adulthood, a distressful situation or education often hampers and impedes his becoming. Due to the inadequate participation of both the adult and the child, dysfunctional education will result. (Van Niekerk, 1990; Sonnekus, 1985; Vrey, 1984).

2.6 SUMMARY

When the adult, who is the more responsible person, does not take care that the conditions for adequate education are met, the child is usually affectively, intellectually and morally neglected. If any of the pedagogic relationships of trust, understanding and authority is absent from the pedagogic situation, it will result in

a dysfunction in the dynamics of the education situation. The child from a deprived community finds himself in a dysfunctional situation. When an educator and a child communicate inadequately all the acts of upbringing are necessarily performed inadequately (Van Niekerk, 1990: 9). The pedagogically inadequate actualization of the child's psychic life is the inevitable result.

From a psychopedagogical perspective the child from a deprived community finds himself in an educational relationship which is dysfunctional. Dysfunctional education results in the under-actualization of the psychic life of the child from a deprived community.

A child's readiness to explore his establishment of relations and of a life-world, are best promoted by parents who give a great deal of love and support, enforce educational controls, and respect and encourage their children. Such parents provide their children with the best pre-school preparation for self-actualization. Education is of invaluable importance for the child's psychological development which in turn enhances his self-image and relationships (Vrey, 1984: 79-80).

In a child's becoming and learning the adult has a specific role to play. School readiness is seen as one of the main events in the life of the child and therefore it is important that he is ready for it. School readiness is concerned with the child's views and attitudes to the formal learning demands and is thus the result of education.

In the next chapter, the life-world of the pre-school child from a deprived community is discussed.

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CHAPTER 3

THE LIFE-WORLD OF THE PRE-SCHOOL CHILD FROM A DEPRIVED COMMUNITY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The way in which the child deals with relationships formed within his life-world differs from child to child. The importance of these relationships is highlighted by Vrey (1984: 21) who noted that the child must form relationships with his world because he needs to orientate, survive and mature within this world. Buitendijk (Vrey, 1984: 21) characterizes this ontic phenomenon by saying that the child "initiates" relationships. By forming relationships, the child thus constitutes the life-world that forms his psychological space and reality to which he is orientated. Van Niekerk (1990: 7) noted that through learning the child constantly raises the level upon which he communicates with life and gives meaning to his world. In learning the child will also constantly form new relationships and improve the quality of existing relationships. Landman and Roos (Kapp, 1991: 51) state that the child in a dysfunctional educational situation (e.g. the child from a deprived community) under-actualises his psychic life.

The pre-school child from a deprived community indeed finds himself within a dysfunctional educational situation. His actions of ascribing significance to matters, i.e. the formation of meaningful relationships are of insufficient quality.

This gives rise to inadequate actions of hoping, planning, gaining insight into himself, of never attaining the freedom to be responsible and thus also of disregarding accepted norms and values (Vrey, 1984: 21-23).

Due to this insufficient ascribing of significance the pre-school child from a deprived community finds himself in a situation wherein no learning in pedagogical sense takes place. The level upon which he communicates with life and gives meaning to his world is inadequate and insufficient. Because of the inadequate nature of existing relationships he cannot improve the quality of existing relationships or form new meaningful relationships within his life-world. Because of this inability to establish a meaningful life-world there is a discrepancy between what the child is and what he ought to be as a person (Gunter, 1982; Behr, 1989).

3.2 EXPERIENCE AND LIFE-WORLD

3.2.1 Experience

The fact that people experience things is self-evident because experiencing and being conscious for all practical purposes are the same thing (Urbani, 1982: 36). All consciousness, all psychic life can be traced back to two basic forms, namely feelings and thoughts. These concepts are ways of expressing a common basic form, i.e. experience of reality (Urbani, 1982: 9). In studying the experience of the pre-school child, we are involved specifically in looking for the state of this child's affective world of experience, his cognitive world of experience and how he gives meaning to this experience. In other words we are concerned here with

the relation between his affective and cognitive experiences or the stability, order and control in his cognitive and affective experiences (Sonnekus, 1985: 60).

Experiencing things is a way of giving meaning to the world around us and this can be effected at three different levels (affective, cognitive, normative). In describing experience in the life-world of the pre-school child the following is meant: Experiencing things is a way of expressing oneself through which something essential about one's life-world becomes manifest (Dreyer & Duminy, 1986: 9-10).

In other words without experiencing, one's life world cannot be built up, cannot be comprehended, cannot be contemplated at all. It is through the child's numerous experiences of reality (world of experience) that his own unique life-world comes into being (Pretorius, 1988: 11). A study of the pre-school child's world of experience implies learning about what he experiences and how he experiences his world and the meaning that he attaches to it.

While it is evident therefore that there is no more significant concept on the basis of which one can give complete expression to man's total involvement in the world than experience, the following statement by Urbani (1982: 34) is most applicable as far as an understanding of a pre-school child's experience is concerned: "Who wants to become acquainted with man should listen to the language spoken by the things in his existence. Who wants to describe man should make an analysis of the landscape within which he demonstrates, explains and reveals himself".

Since man is essentially a being related to other beings it stands to reason that one can only understand his experience by studying him in his relationship with himself, others, the things around him and God.

It is important to bear in mind that all of man's experiences and therefore also those of the pre-school child take place within relationships. A distinction should be made between the following (Vrey, 1984: 20-25):

- * experience of the pre-school child from a deprived community that takes place within his relationship to himself;
- * experiences within his relationships with others;
- * experiences within his relationships with things; and
- * experiences within his relationship with God.

Experience culminates in orientation or is an act of orientating oneself. The pre-school child finds himself in an insecure environment in which he has to orientate himself. To orientate himself the child will have to determine his own position in relation to that with which he is confronted. The child determines the nature of his relationship with his situation as a Gestalt, but also with the constituent parts of the situation. Within a deprived community the pre-school child continuously orientates himself in relation to the situation as a whole, to himself, to the social worker, to his peers, to things/ideas and to God (Abhilak, 1992: 84).

It is therefore important to have a closer look at these relationships of the pre-school child of a deprived community that are found within his life-world.

3.2.2 Life-world of the pre-school child from a deprived community

(1) Factors that may lead to deprivation

According to Pretorius (1988: 7) it is mainly poverty and/or cultural differences that may be responsible for deprivation. Tiedt (Kapp, 1991: 125) points out that the child from a wealthy home may also be deprived if he lacks parental love, care, faith, understanding and trust. Such children often experience pedagogical neglect. A child who through divorce or death of one or both parents grows up in a broken home environment may also be pedagogically neglected and this often gives rise to environmental deprivation. In homes where both parents work all day or have irregular working hours and where the child receives inadequate care and supervision, pedagogical neglect is the obvious result. When the language of the environment in which the child lives and grows up is impoverished his language acquisition will also be inadequate, and this further hinders the growth towards adulthood. Language problems are often important contributory factors towards environmental deprivation. An inadequate physical environment can be a cause of environmental deprivation. Inadequate housing and over-crowding cause the child to have little privacy or room to study (Kapp, 1991; Van Niekerk, 1990).

(2) Characteristics of environmentally deprived children

Children from a deprived community find themselves in a life situation which is generally characterised by (Kapp, 1991: 126):

- * an impoverished environment that is devoid of opportunity;

- * unstable interpersonal relationship;
- * inadequate cognitive development;
- * a culturally different education level; and
- * a poor residential area with conditions such as noise, over-crowding, crime, poor housing and other pathological phenomena.

According to Kok (1984: 21-29) the following are some manifestations generally displayed by children from a deprived society:

- * a poor self-concept: they have very little self-confidence which is often exacerbated by failure;
- * little motivation resulting from poorly directed pedagogical interaction;
- * perceptual deficiencies caused by the incompetence in paying attention, looking at and listening to that which is relevant;
- * poor creativity because the environment of these children offers limited channels for participation in creative activities; and
- * language defects are evidenced particularly in the abstract dimension of verbal functioning.

Children from a deprived community often manifest the following attitudes and behaviour patterns in the class and the school situation (Pretorius, 1988: 221):

- * troublesome in the class;
- * drop out academically and socially;
- * often absent or playing truant;
- * personality problems;
- * social problems;
- * sensitive to any reference to their deficiencies;
- * poor concentration and under-achievement;
- * reveal a low level of expectation regarding school success, training and a future career and have little ambition;
- * display evidence of behaviour problems;
- * identify with undesirable friends;
- * often uncared for, neglected and untidy in appearance;
- * unpopular because of bad behaviour and poor achievement;

- * have a feeling of inferiority;
- * always experiencing anxiety in their contact with people and things and even school attendance poses a threat; and
- * show resentment. Offended by their failure, are embittered because they fail and are jealous of their more successful fellow pupils.

It would appear, therefore, that the children from the deprived community lack "school readiness".

3.3 FORMING RELATIONSHIPS

A child is born into a world of meaning. Once the child begins to understand, the relationship formed may be ineffective and can be improved through greater involvement. His life-world can be divided into self, others, things and ideas and God.

3.3.1 The pre-school child's relations with himself

(1) Physical

It would be appropriate at this stage to examine the meaning of corporeality in human existence in general as highlighted by Urbani (1982).

- * human existence in the world takes place through the body;
- * the body is at the same time man's means of admission to the world and also to other people and things;
- * the body is the mediator between man and the world; and
- * through our body we actively establish our own world.

(2) Self-identity

The pre-school child's relations with his family and objects and his identification with parents and others have resulted in a fairly well-defined self-identity. He knows himself, in fact he knows his name, sex and appearance. Though he cannot express it verbally, he knows who he is. This identity formation is dynamic and continuous. The imitations are real and convincing, and a large number of roles are tested. As self-identity takes place, the need to test roles diminishes. The self-concept is supplemented by evaluating the rapidly growing identity. Acceptance by parents, family and playmates results in self-acceptance. Self-acceptance brings about self-esteem. A positive self-image is an encouraging assurance which makes him adequate and capable of exploring the world. The evaluated self-image has a clearer tendency to action. A positive self-concept is essentially the outcome of loving, caring and accepting education within defined limits. It enables the pre-school child to forget himself (his own identity) and to take risks to explore and to form relations. He becomes selflessly involved and successfully assigns meaning (Van Niekerk, 1990; Kapp, 1991; Vrey, 1984; Sonnekus, 1985; Young, 1978).

