Educators' perceptions of the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum Statement for learners at Special Youth Care and Education Centres in the Western Cape

Carola Petersen

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

A thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of Magister Educationis in the Faculty of Education, University of the Western Cape

November 2009

Supervisor: Nadeen Moolla

Abstract

Abstract

What lies at the heart of this thesis is a desire to resolve a fundamental challenge within 'educational institutions' that serve the needs of youth in conflict with the law, namely whether to provide them access to the same educational programme provided in mainstream schools - as informed by the National Curriculum Statement- or to provide them with an alternative educational programme. Given that Special Youth Care and Education Centres (SYCECs) are meant to cater not only for the educational needs of residents but also their socio-psychological and therapeutic needs, in their new form and function, such facilities have generally struggled to adhere closely to a NCS-based curriculum.

The strengths within the thesis lie in its attempts to uncover the challenges within the Youth Care sector and to explore questions that have not been grappled with sufficiently. This piece of research is regarded as crucial because, especially within education, there is often a huge gap between policy formulation (goals and mission statements) and policy implementation (what educators actually do and believe). One of the key aspects of this study is to expose this disjuncture and to provide a platform for educators to be able to justify their practice. What this study attempts to do is to challenge assumptions by asking obvious and yet very relevant questions.

This study provides educators with an opportunity to share their commitments and biases, their beliefs about what these learners need and what, as educators, they have to offer them. The study focuses specifically on what curriculum educators believe should be offered to the youth in these centres.

It is important to note that the focus of the thesis is on the educational debates and challenges within SYCECs, and not on the overall goals and role to be played by these institutions in rehabilitating youth. This piece of work acknowledges the systemic issues that impact on learning and development of youth, but foregrounds what learners in SYCECs should be taught and why. This is its main contribution.

It is against this background that the thesis sketches the various challenges and dilemmas that confront two SYCECs within the Western Cape. The thesis sets out to show how the different institutions conceive and understand the role of education within its overall service, and how different curricula are operationalised and utilized to achieve this goal. More specifically, the study focuses on the perceptions of educators at the two SYCECs with regard to the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum Statement for learners at such facilities. The purpose is to show how general educator reluctance to adhere to the requirements of the NCS, and to work within its remit, fundamentally limits the extent to which education provision can successfully be provided at SYCECs. The study emphasises the consequence that is that learners in such facilities lose out on fundamental opportunities and rights.

Animated by these goals- namely to relate the perceptions of educators at two SYCECs in ways that allow them to express their 'inner thoughts and concerns' and to encapsulate this within some of the educational dilemmas related to learning and social interactions at SYCECs- the study provides deeper insight into the intended goals and outcomes of current curricula offerings at such facilities –gravitating from NCS to non-NCS offerings.

These aims were met by drawing on data gathered in a literature review, document analysis and focus group and individual interviews with members of staff at two SYCECs in the Western Cape.

Declaration

I declare that *Educators' Perceptions of the Appropriateness and Relevance of the National Curriculum Statement for Learners at Special Youth Care and Education Centres in the Western Cape* is my own work, that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination in any other university, and that all the sources I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Carola Petersen

November 2009

Signed: _____

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

To all the participants in this study whose eagerness to take part and their ability to articulate their thoughts and views prevented the thesis from being a task to be completed, making it instead a labour of delight.

To my friends and ex-colleagues, Louise Bosch, Quinton Liebenberg, Jakes Tanta, – words cannot express my gratitude. To my study buddies – Agnetha Arendse and Brinley Job our getting together and discussions proved to be of value.

Lastly, I want to express a special word of appreciation to all the members of my extended family, my siblings, Melanie, Elaine, Jacques and Elizabeth, their spouses, Vernon, Rudi, Wilma and Arthur and their children. Without you in my life, it would have been difficult to come so far. We have shared so much and we will continue to share more because we are one. I also would like to express gratitude to my in-laws.

The thesis is dedicated to my husband, Andy, who is my inspiration, and my two beautiful children, Andriques and Andrea, who are my strength. I am eternally indebted to them. I express love and appreciation to the three of them for the support, encouragement and tremendous sacrifices they have endured over these four years.