(3) Psychic life

(i) Inadequate exploration

According to Joubert (1978?) exploring implies a study of those aspects of reality which are relatively unknown to the child. He explores those aspects of reality which reflect both known and unknown characteristics. From the discussion of sensing it is clear that as long as a child wonders at aspects of reality and anticipates possible developments or discoveries, he will explore. As a child grows older his emancipating becomes socially influenced (Kagan *et al.* 1980:218).

Every meaning which is not emotionally, cognitively and normatively integrated by the child, leads to anxiety. Anxiety again results in an impotence which, according to Van Niekerk (1990) virtually paralyses the child. Maree (1990) also states that loneliness and insecurity are to be intimately associated with anxiety to be the silent companion of every man's life. The anxious child has difficulty in shouldering the full responsibility for his decisions (Van Niekerk, 1990). Anxiety would thus make the child feel helpless because he is unable to resist it.

When education takes an unfavourable course, like in the life of a deprived child, it always gives rise to anxiety. This in turn acts as an impediment to the child in his becoming. His feeling of insecurity is often revealed as a reluctance to explore, thus resulting in the inadequate actualising of his psychic life. The wheel then turns full circle, as his anxiety is necessarily increased by the very fact of his inadequate exploration of his world (Van Niekerk, 1990: 22-23). The opportunities for him to actualise his psychic life with reference to specific

educational contents also diminish because he prefers to withdraw from that which appears to him to be strange or new.

Objectives of emancipation become more refined and the will to overcome his helplessness becomes a will to succeed. Exploring becomes more formal and organised and less subjective to wonder and anticipate (Van Niekerk, 1990: 22-25).

Perquin (Abhilak, 1992: 89) points out that the affectively neglected and deprived child not only feels insecure resulting in a reluctance to risk exploring his world, but also proves to be shallow, frigid or obtuse in his affect, or may on the other hand become a demanding and disgruntled person.

Those stances or attitudes which the deprived child assumes in exploring his world and which he fails to personally integrate, give rise to emotional lability; if the undigested experiences increase in number, he is eventually driven into an effective no man's land where he suffers from feelings of anxiety, insecurity, helplessness, uncertainty, dependence, loneliness and inferiority (Pretorius, 1988: 51). Lersch (Van Niekerk, 1990: 20) also mentions feelings of pessimism, dissatisfaction, a lack of self-confidence and inferiority, all of which are clearly evident in the life-world of the deprived child. According to Ter Horst (1980: 79) the child withdraws into his own world which to him has the resemblance of safety, yet which actually intensifies his anxiety.

Owing to inadequate assistance in his search for meaning a negative attitude towards life develops in the child, driving him to be always on the defensive (Lerner, 1985: 58). According to Van Niekerk (1990: 4) the deprived child is on the defensive and disregards all forms of authority.

Muller-Eckhard (Van Niekerk, 1990: 21) explains that this defensive attitude may be a flight to the fore (aggression), into oneself (isolation) or into the past (regression). The child cannot take up any new position and only accepts that which is totally familiar to him. He feels that he is a captive, and impotent to change (Van Niekerk, 1990: 127).

A child's reluctance to explore also gives proof of the fact that the volitional education, i.e. education directed at developing the child's will, has been neglected. Unwillingness to actively participate in the task of becoming an adult is rarely evidenced by an affectively stable child (Van Niekerk, 1990: 128). Sonnekus (1985) states that both reluctance of will and weakly-directed intentionality occur when the child's will is not adequately actualised. This reluctance of will and weakly-directed intentionality is one of the major problems facing the deprived child.

According to Pretorius (1988: 50) experiences on a pathic level of feeling have the implication of pathic unrest. Such a child from a deprived community is usually labile, confused and disorientated concerning the gnostic import of experiences. It inhibits the child's desires and initiative in a number of ways. Pretorius (1988: 50-51) mentions the following examples which have particular reference to the children from a deprived community:

- * the child wishes to become someone in his own right but he is held in check and remains small (immature);
- * he is forced to adopt an expectant attitude despite the fact that as a person he is endowed with the initiative to create relationships;

- * he desires to be accepted, yet feels rejected;
- * would like to feel worthy, but feels inferior instead;
- * he desires stability; seeks understanding, but regards himself as misunderstood;
- * craves support to realise his full potential, but constantly seems to be dispossessed of his potentialities; and
- * wishes to submit to true authority, but experiences a total absence of it.

(ii) Inadequate emancipation

According to Vrey (1984: 13) the person who the child is constantly becoming, corresponds with his anticipated image of self (with that which he would like to become). If this image seems dim or unattainable as in the case of the deprived child, he will eventually accept that it is in actual fact unreachable - and will consequently believe himself to be hopelessly "inferior".

"Emancipating" essentially means that the child is realising or actualising the potential he is endowed with as a person as it pertains to his various abilities (Van Niekerk, 1990: 23). The child who "under-estimates" his potential is consequently limited to actualising only this supposedly "inferior" potential. According to Van Niekerk (1990: 23) there is proof of a weakened will in respect of his real

potential, especially in an emancipatory sense. This obviously amounts to reluctance (unwillingness) to become properly adult.

The absence of an educator/parent in the life-world of the deprived child gives rise to a situation where no purposeful support is given with regard to his emancipation. The fostering within him of the will to become what he ought to be according to his potential, is also absent (Van Niekerk, 1990: 22-23; Vrey, 1984: 105).

(iii) Inadequate distantiating

According to Van Niekerk (1990: 23) a child in a dysfunctional educational setting usually takes inadequate distance from himself and his situatedness. This fact has particular implications regarding the way in which the child will set about learning. In failing to take sufficient distance from himself, the deprived child is therefore less able to adopt the proper attitude for truly involving himself with the things of this world which are outside of himself. This inability to experience matters and ascribe significance to them in a sufficiently dissociated, controlled and well-ordered gnostic manner by means of his perceptions, thoughts, etc. brings about a further degree of pathic-affective lability. He in effect fails to sufficiently control his emotional life by means of his reason. The insecure child, of which the deprived child is a good example, finds it hard to risk proceeding from the mode of sensing to perceiving, and onward to thinking, imagining and memorising, as he is hampered by anxiety and emotional unrest. A labile mode of sensing also frequently causes the child's attention to fluctuate when he tries to attend to something on a gnostic level (Sonnekus, 1985: 112; Van Niekerk, 1990: 23-24).

(iv) Inadequate differentiation

In a dysfunctional educational setting a child is reluctant to fully actualise his potential and accordingly also reveals a reluctance to differentiate (Van Niekerk, 1990: 24). When his cognitive education is neglected (e.g. by meagre responses to his questions regarding the surrounding world) he may initially still prove to be willing to differentiate according to this ability. The inadequate disclosure of real facts by the educator does not, however, grant the child a sufficient opportunity to really actualise and practise his intellectual potential, by way of differentiation, as the proper guidance and instruction are simply lacking (Van Niekerk, 1990: 24; Vrey, 1984: 17-18).

Inadequate intellectual education implies that the deprived child fails to achieve the necessary opportunity to differentiate the potentialities he has been endowed with as a person and to "exercise" them in attaching real significance to the realities of living, in practical situations. Scharf, Powell and Thomas (Hickson & Gaydon, 1989: 88) mention that most of the deprived children in South Africa have little exposure to formal education, and consequently lack basic and numerical skills. According to Kramer, McLachlan, Osler and Swart (1986) most of the deprived have been identified as learning disabled.

Apart from the thousands of black children of school going age who have no part of formal education, in certain areas 50% of the pupils are in need of remedial education (Human Science Research Council, 1981: 139). It is therefore not surprising that more than half of the pupils who started their school careers in 1977 already left school before the end of standard 4 (Human Science Research Council, 1981: 141).

(v) Inadequate objectification

When a child is over-protected or rejected, or when too much is consistently expected of him, he feels that he is not at total liberty to "let go" of himself, his fellow-man and material things in order to view himself, his parents, other people and the realities of life objectively. He is consequently unable to discover the factual nature of matters (Van Niekerk, 1990: 24).

If that which should be said, done and known is insufficiently modelled or instructed to the child, he is not receiving adequate and real support toward eventually taking an objective stance. In the classroom or at home the educator must endeavour to always answer the child's questions concerning reality as adequate as possible. If the child's questions are ignored or answered unsatisfactorily, this child who is busy actualising his personal potential, achieves only an uncertain or wavering grasp of the content which he knows he does not fully know. Consequently his awareness of his ignorance and his quest for knowledge are both intensified. In this regard the deprived child's affect may then become increasingly labile, especially because he "knows" that he "does not know". It may also lead to a lack of organisation and insufficient structuring in respect of his quest for knowledge, so that he fails to discover the essentials of life. Ironically, he tries to escape the danger by retreating into an experiential world which is already "unsafe"; and by safeguarding himself by way of passivity, thus further decreasing his gnostic-cognitive mobility. Action and activity in the sense of wanting to explore, emancipate, etc. of one's own accord consequently comes to a virtual halt, hence, the deprived child's orientation is inadequate (Van Niekerk, 1990: 24-25; Vrey, 1984: 106).

(vi) Inadequate learning

We are reminded of the fact that the educative dialogue is always a point where the subjective interpretations of an adult and a child intersect, and where short-circuits may occur (Van Niekerk, 1990: 26). It is accordingly also clear that no child learns automatically. To be able to learn, a child must actively direct himself to the content emotionally and involve himself intellectually.

The affective mode of learning is sensing, also qualified as an accompanying or concomitant mode of learning. It is the consistent preparation and introduction to all cognitive modes of learning. It is the initial stage of becoming involved with the content, where the child actually becomes aware of it. When he subsequently opens up to the content in order to assimilate it into his own experiential world by means of his perceptions, thoughts, etc., he is paying attention to the content and learning it (Van Niekerk, 1990: 25). The child's fund of experience reflects a hierarchy of values and significances, which reflect the way in which things have been meaningfully experienced, e.g. stabile or labile in the affective sense, or cognitively organised or disorganised. Those experiences which he has not meaningfully integrated or digested (usually manifested in terms of anxiety, uncertainty, insecurity and ignorance) constantly force themselves to awareness. In his efforts to learn, he experiences difficulties in breaking through these subjective moments of sensing in order to focus on the material to be learned in an organised way. This is the prerequisite to remaining involved with or paying attention to the contents by way of perceiving, thinking and so forth (Van Niekerk, 1990: 25; Kruger & Krause, 1979: 89-95).

It follows that the possibility always exists for affective lability to occur, resulting in a destabilisation of the sensing mode of learning which initiates all learning and which should accompany the cognitive modes. The child in that instance also feels that he is unable to learn adequately. This in turn leads to an intensification of his feelings of anxiety, insecurity and ignorance. Such a condition can be envisaged as a "wall" which has arisen between the child's learning potential and his affective learning, instead of the "bridge" which normally exists when he feels secure in his lived-experience of love, acceptance, encouragement, warmth, and so forth, which enables him to fully realise his learning potential (Van Niekerk, 1990: 63).

With reference to Scharf *et al.* (Hickson & Gaydon, 1989: 88) state that many of the deprived children report that they ran away from home to escape school. They described having experienced humiliation, rejection and failure in the school setting which resulted in conflict situations at home. Consequently the school environment was perceived as hostile, and most of those who left, recall being beaten on numerous occasions. Affective destabilisation thus essentially causes a corrosion on the deprived child's readiness to learn in the classroom, resulting in further lability, which in turn again hampers him in his sensing and attending. He will under these circumstances never be able to learn according to his true potential.

3.3.2 Relationship with others

(1) Relations with parents

According to Vrey (1984: 22-23) parents have authority and, ideally, provide the

secure basis from which the child initiates other relationships. His increasing involvement with the world outside his home entails new perspective; parents are seen as people comparable to other adults. In a psychological sense, the child leaves the parent's home and takes up a new personal vantage point outside the family from which he sees both the world and the home in a new light. These assumptions of new vantage points can be seen as the child's fight for emancipation. It is indeed an effort and a fight, because leaving home implies the possibility that the door may shut behind him and not easily open again. We see this in the anxiety and conflict experienced by many children, particularly those whose relations with their parents were not wholesome to start with (Zalba, 1983: 444).

During the pre-school stage of the child's becoming the mother is well known. Because of the consistency of her behaviour she remains an anchorage point or beacon for the formation of further relationships. A healthy relationship will be characterised by love, security, self-giving acceptance, trust and esteem. The father's availability and continuous willingness to establish a relationship provide opportunities for the child to experience that he has someone besides mother to whom he can turn for help en route to adulthood (Oberholzer, 1986 a: 74-76).

The parent who knows his child not only sees or hears the child but also feels, and through this empathy knows what the child needs. The knowing, feeling and willing are mutual. The child knows the parent who does not always succeed in hiding his feelings. The child also very well understands the parents' intentions concerning himself. The polarisation effect of a healthy relationship is attraction. Even if the parent were to reject the child, the latter will for a considerable period

of time approach the parent. He is emotionally bound to the parent in such a way that separation brings pain. (Du Plooy, Griessel & Oberholzer, 1982; Vrey, 1984).

A child who feels accepted and secure can leave his parents on occasions with far less tension and anxiety because he is secure. This certainty of acceptance is very important for a child's becoming since he can venture and explore without fear of separation from the parent (Vrey, 1984; Du Plooy, Griessel & Oberholzer, 1982).

(a) Errors in the parent-child relationship

Van Niekerk (1990: 14-20) ascribes the dysfunction of the pedagogical situation to specific errors in relation to the child. These factors may be summarised under the following headings:

(i) Lack of security

Lubbers (Van Niekerk, 1990: 14) declares that when a person fails to meaningfully integrate that which is offered to him by life (also in the sense of a task or a command), yet on the other hand cannot make his peace with it either, that matter becomes an indeterminable burden which allows no escape. This burden makes itself felt in a generalised sense of unease and unhappiness, which is barely definable. If a child is not offered a guarantee of security by his educators, he is exposed to danger and no longer exists in close connection with the adults with whom he should have been allied by the shared goal of his own adulthood.

(ii) Obscured future perspective

Ter Horst (1980: 97) remarks in this context that the educators for the time being represent past, present and future to the child. When the educators ignore or shirk their educational responsibility, there are no memories, stories, photo albums, other people or even objects to bind the child to his past. If the future is obscured in the child's view, there is little to look forward to or to expect and there are no plans or tasks, however small, waiting to be fulfilled.

(iii) Affective or emotional neglect

The unfavourable course that education may run, always implies that the educational relationships are likewise being inadequately realised (Van Niekerk, 1990: 15). A child may consequently experience little or no sense in relationships. This results in his being "unwilling" to risk total involvement with any educator. A lack of mutual trust, understanding and sympathetic authoritative guidance always implies that the child must suffer neglect in respect of not only his affective, but also his intellectual and moral development. He will consequently explore the educational contents inadequately, so that the educational encounter is likewise inadequately performed by his pre-cognitive (intuitive) reconnaissance. Destabilised trust and confidence then indeed lead to half-heartedness by suppressing the urge to explore (Vrey, 1984; Van Niekerk, 1990; Kapp, 1991).

When the educational encounter is lukewarm or is based on uncertainty, it cannot come to fruition. The child then experiences that he is not being accepted, that the adult is not sincerely making contact with him. He will

consequently not be whole-hearted in his acceptance of authority and of norms represented by the adult (Gardner, 1978: 75).

When the educational course does not culminate in an emotional encounter, the child is reluctant to trust the adult. The child in other words is not receptive to education because he feels misunderstood, and he refuses to listen to an exposition or explanation of norms (Vrey, 1984; Kapp, 1991).

When the educator fails to grant the child the opportunity to experience trust and faith, he actually becomes a threat to the child. He does not contribute towards the child's actualization of his psychic life in respect of his significant personal experience, his will, his knowledge and his action. The child remains more immature than could be expected (Van Niekerk, 1990: 122).

A child who lacks trust and confidence is labile or even impulsive in his emotional life. Whenever it is impossible for a child to trust and to have faith in his educators the relationship of understanding is also bound to fail because such educators do not really understand the child or what is happening to him. They especially have little insight into the full implications of his distress (Van Niekerk, 1990: 16; Sonnekus, 1985: 151).

(iv) Rejection of the child

According to Van Niekerk (1990: 17) a child can generally do very little to ensure that he will be lovingly accepted from the outset. He might as easily be rejected,

despite all the potential that he may have. When an educator does not spontaneously accept, but in fact rejects a child, the latter immediately feels that he is not being accepted and is thought of as unwelcome. He then experiences insecurity and anxiety. This intuitive knowledge (felt knowledge) eventually drives him to withdraw from the educational relationship, thus inhibiting any true encounter.

(v) The inadequate exercise of authority

Problems furthermore arise in the child's educational situation when authority is constantly wielded in an unsympathetic, inconsistent, loveless or dictatorial manner, but also when no authority is exercised at all. When a child is confronted with too many commands and/or demands, when too much is expected of him he regards most of these restrictions to be devoid of meaning, the great number of impressions alone could give rise to uncertainty within him (Van Niekerk, 1990: 19).

(vi) Disregarding the child as a unique person

One should constantly bear in mind what the real meanings are which the child may be ascribing to the adult's actions. Affective liability for example accompanies any unfavourable lived-experience, in the sense that the child comes to regard himself, his parents, teachers, the school, his friends and even his lessons with anxiety. Van Niekerk (1990: 19) maintains that the way in which the child is greeted by a parent or his teacher; the way in which a question is asked about his activities; in which he is instructed or forbidden to do certain things; the tone in which appreciation is expressed - indeed, in every communicative

interaction between the educator and the child derives its real significance from the child's experiential world in a unique way.

(2) Awareness of the family's nature

Pretorius (1988: 56-58) sees the secure environment of the family milieu as providing the child with the following vital aspects which are essential in the child's efforts of becoming:

- * the family milieu provides the child with a safe place from which he can explore his life-world;
- * the family milieu supplies the child with answers to problems he may encounter during his explorations;
- * the family milieu is a world where love is personally directed towards the child;
- * the family milieu is the primary socialising agent where the child learns socially accepted behaviour;
- * the family milieu is dynamic in that it adjusts according to, and accommodates changes and new influences from outside the family milieu; and
- * the family milieu is one of lasting relationships which enable the child to discover personal norms and values.

Children from deprived communities do not experience the above important aspects en route to adulthood because the environment they live in is far from being secure, stable and conducive (Van Niekerk, 1990).

(3) Peers

Up to the age of four the child's language and play are mainly egocentric, but he enjoys immensely being with his peers. Between the ages of four and six communication with playmates teaches him the beginnings of sharing. The urge to be accepted helps him to control his own feelings and will (Vrey, 1984; Griessel, 1987; Oberholzer, 1986 a; Du Plooy & Kilian, 1984). Interaction with his peers puts pressure on the child to conform to the rules of the group. Children spending their time during the critical development within the confines of limited social environment such as the home somewhat limits their social experience, especially in the case of the children from deprived communities. Play, the joyous work of childhood is seen as the activity that satisfies the needs of peers. Cohen and Rudolph (1977: 103) have found that play is a totally integrating experience among children. Social interaction among peers is essential; sharing actions and ideas with each other gives them a growing understanding of the world and themselves (Vrey, 1984: 24; Derbyshire, 1991: 188-189; Mwamwenda, 1989: 34-35).

3.3.3 Relationships with objects and ideas

Relationships with objects and ideas in his life-world depend on his ability to assign to the concepts of space, time and quantity in regard to the concrete world. The child's understanding of the objects depends directly on the permanence of

their meaning of them. When the ball rolls under the chest of drawers he knows the ball has not disappeared. He, however, makes meaningful attempts to retrieve it. He is aware that his physical environment includes more objects than he has any immediate use for. He can picture familiar but absent objects and compare these with objects he can see. He can give a reasonable answer to a question like "Does this car look like your father's car?" The mental image the child works with, and their relationships are still primitive. He may know that the large aeroplane next to him is the same as the "tiny" one high in the air. But space and time are confusing and he finds it difficult to deal with permanence of size in relation to an increase in distance. This ability increases rapidly as he becomes older and more experienced. He becomes better at spatially structuring his world. This is important as it enables him to take up a stance regarding to objects and their size relative to himself. Spatial orientation especially in regard to position, size and distance makes accurate perceptions possible. A child with problems in spatial orientation has difficulty in distinguishing between right and wrong, inside and outside, above and below, left and right, before and after, etc. When making shapes he confuses "b" with "d". Exercises in perceptual development, especially at pre-school are very important to the child's readiness for school. Most children achieve spatial orientation before they go to school, their relationships with objects in space are authentic (Vygotsky, 1987; Vrey, 1984; Sonnekus, 1991; Venter, 1979; Mwamwenda, 1989).