I also dedicate the thesis to my late father, JC, and mother, Susan who instilled in me the love for learning and the love for children in conflict with the law. Also, to my late brother, Johann, who would have been so proud of his sister.

CONTENTS

Chapter 3: Curriculum Provision for learners in the Juvenile Justice System

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

Chapter 5: Findings

UNIVERSITY *of the*

WESTERN CAPE

LIST OF TABLES

UNIVERSITY *of the*
WESTERN CAPE

LIST OF FIGURES

List of Acronyms

C2005   Curriculum 2005

CJP   Child Justice Project

DoE   Department of Education

DQA   Departmental Quality Assurance

FET   Further Education and Training

GET   General Education and Training

ILP   Individual Learning Programme

IMC   Inter-Ministerial Committee on Young People at Risk

NCS   National Curriculum Statement

OBE   Outcomes Based Education

RNCS   Revised National Curriculum Statement

SASA   South African Schools Act

SEN   Special Education Needs

SGB   School Governing Body

SMT   School Management Team

SYCEC   Special Youth Care and Education Centre

TIP   Transforming Institutional Practices

USA   United States of America

WCED   Western Cape Education Department

CHAPTER 1 - OVERVIEW AND MOTIVATION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

> "We cannot expect ourselves to have an in-depth knowledge of all curricula offered at any or all levels, but we must have an in-depth knowledge of the learning characteristics of our students. Only when …we know that information can we facilitate their inclusion in the mainstream of society as productive and self-actualized individuals. "

These words of Pamela Kniss (2000:283) inspired me to embark on a research study in 2006.

This research study was conducted in a vibrant and ever-changing landscape in South African education and especially in the education provision and development of learners who come into conflict with the law. One needs to be mindful of the fact that education was driven for decades by the South African Government's policy prior to 1994, which was based on race. The National Commission on Special Needs on Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support Services indicate that "where provided, specialized education and support were provided on a racial basis, with the best human, physical and material resources reserved for whites" (Department of Education, 2001:5). This includes education provision for learners with barriers to learning which the focus of this study is.

It is acknowledged by the Department of Education (2001) that a broad range of learning needs exists among learners at any given time and when those needs are not met a barrier to learning might arise. Barriers to learning may arise because of "physical, mental, sensory, neurological and developmental impairments, psycho-social disturbances, and differences in intellectual ability, particular life experiences or socio-economic deprivation" (Department of Education, 2001: 17). The Department of Education (2001:18) also acknowledges that a barrier to learning might arise due to:

"negative attitudes to and stereotyping of differences, an inflexible curriculum, inappropriate languages or language of learning and teaching, inappropriate communication, inaccessible and unsafe built environment, inappropriate and inadequate support services, inadequate policies and legislation, the non-recognition and involvement of parents and inadequately and inappropriately trained education managers and educators".

The initial literature search indicated a lack of research on the juvenile justice system in South Africa. This thesis, therefore, places a spotlight on a sector that has been largely neglected for many years. Curriculum provision for learners in these centres still remains a key debate. This research therefore, makes a valuable contribution to the debate and to policy development and practices within the education sector more broadly.

1.2   SPECIAL YOUTH CARE AND EDUCATION CENTRES IN CONTEXT

1.2.1   Special Youth Care and Education Centres as organizations

The Special Youth Care and Education Centre's (SYCEC) core purpose can be described as offering education and training to learners who come into conflict with the law. The learners are referred by the Children's Court to the SYCEC and the Centre is obliged by law to offer therapeutic programmes to the learners. According to the Children's Act as amended in 2008 a SYCEC is a:

"Centre for the provision of residential care to more than six children outside the child's family environment in accordance with a residential programme suited for the child in the facility… which is maintained for children ordered by court to receive tuition or training" (Department of Social Development, 2008:80).

The Special Youth Care and Education Centres were previously referred to as Reform Schools. It is noted that it is only in the Western Cape that the term SYCEC replaced

the term Reform Schools. Badroodien (2001) indicates that Reformatories and Schools of Industries were established by the Union Government of South Africa towards the end and during the twentieth century. The first Reformatory School, Porter Reformatory School in Cape Town was established in 1889 for juvenile offenders (Saffy, 2003). The first Government Industrial School for boys and girls, in the then Transvaal, was established on the 1st October 1909 in Standerton. The school started with one girl and six boys (Bester, 2009).