The child has a problem with temporal orientation because he cannot understand that time proceeds at a constant pace, independently of himself, his wishes and his needs. His conception of time is much longer than the half-an-hour he spends

waiting for his friend than the half-an-hour they spend together. Only after the age of four years can the child begin to form an idea of the constancy of the time indicated by clocks and calendars. He often develops his own time units. In order to form relationships with the world temporal and spatial concepts are necessary. At first due to centric and egocentric thought, the child's concept of time relates only to himself, his needs and pleasures. Gradually the time concept according to a *chronometer and calendar* develops. The *permanence of time* begins to become very much clearer to the child and he is able to see the relationship between time and distance. He begins to realise that to run round the block of flats twice takes longer than to run once (Vrey, 1984; Vygotsky, 1987; Sonnekus, 1991).

According to Piaget and Inhelder (Vrey, 1984: 107) the child is of the opinion that quantity changes along with shape. He thinks the clay becomes less when its shape is changed from a long snake to a ball. Only when the conservation of permanence of volume, quantity and number despite changes in colour, shape, etc. is realised can the child form authentic relations in this regard.

A child's concept of his physical world is a function of the unique interaction between the child and his environment, experience, needs and ideals. He makes no attempt to understand space as space or quantity as quantity. The concept appears as part of his interaction with people and objects, and individual differences bring about a difference in quantity and quality of these relations (Vrey, 1984; Van Niekerk, 1990; Langeveld, 1974; Sonnekus, 1991; Kapp, 1991).

Elkind (Vrey, 1984: 179) notes that abstract thought enables the child to conceptualise concepts of identity and destiny. Directing this thought to himself, he becomes aware of new dimensions in his own identity and in his ability to conceive logical consequences. He can also think about his destiny and so form a conception of the ideal self. Abstract thought is developed through formal education. The lack of meaningful education in the life-world of the pre-school child will thus hamper the adequate development of abstract thought (Griessel, Louw & Swart, 1986: 173; Burger, 1993: 53).

3.3.4 Relationship with God

Urbani (1987: 13) says, "According to the Christian religion man is a being of value. He has been created in the image and likeness of God and is therefore more than mere blood and bones. He has been called by God and must account to God for his actions".

Like anyone else a child from a deprived community may question the sense and meaning of his existence. Such a child because of the circumstances in which he finds himself is no more dependent upon God than a child from an affluent society. Ultimate realisation of the meaning of life is according to May (Urbani, 1987: 14) to say "Yes" to God for it is only through Him that sense can be given to existence. A deprived child like any other depends on the loving help and support of an adult in his endeavours to understand the meaning of life. One of the attitudes that can be adopted by a deprived child in his relationship with God is "acceptance". Active acceptance means confidence and faith that life has meaning and purpose. May (Urbani, 1987: 15) says that religion is the belief in purpose,

and therefore meaning, in the total life process ... Religious experience involves real faith in God (Urbani, 1987: 13-15).

3.4 SUMMARY

In constituting his life-world, the child is increasingly concerned with ideas. As with objects, people, or the attitudes of people towards himself, he becomes aware of the significance of ideas for him and their implications for his own identity (Vrey, 1984: 177). The pre-school child from a deprived community constitutes an inadequate life-world and this will eventually influence his relations to himself, others, objects and God. The absence of formal education, a secure home environment and other essential factors for his becoming inhibits the proper development of the child's cognitive powers. The life-world of the child will thus be inadequate because it focuses mainly on the essence of survival and the rejection of things and/or ideas that cannot be utilised for survival purposes.

According to Van Niekerk (1990: 20-30) under-actualization of the psychic life of the pre-school child will eventually result in:

- * inadequate exploration;
- * inadequate emancipation;
- * inadequate distantiation;
- * inadequate differentiation;

- * inadequate objectivation; and
- * inadequate learning.

In the next chapter, accountable support for the children from a deprived community will be discussed.

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CHAPTER 4

ACCOUNTABLE SUPPORT FOR THE CHILDREN FROM A DEPRIVED COMMUNITY

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CHAPTER 4

ACCOUNTABLE SUPPORT FOR THE CHILDREN FROM A DEPRIVED COMMUNITY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three it was found that the pre-school child from a deprived community constituted an inadequate life-world and this eventually does influence his relationship with parents, peers, objects and God. No child can be rushed into school readiness within a short period. A child should be prepared for school from birth. In this chapter accountable support given to parents, pre-school children and teachers of pre-school children from a deprived community, and the roles played by social workers, parents, pre-school teachers and the principals are discussed.

Van Niekerk (1990: 6) states that without the active participation of the adults (parents) in the dynamics of the education situation, the essential meaning of education is not fulfilled. Parental involvement in the child's pre-school education is, therefore, of paramount importance as this not only improves the relationship between educators and the child but also equips both with the skills to deal with problems encountered by children especially in their formative years of schooling.

According to Van Schalkwyk (1983: 132) every supporting service for a child accomplishes a specific task in the interest of education: "... supporting services are essentially educationally qualified". Ruperti (1979: 112) calls supporting services as organised assistance provided so that the education process can proceed smoothly. With particular reference to the pedagogic situation Van Schalkwyk (1983: 132) mentions that after the origin of the child's problem and its causes have been determined, support must also be given to the parents since they are generally the main cause of the child's problems. It would be untenable to try to explain the phenomenon of the deprived child in a simplistic way by referring to certain specific factors in isolation, such as poverty or drug and alcohol abuse (Van Niekerk, 1990: 5). The effect of each of these factors on the education or upbringing of a child from a deprived community should be interpreted and clearly indicated. Accountable support for the deprived child must be therefore viewed from his dependence on education. The deprived child finds himself in a situation of dysfunctional education. Accountable support for the deprived child implies that the child must be given meaningful help so that the situation of dysfunctional education in which he is caught up with can be rectified. This also implies that all existing legislations that provide for the social, welfare and education of the deprived child and structures for the accountable support for the deprived child must be investigated (Steyn, Van Wyk & Le Roux, 1987; Derbyshire, 1991).

The Child Care Act No 86 of 1991 (Republic of South Africa, 1991) is a legal instrument sanctioning the services rendered to all children in need of care in the Republic of South Africa. According to Mbanjwa (1990: 2) community involvement has however, increased particularly to meeting the needs of the deprived child, and there has been a noticeable discrepancy between what the Act

provides and what private initiative is offering towards the alleviation of the plight of the deprived child.

4.2 THE CHILD CARE ACT NO 86 OF 1991 AS AMENDED

This act focuses on the inadequate parent rather than on the uncontrollable child. No provision is made in the Act to accommodate parents who, because of the circumstances beyond their control (poverty, urbanisation, unrest, illiteracy, etc.) do not earn enough to provide for the needs of their family (Van Niekerk, 1990: 6).

4.2.1 Certain definitions in this Act

Before looking at the above-mentioned act it is necessary to clarify certain definitions from The Child Care Act No 86 of 1991 (Republic of South Africa, 1991) as amended:

- * **Social worker:** Means any person registered as a social worker under the Social and Associated Workers Act.
- * **Authorised Officer:** Means any person authorized in writing by a commissioner of Child Welfare, social worker or policeman to perform a service.
- * **Children's court:** A private hearing where a commissioner of Child

Welfare (who is always a magistrate), a social worker, a child and family concerned attend an inquiry held in camera.

- * **Children's home:** Means any residence or home maintained for the reception, protection, care and bringing-up of more than six children apart from their parents but does not include any school of industries or reform.
- * **Reform school:** Means a school maintained for the reception, care, education and training of children sent thereto in terms of the Criminal Procedure Act of 1991 as amended, and sent thereto under the Child Care Act No 86 of 1991 as amended.
- * **School of industries:** Means a school maintained for the reception, care, education and training of children sent or transferred thereto under the Child Care Act.
- * **Director-General:** In relation to the Child Care Act means the head of the department of State, administered by the Minister to whom the administration of that provision has been assigned.
- * **Place of Care:** Means any building or premises maintained or used, whether for profit or otherwise, for the reception and temporal or partial care of more than six children apart from their parents, but does not include any boarding school, school hostel or any establishment which is maintained or used mainly for the tuition or

training of children which is controlled by or which has been registered or approved by the State.

- * Place of safety: Means any temporal place suitable for the reception of a child into which the owner, occupier or person in charge thereof is willing to receive a child.

4.2.2 Provisions in the Child Care Act No 86 of 1991 as amended

The following are the various ways in which the children are dealt with in terms of this Act:

(1) Opening of Children's Court proceedings

There are four ways in which children's Court proceedings may be opened viz:

- * If it appears to any court in the course of any proceedings before that court that any child has no parent or guardian or that it is in the interest and welfare of any child that he be taken to a place of safety, that court may make such an order (Section 11 (1)).
- * If it appears to any Commissioner of Child Welfare on information given under oath by any person that there is reasonable grounds for believing that any child has no parent or guardian, or that it is in the interest of the safety and welfare of any child that he be taken to a place of safety, that Commissioner may issue a warrant authorizing

any policeman or social worker or any other person to search for the child and take him to a place of safety (Section 11 (2)).

- * Any policeman, social worker or authorized officer may remove a child to a place of safety without a warrant if such a person has reason to believe that the child is a child referred to in Section 14 (14), (to be explained later) and that the delay in obtaining a warrant will be prejudicial to the safety and welfare of that child (Section 12 (1)).
- * A child can be taken to a children's court by a social worker with a report requesting that children's court proceedings be opened in view of the fact that the child has no parent or guardian or is in the custody of a person unable or unfit in terms of section 14 (14) to have the custody of the child.

(2) Holding of Inquiries

Holding of inquiries is the second provision laid down in the Child Care Act No 86 of 1991 for dealing with children. At the children's court inquiry the court must determine whether a child before it can be described in terms of Section 14 (4) referred to earlier. This would determine whether:

- * the child has no parent or guardian;
- * the child has a parent or guardian who is unable or unfit to have the custody of the child in that he either

- * is mentally ill to such a degree that he is unable to provide for the physical, mental or social well-being of the child;
- * has assaulted or ill-treated the child or allowed him to be assaulted or ill-treated;
- * has caused or conduced to the seduction, abduction or prostitution of the child or the commission by the child of immoral acts;
- * displays habits and behaviour which may seriously injure the physical, mental or social well-being of the child;
- * fails to maintain the child adequately;
- * neglects the child or allows him to be neglected;
- * cannot control the child properly, so as to ensure proper behaviour such as regular school attendance; and
- * has no visible means of support.

As can be noted above, emphasis in Section 14 is more on the parent than on the child. This sometimes creates problems for social workers when dealing with the deprived children as their parents are not easily available to investigate their circumstances (Mbanjwa, 1990: 6). Social workers therefore have to "presume" that the parents are unable or unfit to care for their child.

(3) Orders which can be made at the inquiry

Upon the holding of a Children's Court Inquiry the Child Care Act makes provision for either of the following orders to be made:

- * that the child be returned to his parents under the supervision of the social worker and on a condition that the child or his parent comply with certain requirements;
- * that the child be placed in the custody of foster parents under supervision of the social worker;
- * that the child be sent to a children's home designated by the Director-General; and
- * that the child be sent to a school of industries designated by the Director-General (Section 15 (1)).

(4) Residential care provided in terms of the Child Care Act No 86 of 1991 as amended

(a) Place of Safety

As has been stated under the definitions, this is a place that provides temporal care of the children whilst the social workers are carrying out investigations in terms of the Child Care Act. The Child Care Act permits detention of the child for up to 14 days after which a social worker is expected to report at the Children's Court

with her recommendations regarding the future placement of the child (Mbanjwa, 1990: 7).

(b) Children's Home

Any residence or home maintained for the reception, protection, care and bringing-up of more than six children apart from their parents but does not include any school of industries or reform school. According to Mbanjwa (1990:7) children who for any reason cannot be returned to their parents or cannot be placed with foster parents are very often sent to a Children's Home which is a more permanent home than the Place of Safety. The Act provides for the keeping of a child at the Children's Home for up to 2 years.

(c) Reform Schools

Children that have been dealt with in terms of the Criminal Procedures Act of 1991 as amended, are very often ordered to Reform School. This is a corrective institution which through both its professional and non-professional staff aims at providing a corrective rehabilitation programme to assist juveniles to normal standards of action. Children stay for up to 2 years (Mbanjwa, 1990: 7).

(d) Schools of Industries

According to Van Niekerk (1990: 4) schools of industries are places that aim at training the youth in the marketable skills of industry. Formal education is also

provided though the main emphasis is preparing the youth for eventual entry into the open labour market. Skills training is offered in trades like brick-laying, carpentry, electrical engineering etc.

4.3 OVERVIEW OF THE SOUTH AFRICAN WELFARE SYSTEM

4.3.1 Legislation

According to the new government which came into being as from the end of April 1994 all Welfare and Social legislations previously based on ethnicity are currently being addressed.

In addition to the Republic of South Africa Constitution Act, 1983, which enables welfare to be organized on a race group basis, three Acts of Parliament provide the framework for the Republic's social welfare system (McKendrick, 1987: 24-28):

- * the Social and Associated Workers Act 1986 as amended, which provides for control over the profession of social work and associated professions (such as child care workers, for example);
- * the National Welfare Act 1986 as amended, which provides amongst other things for the registration of welfare organizations, the co-ordination and planning of welfare services at the local level, a South African Welfare Council to advise the Minister on welfare matters, and for regional welfare boards for the various race groups; and

- * fund-raising Act 1978, as amended, which provides for control of the collection or receipt of voluntary contributions for the public.

Within the context of these three Acts, social welfare organizations are influenced by the provisions of other Acts which regulate the social welfare response to persons who are disadvantaged or at risk. Principal among these Acts are:

- * Abuse of Dependence Producing Substances and Rehabilitation Centres Act, No 78 of 1990;
- * The Aged Persons Act, No 46 of 1976;
- * The Blind Persons Act, No 16 of 1971;
- * The Child Care Act, No 86 of 1991;
- * The Criminal Procedure Act, No 5 of 1991;
- * The Disability Grants Act, No 17 of 1971;
- * The Mental Health Act, No 62 of 1988; and
- * The Social Pensions Act, No 96 Of 1983.

4.3.2 Structure

Bearing in mind that a number of uniracial welfare structures exist side by side, it is nevertheless possible to demarcate the respective roles of state and community across all of these parallel structures.

According to McKendrick (1987) the state's task is provision of:

- * statutory personal social service programmes;
- * overall planning of social welfare; and
- * social security provision.

The private sector, comprising community and church-sponsored welfare organisations, has primary responsibility for non-statutory personal social services.

"Personal social services", or "social services", refer to organised activities that are directly concerned with the conservation, protection and improvement of human resources (McKendrick, 1987: 25). They involve direct services to people (individuals, families, small groups and larger community groups) to promote their social well-being, to prevent the occurrence of social problems, and to reduce existing social problems.

The term "social security" is used (McKendrick, 1987: 25) to imply programmes of protection, usually involving financial assistance, provided to people by the state in order to protect them against the contingencies of life (e.g. blindness, disability, old age, etc.).

According to McKendrick (1987: 26) in South Africa proper state-sponsored personal social services are delivered through the regional and local offices of four state departments (the Departments of Health Services and Welfare of the Houses

of Assembly, Delegates and Representatives, respectively, and the Department of education and Development Aid); while in the self-governing and independent South African national states, they are delivered through independent departments of health and welfare.

The personal social services given by state departments are concerned with the social welfare aspects of Acts of Parliament. Community and church-sponsored personal social services are delivered by 1 600 local welfare organizations, registered as such in terms of the National Welfare Act, 1986, as amended. Almost without exception, local welfare organizations are affiliated to one of 18 nationally- or provincially-organised bodies (for example, the S.A. National Council for the Blind, or the Jewish Family and Community Council of the Transvaal). These national and provincial bodies co-ordinate and develop local services within their functional fields.

While overall control of social welfare planning is retained by the various state departments, four structures exist to facilitate co-ordination and co-operation between the state and the private sector on matters directly or indirectly related to welfare (McKendrick, 1987: 26).

- * Nationally- and provincially-organised bodies liaise with the state on matters concerning the fields in which they function, while on matters of common interest they combine together into an *ad hoc* committee for dealings with the state.
- * The National Welfare Act, 1986, as amended, provides for 24 regional welfare boards, representing states and community interests,

which have statutory power to regulate, co-ordinate, promote and plan welfare activities within their regions. These boards are uniracial. At the national level, the multi-racial South African Welfare Council advises the government on social welfare needs and issues.

- * For the purposes of co-ordinating social, physical, economic and constitutional development, the Department of Constitutional Development and Planning has created multi-racial Regional Development Advisory Committees in each of the eight development regions of South Africa. Each regional committee is represented on the National Development Advisory Committee, which advises the Cabinet on overall development needs and strategies.
- * A national Population Development Programme, initiated in 1984, has the aim of stimulating community development at the local level in order to accelerate improvement in the quality of life of all communities. Local community development committees are represented on sub-regional Development Associations, which in turn are represented on the regional development advisory committees described earlier. Within each region, state and community activities to promote the Population Development Programme are co-ordinated through an inter-departmental committee on which the private sector is represented (McKendrick & Dudas, 1987).

In addition to the four structures described above, other structures exist which may have influence on the co-ordination and/or development of welfare facilities. One of these is the network of state-established Joint Management Committees which

covers the whole country. The functioning of these committees is not open to direct public scrutiny. The committees are reported to be primarily concerned with security, and to this end co-ordinate the activities of all state departments, including security forces, at the local levels (McKendrick, 1987: 29).

Other programmes and structures with the potential to greatly influence welfare planning and co-ordination exist under the aegis of the "common affairs" Department of National Health and Population Development. One is a co-ordinating Committee to promote the interest of disabled people at national and regional levels through the formulation of a national policy on the care of the disabled, and the devising of strategies to meet these people's needs. Another is the National Advisory Board on Rehabilitation Matters which, despite its broad title, is concerned with the abuse of dependence-producing substances. This Board is giving attention to the formulation of a national policy on the prevention and combatting of alcohol and drug abuse.

4.3.3 Funding of social welfare

According to McKendrick (1987: 27-28) the finance for welfare services in South Africa is predominantly provided by the state from tax revenue. Income tax from individuals provides the state with its largest single source of revenue: 10 billion Rands annually, compared with 9,5 billion Rands in tax collected from industry and 8 billion Rands generated from general sales tax.

Work-related social security provision involves funding from other sources in addition to the state. Unemployment insurance (which includes maternity and

sickness benefits for workers) is jointly funded by contributions from employees, employers and the state, while work injury benefits ('workmen's compensation') are financed entirely by employers through insurance premiums which vary with risk.

There can be no doubt that the state is overwhelmingly the major source of finance for welfare services (McKendrick, 1987: 27-28). Nevertheless, the private sector is not an insignificant source of funding for community welfare organisations. No recent figure exists of the actual total income of the Republic's 1 600 community-and-church-sponsored welfare organizations, but in 1976 the Van Rooyen Commission estimated their income to be R130 million (Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the collection of voluntary contributions from the public, 1976). McKendrick and Dudas (1987) have projected that this income, allowing for inflation, was in excess of R250 million in 1986.

4.4 DE LANGE REPORT (H.S.R.C.: 1981)

An investigation regarding education for the pedagogically neglected child is contained in the De Lange Report (H.S.R.C.: 1981). which investigated education for children with special educational needs. Although not specifically mentioned, the deprived child is without any doubt a pedagogically neglected child. The De Lange Report (H.S.R.C.: 1981) made certain recommendations regarding a support structure for the pedagogically neglected child. These recommendations can also prove to be invaluable; as means of support for the deprived children as well as an effective means to deal with the deprived children phenomenon as a whole. Let us then consider these recommendations.

4.4.1 Recommendations of the De Lange Report (H.S.R.C.: 1981)
regarding the pedagogically neglected child

According to the De Lange Report (H.S.R.C.: 1981) ways and means should be sought to place Children's Homes, Children's Act Schools and Places of Safety under the same control, preferably under that of the department that is best equipped to see to the needs of these children. Other recommendations include the following:

- * Children with no behaviour deviations who reside in children's homes should not be placed in Children's Act schools.
- * Attention should be given to the size, construction and geographic placement of Children's Act schools and children's homes, but more specifically to smaller hostels and contact with other schools and society in general.
- * Provision of services on the basis of a multi-disciplinary team should enjoy top priority.
- * An in-depth evaluation would be made of how the total situation of the juvenile delinquent is dealt with, with special reference to the quality of the present re-educative programme.
- * Long-term follow-up studies of pupils who have been discharged from Children's Act schools should be undertaken with a view to possible future adjustments of the present educational situation.

- * Attention should be paid to the critical shortage of child psychiatrists and their training.
- * A co-operative Educational Service Centre (CESC) which incorporates a section for Evaluation and Guidance (SEG) should be established in every defined educational region (or service area).

(1) The functioning of the section for evaluation and guidance (SEG)

According to the De Lange Report (H.S.R.C : 1981) the task of the SEG includes comprehensive diagnosis, designing remedial educational programmes and guidance. The SEG does not provide continuous remedial and other assistance, therapy, special education, etc. This is provided within the various educational institutions where guidance re-diagnosis, follow-up treatment and in-service training can be done by the staff of the SEG.

Comprehensive evaluation includes an evaluation, diagnosis, guidance and designing programmes by a team comprising educationists, social workers, psychologists, medical doctors and paramedics. The SEG therefore provides preventive as well as diagnostic and guidance services in that evaluation, diagnosis and guidance are provided for children (from birth onwards) as well as parents (a genetic advisory service is also included).

To create greater clarity and rationalization in respect of these team members, the Work Committee: Education for children with special educational needs as a result of its findings held in-depth discussions on the personnel who should be involved

in the school clinics and co-operative evaluation and guidance centres and laid down guidelines for the functions and training of the following team members:

- * educational psychologist;
- * educationist (orthodidactics); and
- * school social worker.

An educational psychologist is someone who has been registered in terms of Medical, Dental and Supplementary Health Services Professions Act No 56 of 1974. Ideally, he has five consecutive years of training in psychology, has served an internship of 18 months at an approved institution and is capable of using diagnostic tests and making corrections in terms of diagnoses that have already been made.

The educationist (orthodidactics) has qualifications as laid down by an appropriate professional council. His functions include the interpretation of scholastic data of a diagnostic nature (or psychological reports), the development of didactical programmes, didactical evaluation, consultation with the teacher and remedial teacher in particular and the implementation of educational and remedial programmes.

The school social worker is registered according to Social Work Act No. 110 of 1978 and is responsible for family guidance, the socialization of the child and for dealing with problems that may arise in the child's transition from mainstream to special education or vice versa.

The above is merely a brief and preliminary exposition of some of the main functions of the functionaries mentioned. In the light of this the following categories of professional personnel are proposed for a fully developed SEG on a full time basis (Urbani, 1987):

- * The head as team leader/co-ordinator;
- * Doctor;
- * Educationist (orthodidactics);
- * School guidance teacher/Counselling psychologist;
- * Educational psychologist;
- * School social worker; and
- * Nurse.

Medical specialists, paramedics and legal advisors will also be included on a part-time basis. It is important that professional personnel in particular who are involved in the SEG on a full-time basis should also play a part in the in-service training of staff at the SEG as well as related personnel.

In the light of the above the following recommendations were made:

RECOMMENDATION 16: The training of educationists (orthodidactics), who are responsible for designing remedial programmes for children with learning problems

with a view to the remedial or class teachers at schools implementing those is an urgent matter.

RECOMMENDATION 18: Within the context of the SEG the task of the school social worker should include family guidance, socialization of the child and dealing with problems that may arise in the transition from mainstream education to special education or vice versa.

(2) Registration with a statutory teachers' council

It is imperative that the existing professional personnel involved in the task of evaluation and diagnosis of and providing assistance and guidance for impaired and handicapped children and who have undergone predominantly educational training, should be subject to the discipline and registration requirements of a professional council. The committee does not wish to express an opinion on what the fields of jurisdiction of the three professional councils for psychologists, social workers and teachers in particular should be, for it feels that these professional bodies should judge for themselves. The above-mentioned two categories should be able to register with a statutory teachers' council.

(3) The relation between the SEG and school clinics

School clinics which are under the same control as the schools in a specific region serve as an intermediate body between the SEG and schools. Personnel attached to school clinics consist of the same categories of team members working at the SEG. Comprehensive evaluation, diagnosis and guidance as well as assistance,

therapy, remedial treatment, compensatory education and parental guidance can be provided at school clinics. School clinics form an integral part of an education authority's provision of education in a particular area or region. The staff at school clinics and teaching staff at schools work together as a team. Personnel of the SEG can also assist with the in-service training of personnel at school clinics.

An infrastructure for the education of and the rendering of assistance to children with special educational needs should be built up simultaneously within schools and school clinics.

Initially the staff at the school clinics will have to serve more schools and provide in-service training for teachers. It is only in cases where the personnel at school clinics cannot deal with specific problem situations satisfactorily that the assistance of the SEG will be sought

4.5 SCHOOL SOCIAL WORK

In considering school social work as means of an accountable support system for the pre-school children the following important factors must be borne in mind:

- * the majority of deprived children identified in the RSA are at present from an environmentally disadvantaged community;
- * compulsory education for pre-school children does not yet exist in the RSA; and

- * school clinics for children in the different education departments are virtually non-existent.

These three factors would thus imply that at present a school social work programme within schools, as means of rendering an accountable support system for deprived children, would actually be powerless. The main reason for this is the fact that education for pre-school children is not yet compulsory. However, school social work can render a crucial contribution as a support system for pre-school children where there is compulsory education.

4.5.1 The scope of school social work

According to Le Roux (1987: 211) the behaviour of the child that is deprived of the secure environment of the school will manifest itself in aggressiveness, anti-social behaviour and the development of a phobia regarding the school and education. If a school social worker could assist the teacher in identifying, diagnosing the problem, working with the problem and even refer the problem for specialised attention, preventive action could be taken timeously within the school context. Social work training is geared towards assisting the client (e.g. a child displaying deviant behaviour) to achieve his maximum potential within any given circumstance.

Due to the fact that formal educational structures concentrate their efforts mainly on teaching or the transfer of knowledge, very little time and opportunities remain for the teacher to give special attention to pupils in need of care (Human Sciences Research Council, 1981: 58). In the same manner principals of schools are usually

buried under administrative responsibilities and have neither the time nor opportunity for supplying guidance to families where problems exist.

According to Van Wyk (1989: 88) the "Subject Advisor: Guidance" is not professionally qualified to handle welfare related problems in schools or compile reports regarding them. This task could be fulfilled by a school social worker within the school. As highlighted by the De Lange Report (H.S.R.C.: 1981) on the Provision of Education in the RSA (1981), the school social worker is registered according to Act No. 110 of 1978 and will be responsible for family guidance, the socialisation of the child and for dealing with problems that may arise in the child's transition from mainstream to special education or vice versa. The school social worker will have statutory support as well as the training to perform these functions within the school environment. At present no teacher, guidance teacher or principal has any statutory power, the required training or experience to perform these functions adequately.

4.5.2 Role of the social workers

Social workers play a meaningful role in assisting children from disadvantaged environment and community. It is not the intention of the social workers to assume the responsibility of the parents who must be involved in the welfare and education of their children. However, they offer assistance and guidance in areas such as (Abhilak, 1992; Fullard, 1981):

- * weekly discussions with mothers on topics such as hygiene, correct balanced diet, monitoring of school work, etc.;

- * eradication of teenage delinquency, drug abuse, alcoholism, truancy, anti-social behaviour;
- * introduction of a feeding scheme; and
- * establishment of day care centres and creches.

Because social workers have the special expertise in their field of work, they perform the following functions (Abhilak, 1992; Purkey, 1990):

- * advise parents who are unable to cope with their personal and social problems;
- * remove abused and neglected children and place them in the custody of foster parents;
- * reach out to the whole family to make a reliable diagnosis and evaluate the therapeutic potential;
- * refer and recommend suitable treatment for and rehabilitation of offending parents to the authorities concerned; and
- * liaise with parents, teachers, pupils, local welfare organisations and the state welfare services.

4.6 THE ROLE OF THE PARENTS

The first and main educators of the pre-school child are his parents. Although both parents are responsible for the education of their child, the roles of the father and

mother differ. The difference is mainly traditional. One of the most important functions of the parents is to prepare the child to be school ready. According to Van Niekerk (1990: 163) it can be only achieved whenever the parent and the child are together in a loving situation. By supporting the child pedagogically and by providing a living space of safety and security, a willingness to unlock reality is created for the child (De Jongh, 1987: 1).

Through parental support the child is gradually made ready for school psychically, linguistically, affective-socially and cognitively. Physical readiness entails the encouragement from parents that their child be clean and tidy, dress and undress by himself, comb his hair and eat on his own. With the caring assistance and loving support of the parents the child learns to sit, crawl and later to walk. Language as a mode of thinking helps to control his behaviour. The adult's verbal instructions force the child to subordinate his action to words. The child is assisted and supported in the establishment of positive relationships with himself, with others, with things and objects as well as with God (Gerber, 1985: 94).

4.6.1 Family

The basis of the family is love, initially the love of husband and wife and later that between husband, wife and child. As the child grows up and his relationship with his parents changes, the love between parents and child is still the binding force in the family. It may be regarded as the primary educational situation. Though teaching takes place in the family and education in school, education is primarily something that takes place in the home (Pretorius, 1988: 45). A sound family life provides the child with virtually all the guidance he needs in his striving for

adulthood. Regular care and total acceptance foster self-confidence. A family comprising father, mother, grandparents, children and other relatives are united by ties of marriage, blood or adoption (Kapp, 1991; Pretorius, 1988; Farmer, 1982; Kok, 1984).

The causes of non-school readiness may, in many instances, be traced back to the home (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983: 4). Where the coherence between family members is absent, the family is incomplete or the parents do not fulfil their educational task regarding the pre-school child, it can delay the child's school readiness. This will have a detrimental influence not only on his school entry, but on his whole disposition toward school and school work (Kapp, 1991: 190).

Some of the main functions of the family as the primary educational situation include (Farmer, 1982; Pretorius, 1988; John, 1993):

- * To assist, guide and protect the child on his way to adulthood;
- * To provide the child with a place where he can practise and experience to play an active role in his progress to adulthood;
- * To afford emotional stability, particularly a feeling of belonging; and
- * To love, trust, respect, understand, confide in and care for the child.

4.6.2 Mother

The affective relationship between mother and child is of crucial importance in the

unfolding of the child's personality. The following are some of the more important ways in which the mother can render assistance to pre-school children from a deprived community (Govender, 1989; John, 1993):

- * assistance provided in the form of caressing, caring, comforting, responses to questions and sharing of activities helps the child in his preparation for school readiness;
- * the mother helps her child in his becoming from total dependence to independence, from childhood to adolescence. This she achieves by gradually making the child responsible to fend for himself;
- * initially the child depends entirely on his mother. As he grows older with the assistance provided by his mother he learns to feed himself, dress and undress and sleep alone;
- * the mother helps her child in the acquisition of certain basic skills and knowledge e.g. use of the spoon, fork, knife, pencil, comb, holding of books with pictures correctly, saying thank you, please, etc.;
- * being the first teacher the mother assists the child in his social, cognitive, moral and linguistic development;
- * assists in concept formation. This is achieved e.g. while the mother is busy in the kitchen. She asks her child to select 5 small potatoes, wash the big red spoon, give dad 2 bananas and 4 plums, etc.;

- * supportive role of the mother in assisting the child on the path to independence; and
- * provides love, security and stability.

4.6.3 Father

The father by virtue of his role as breadwinner hardly spends much time with his children. Nevertheless as one of the parents it is obligatory on his part to offer assistance, guidance and support particularly in the pre-school years (Pilling & Pringle, 1978: 13).

The following assist pre-school children in their preparation for school entry (Berger, 1981: 73; John, 1993):

- * the father accompanying his children to places of interest and educational importance like museum, park, library, beach, etc.;
- * the father reading important and interesting articles appearing in the daily newspapers;
- * the father having the patience to answer all the questions that his children will direct to him;
- * the father finding time to play games such as cricket, soccer, tennis with his children;
- * the father praising and rewarding his children for their efforts, however small or insignificant;

- * the father acts as a role model;
- * the father sets principles and standards which the children are expected to adhere to;
- * he respects and discharges his responsibility;
- * plays a key role in uniting the family; and
- * he exercises authority and maintains discipline.

4.7 ROLE OF THE PRE-SCHOOL TEACHER

The pre-primary school is not a place where formal teaching occurs but it makes a valuable contribution to the child's initial school readiness. The aim of the pre-school is not to replace the home, but to supplement it in order to facilitate the child's gradual transition from childhood to adulthood (Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983: 124).

4.7.1 Support and assistance given to the child

A pre-school offers the child the opportunity, in an informal way, to gradually develop cognitively, linguistically and affectively. To improve meaningful learning in the pre-school situation the subject matter corresponds with the child's development and therefore the choice and the sequence of the subject matter, i.e., the curriculum should be subject to careful planning and execution (Park, 1986: 149). The teacher helps the child to get him school ready in the following ways

(Reilly & Hofmeyr, 1983; Padayachee, 1992; Mwamwenda, 1989; Department of National Education, 1992):

- * The development of the cognitive functions remains the teacher's primary task, but he never ignores the child's other possibilities since he is always dealing with the child as an indivisible totality in function.
- * The teacher who understands his children, treats them with love and respect.
- * The teacher's voice attracts the children rather than repels them. Proper use of language is also very important because the pre-school child is at a particularly sensitive stage of his language development.
- * The teacher supports the child in making decisions without making the choice for him or forcing his will on the child.
- * The teacher provides specific guidance for the acquisition of skills.
- * Authority and guidance are the watchwords throughout, but never become dictatorial. The teacher constantly exemplifies and communicates norms and values to the child.
- * The teacher accompanies the child after he has obtained a thorough knowledge of him, his needs and his stage of development.
- * The teacher's support is always in the best interest of the child and always considers the child as a totality.

- * The teacher speaks directly to the child, uses short sentences, ensures that the child understands and always insists on eye contact.
- * Suggestions, support and assistance always take the positive approach e.g. what we can do rather than what we cannot do. Gives children credit for their positive behaviour.
- * The child can only actualize himself if the teacher (adult) accompanies him affectively, cognitively and normatively in the following manner (Vrey, 1984):
 - Affective accompanying;
 - Cognitive accompanying; and
 - Normative accompanying.

(1) Affective accompanying

This involves affective dialogue and interaction between the teacher and the child. The teacher attempts to create a warm, intimate and trusting encounter between himself and the child marked by experience of mutual trust, understanding and unconditional acceptance. Acceptance is the basis for a stable affective life and makes the child prepared to enter into relationship of togetherness and to open himself to subject matter. Frank, open manner on the part of the teacher ensures that the child declares himself ready to learn (Behr, 1989; Christie, 1989; Department of Education and Culture, 1993).

(2) Cognitive accompanying

In providing support and assistance the teacher knows what he has planned, what he wants to achieve and how he will set about it. This entails a responsible reduction, explanation, organization and systematization of the subject matter, always with due regard for the young child's learning potential (Burger, 1993: 53).

(3) Normative accompanying

The teacher's example, norms, values and the way he expresses these are of cardinal importance as the child aspires to emulate him (Sonnekus, 1985; Langeveld, 1974).

Since the pre-school aims at teaching the child through play, playing with equipment outside and inside is essential. Play is of particular value for the gradual preparation of the child for the formal learning situation as prevalent in the school. The play in the course of the child's learning and becoming is of great educational importance as reflected below (Kapp, 1991; Pelton, 1980):

- * Different types of play are distinguished by authors like Piaget (Vygotsky, 1987) and Langeveld (1974). These researchers as well as others agree that play fulfils a very important role in the child's learning and becoming and therefore also in his school readiness.
- * As a result of playing with others, the child learns the rules of acceptable social behaviour. Play is based on love and trust and only occurs if the child feels safe. Through play the child comes into

contact with others, learns sharing, gains respect and esteem for others and acquires gradual freedom towards responsibility. All these help facilitate his successful entry into the formal learning situation.

- * Play assists significantly in the moral becoming of the child. He learns through play how to subject himself and to allow others their turns.
- * Fantasy play in the learning of and identification with a sex role is very important. By imitating certain roles in fantasy play the child gradually becomes more familiar with that which is acceptable in the world of the adult with regard to role fulfilment.
- * Play helps the child to master certain social skills. This makes social orientation possible, builds a bridge between the child's world of play and the adult world of work, and helps the child to cope successfully with the demands of the formal learning situation.
- * Playing with others strengthens the child's language and communication skills and abilities. Language and play together serve as possibilities for expression.
- * Through play the child gets the opportunity to express his emotions in an acceptable way. Play is important for the child's becoming. Both of these are essential requirements for school readiness.

- * Play provides the child with the opportunity for self-expression and projection in the sense that through play the child's feelings can be revealed. Expression indicates how he feels about things and what meaning they have for him. This also contributes towards the child's school readiness.
- * Play also helps the child to overcome his feeling of helplessness and to experience security and safety, which engenders a willingness to venture into and to investigate the formal learning situation.
- * Play helps in the child's cognitive development. Play provides the child with the opportunity to experiment with concrete objects and to investigate his environment, which enables him to gradually gain a better and firmer grip on reality as a whole. In the play situation the child encounters problems which he tries to analyze and find solutions. As a result of this his ability to solve problems develops and he gradually becomes more ready for formal schooling.

4.7.2 Support and assistance given to parents

Parenthood is a new experience for most of the parents. Since they are intensely interested in the child's educational development, parents need support and guidance in respect of the preparation of the child for this school entry (Hendrick, 1980: 245).

The pre-school teachers in conjunction with the school management assist, support and provide guidance so that parents in turn can help prepare their children for

formal schooling. Some of the ways in which assistance is offered include (Naidoo, 1991; Verster, 1979; Wallace & McLoughlin, 1979; Moodley, 1992):

- * Meeting with parents. These are held regularly during the course of the year in order to assist them to help their children by:
 - enquiring from their children the highlights of the day at the pre-school;
 - assisting their children in providing information and or pictures which their children are required to bring to school the next day.
- * Motivate parents to create a home environment that is conducive to a good learning/educational situation by setting part of a room which the child regards as the "classroom" at home.
- * Parents of children with behavioural problems are constantly invited to the school to provide them with information on how to solve, eradicate or overcome the problems.

4.8 **ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL**

The principal as the head of the school ensures that the school functions in accordance with the expectations of society. Bearing in mind that his school serves

a deprived community it is incumbent upon him to create a culture of learning for the children and establish effective communication channels between his school and the parents. He meets with the parents on a regular basis, at least once a term. He does not hesitate to invite parents of pupils who are not making the desired progress and offers help to remedy the difficulties and weaknesses. He strives for maximum parental involvement in the education of the children and maintains effective communication with the parent community (Parshotam, 1992: 124; Hildebrand, 1990).

As a responsible officer the principal is accountable to the parent community that he serves, education authorities, his teachers and the pupils. In attempting to discharge his duties he strives for the greatest co-operation and maximum involvement of all the parties concerned by (Department of Education and Culture, 1993):

- * establishing and maintaining an amicable relationship between parents and teachers;
- * electing parents to serve on sports, finance and concert committees as well as on the Parent-Teacher Association.
- * liaising with local authorities, sporting and social organisations for the provision of certain basic amenities;
- * organising induction and orientation courses for new teachers and workshops and seminars for experienced educators;

- * supervising the work of both teachers and pupils; and
- * organising extra curricular activities for pupils.

The four-fold role of the principal as a manager, administrator, leader and educator demands of him sincere and honest commitment, dedication and devotion to his chosen vocation, teaching.

4.9 SUMMARY

The pre-school years are decisive, informative and impressionable for the child. The pre-school child therefore needs the assistance, support and guidance of educators to help him to become what he ought to. His primary educators are his parents. The teacher is a substitute for mother and father as the child's educator for a part of every school day. Because the pre-school child is not always capable of attaching meanings and significance in a positive way, he needs assistance, support and guidance of responsible supporters. Effective assistance in the pre-school years will determine whether or not the child will be ready to accept successfully the challenge of the first years of formal schooling (Kapp, 1991: 185-190).

Supporting services for the children from a deprived community are provided by:

- * parents;

- * teachers
- * education authorities;
- * social workers; and
- * state welfare services and welfare organisations.

The writer will now present a summary and his recommendations in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

Having discussed the accountable support for the children from a deprived community the writer will now present a summary and some considered recommendations.

5.1.1 Statement of the problem

This study investigated school readiness relating to children from deprived communities from a psychopedagogical perspective. In essence the study investigated the following problems:

- * the inadequate self-actualization of the psychic life of the pre-school children from deprived communities and the quality of adult accompaniment with regard to the education situation; and
- * the life-world of the pre-school children from deprived communities as it reveals itself in their relations with themselves, others, things/ideas and God.

5.1.2 A psychopedagogical perspective

Both the adult and the child are to be held responsible for the success of the child's education. The adult, being the more responsible person, is the one who should mainly be called to account for any dysfunction in the dynamics of the upbringing. When the adult does not take care that the conditions for adequate education are met, the child is usually affectively, intellectually and normatively neglected. The neglect is not always intentional. It is possible that the adult's appeal to the child is not sufficiently clear and unambiguous, and is misunderstood. This does imply that the pedagogic relationship of understanding is not being adequately constituted. If any of the pedagogic relationships of trust, understanding and authority are absent from the pedagogic situation, it will result in a dysfunction in the dynamics of the education situation. The deprived child thus finds himself in this situation of dysfunctional education. Without sufficient participation of an adult in the dynamics of the education situation, the essential meaning of education is not fulfilled because the deprived child is not involved in an intimate relationship with an educator (parent) who focuses on the child's adulthood. When an educator and a child communicate inadequately all the acts of upbringing itself are necessarily performed inadequately. The pedagogically inadequate actualization of the child's psychic life is the inevitable result (Nel & Urbani, 1990).

Emancipation and exploration are two of the most fundamental forces underlying experiencing. The deprived child's experiencing of reality does not allow him to determine what opportunities are available for his emancipation. The exploring and emancipation that the deprived child experiences always has a negative connotation. This directly pertains to the modes of the exploring, emancipating, distantiating,

objectification and differentiating, which are in the same event inadequately actualised in terms of the pedagogical norm. He is indeed obstructed in his progress towards adulthood. The rate of his becoming is slowed down and his progress is much slower than it ought to be; there is a developmental lag between the level which the deprived child has in fact attained and that which he should have been on according to his potential. In short, there is a discrepancy between what the child is and what he ought to be as a person. His actions of ascribing significance to matters, of exerting himself, venturing forth, hoping, planning, fulfilling his future, valuing, gaining insight, attaining the freedom to be responsible and of accepting norms, are all of an insufficient quality (Van Niekerk, 1990: 20-22).

Differentiation has been used to describe the unfolding of the affectivity. Concurrently with a differentiation of the affects, differentiation is also inadequately actualised by the deprived child in respect of sensing-perceiving, motoric, imaging and imagining, memory and thinking i.e. the deprived child does not learn according to his learning abilities. The deprived child is also hampered in his will to actualise his potentials. Without the need to learn and a differentiation of the affects the cognitive aspects of the deprived child's becoming is not actualised (Van Niekerk, 1990:24).

The absence of specific ethical and moral factors in the educational setting could also hamper the child's education. The lack of educational dialogue between an adult and the deprived child is one of the major factors that short-circuit the dynamics of the educational situation. The point where the subjective interpretations of the adult and the child intersect is insufficient and results in the progression of the deprived child

being replaced by retrogression. The self-evident norms are passed over in silence and thus actually disregarded.

From a psychopedagogical perspective the child finds himself in an educational relationship which is dysfunctional. Dysfunctional education implies that the deprived child's psychic life is under-actualised. This under-actualization of the psychic life of the child will eventually result in (Van Niekerk, 1990: 20-26):

- * inadequate exploration;
- * inadequate emancipation;
- * inadequate distantiation;
- * inadequate differentiation;
- * inadequate objectification; and
- * inadequate learning;

5.1.3 Relevant research regarding the life-world of the deprived child

A meaningful life-world is formed when the child, by attributing meaning, forms relationships with objects, people, ideas, values, himself and God. To attribute meaning to a relationship implies much more than mere understanding. The quality of both meaning and involvement is determined by what the child subjectively experiences, and both are components of self-actualization, which, because of the

need for educational assistance, is guided actualization. The child's relationships are therefore an expression of his life-world (Urbani, 1987).

The life-world of deprived children is an example of the outcome of disharmonious educational dynamics. It represents inadequate personality development, which, although it took place through the child's own initiative, is mainly the result of the educational misguiding by the parents and other adults. The child's initiative stems from the need of every human being to be somebody and to become somebody. When the child feels himself unaccepted, rejected and unwelcome, he develops a feeling of inferiority. Whether a child will develop a constructive or destructive attitude, in the first place depends on his parents' attitude to him. The fact that the deprived child finds himself in a situation of dysfunctional education, implies that his psychic life is under-actualised (Schmidt, 1976; Laishley & Coleman, 1978; Kapp, 1991).

5.1.4 Accountable support

Accountable support for children from a deprived community must, therefore, be viewed from their dependence on education. They find themselves in a situation of dysfunctional education. Accountable support for such children implies that they be given meaningful assistance so that the situation of dysfunctional education and upbringing in which they are caught up with can be rectified.

Parents from deprived communities have had little or no formal education. Thus they could provide neither incentives nor the motivation for their children. As the

child's cardinal teacher the parents need to keep abreast of new developments in education. Therefore, there is a need for a special adult education programme especially for those who do not have basic education. The adult education programme will help them to understand the education process at school and accordingly assist their children at home. A programme of guidance and counselling would help benefit parents tremendously.

Accountable support is provided by:

- * parents;
- * pre-school teachers;
- * social workers; and
- * principal.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

For children to receive maximum benefit of formal education a certain level of school readiness must be achieved. Children need specific learning experiences before structured teaching can take place. Children have basic needs which should be satisfied to ensure direct learning or a "higher level of functioning". The home environment is the child's only significant contributor towards physical, emotional, social and intellectual maturity. Children from stimulating homes are motivated and rewarded and the desired responses are reinforced. Motivated children find pleasure in learning. Not all children are fortunate enough to be subjected to

stimulating homes with caring parents. Pre-primary school is primarily available to children from good homes.

5.2.1 Bridging module readiness class

(a) Rationale

In order to avoid learning problems that children encounter on entry for formal schooling, problems that result in repeated failure, high drop-out rate and other social misfortunes, children require a structured and academically orientated education programme. This is necessary to bridge the gap between home and school. The bridging period provides the child with the opportunity to effect the necessary adjustment between home and school, informal and formal, learning, play and work at his own pace. During the bridging period the teacher is afforded the opportunity to detect any deficits and weaknesses in specific areas. An early detection, intervention and remediation could eradicate the problem once and for all. The bridging readiness class also provides the child the opportunity to proceed from the known to the unknown, from the concrete to the abstract and from play to work. With greater flexibility and lack of stress and strain the child will be better prepared for formal schooling.

(b) Recommendations

The recommendations are:

- * that bridging module readiness classes be established at primary schools where there are no pre-school facilities;

- * that children who turn five years during the course of the year be enrolled as a bridging module readiness class pupil;
- * that professionally qualified educators be placed in charge of these children; and
- * that the Head of Department, junior primary phase supervise the work of the bridging module readiness class teachers and pupils.

5.2.2 Educational programmes

(a) Rationale

The writer is of the opinion that the institution of educational programmes for parents, teachers, school management staff, pupils, social workers, school psychologists and superintendents of education will contribute immensely towards school readiness, elimination of repeated failure and drop-out of pupils, attention being focused on dysfunctional upbringing and greater parental involvement in the education of their children. It is important that the deprived sections of the community are reached, since it is generally known that they have larger families, which inevitably strain their financial resources. The implementation of educational programmes will help parents from a deprived community not only to prepare for the birth of a child, but also provide guidance and assistance on coping skills with regard to children, on interaction and on the resources available to them and their children.

It is an acknowledged fact that schools play an important role in the lives of the children. After the family, the school is the next most important institution which

shares with parents the tasks of socialization, education and acculturation of the children in its care. The function of the school is not only to impart academic knowledge, but rather a knowledge as a preparation for life in general to enable children to grow physically, socially and intellectually in order to achieve their full potential. Parents who have benefited from the educational programmes could pass on the information to their children on aspects such as interpersonal behaviour, communication skills, social habits, etc. to enable them to cope successfully on leaving home for school for formal education.

(b) Recommendations

The recommendations are:

- * that programmes covering the following aspects be organised:
 - social, physical, etc. conducted by social workers;
 - educational programmes undertaken by schools in conjunction with educational authorities; and
 - human relations relating to family life, communication, interpersonal relations, moral values, etc.
- * that such programmes should meet the varied needs of both parents and their children;
- * that parents and children be encouraged to attend the programmes and to express themselves freely and frankly;

- * that their fears, uncertainties, problems, needs, etc. be addressed;
and
- * that the educational programmes be an ongoing process.

5.2.3 Establishment of pre-schools

(a) Rationale

Pre-school education in South Africa is neither compulsory nor free. In the main, therefore, private individuals and social, welfare and educational organisations take the initiative in providing pre-school education. Unique problems such as shortage of professionally qualified teachers, absence of a uniform standard of care and administration, inadequate finance and the need for planning and provision of physical facilities for pre-school education restrict the establishment of pre-schools.

The home environment of children from a deprived community is not educative enough to prepare them for formal schooling. Since school readiness is a prerequisite for success at school more especially in the initial stages of education, pre-school would provide the children with the necessary basic knowledge prior to their school entry. Although no normal teaching is undertaken, guidance and assistance can be given unobtrusively since every child who works at his own pace is occupied with some human activity.

Both the failure and drop-out rates amongst pupils would be minimal since as pre-school pupils they would be prepared for formal school instruction the following

year. The child's educative environment will be so designed that the pre-school will foster optimal cognitive development which will lead to the child's smooth entry for formal schooling.

(b) Recommendations

The recommendations are:

- * that pre-schools be established, registered, fully financed and controlled by the state;
- * that pre-schools be established on a regional basis so that a pre-school could serve a cluster of primary schools;
- * that pre-schools have clearly formulated aims which are not only achievable, but are also in accordance with the realisation of the ultimate aim of education; and
- * that the teaching personnel be professionally qualified:
 - universities, colleges of education and technikons offer a four-year education diploma with specialisation towards Pre-primary education;
 - orientation courses, workshops and seminars be held on a regular basis in order to upgrade the teacher's knowledge and expertise;
 - pre-school educator liaise on a regular basis with their colleagues at primary schools where the pupils of the former are now receiving formal education.

5.2.4 Further research

(a) Rationale

School readiness is a pre-condition for a successful school career irrespective of race, colour or creed.

This study was confined to children from a deprived community. Sufficient research on school readiness of children from deprived communities has not been undertaken.

(b) Recommendation

The recommendation is:

- * that an in-depth study be conducted on school readiness in respect of children from deprived communities.

5.3 **FINAL REMARK**

It is hoped that this study will be of value particularly to the various educational and welfare departments with regards to meeting the needs of children and their parents from deprived communities. It is also hoped that the study will contribute towards brightening the perspective future of the deprived children.

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