In 1913 the Children's Protection Act of 1913 was passed and Government Schools of Industries and Reformatories were subsequently transferred from the Department of Prisons to the Department of Education in 1917. The purpose of the transfer of reformatories in South Africa was to change their primary goal from one of detention to one of education and development.

Various laws such as the Children's Act of 1960, the Children's Acts of the Homelands were passed which made the appointment of probation officers and the establishment, maintenance and management of Schools of Industries and Reform Schools possible. This increased the legal protection of children.

During the latter part of 1990's the Child and Youth Care system underwent major changes. South Africa ratified the United Nations Conventions on the Rights of the Child and a new Constitution was passed in 1996. In this Constitution the rights of children were prioritized and protected.

A dramatic transformation of the Child and Youth Care system was undertaken during this period. A national task team was established and a report "In whose best interest? Report on Places of Safety, Schools of Industries and Reform Schools" was tabled. This led to the Children's Act of 2005 which changes the landscape of the Child and Youth Care system. Reform Schools and Schools of Industries will be converted into Child and Youth Care centres. The centres will also be transferred from the

3

Department of Education to the Department of Social Development over a period in 2010 and 2011.

It should be noted that the Youth Care centres or Schools of Industries are catering for learners who are termed "in need of care". Learners are referred to these schools via the Child Care Act of 1983. A children's court designates a learner to a Youth Care Centre or a School of Industries. It is worth noting that the two institutional forms are closely linked and form part of a complex network of state institutions that cater for and service the needs of marginalized and vulnerable learners in need of state intervention. These institutions previously operated under the National Department of Education but whose jurisdiction was devolved in 1990 to the provincial Departments of Education.

Various departments such as Justice and Constitutional Development, Education and Social Development have an input on how the needs of learners in conflict with the law are addressed. Although SYCECs as educational facilities are significantly different from mainstream schools they resort under the jurisdiction of the provincial Department of Education as indicated earlier.

The Criminal Procedure Act of 1977, the Child Justice Act of 2008, the Child Care Act of 1983 and the Children's Act of 2005 govern the juvenile justice system in South Africa. Various acts are committed by children for whom they can be charged. These include murder, rape, armed robbery, robbery of a motor vehicle, serious assault, sexual assault, kidnapping, dealing in drugs, and any conspiracy, incitement or attempt to commit any of these offences (Booysens, 2003). A child under the age of seven is however presumed to lack capacity and cannot be prosecuted; they may be detained but only as a last resort.

A School Management Team (SMT) as in any other mainstream school manages the SYCEC. The centre has a principal, deputy principal and three departmental heads. These departmental heads are employed to head the Academic Department, Technical

Skills Department and Life Orientation and Residential Care Department. A psychologist is employed as the departmental head for the Learner Support Services. The principal is employed on post level 4 whilst the deputy principal is employed on post level 3. The psychologist who heads the support services is also employed on post level three. All the other Heads of Departments are employed on post level 2. The educators employed in the three departments, the social worker, occupational therapist and registered nurse are appointed on post level 1.

While SYCECs have similar structures to mainstream schools the portfolios of the educators are significantly different to mainstream schools. This is due to the key role that SYCECs have historically played within the juvenile justice system. Educators are not only seen as providers of education and training but are also expected to engage with social order concerns. In this system the educators have a broader mandate and more responsibilities and often operate outside the narrow purview of educational need. Educational issues are but one component of the overall system that serves learners in the SYCEC.
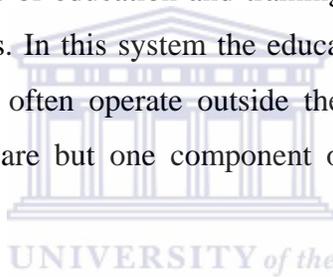
Figure 1 depicts the organogram of the structures and hierarchy at the SYCEC.

Figure 1: Organogram of the Structures and Hierarchy at the SYCEC

```
                        ┌─────────────────┐
                        │   Principal     │
                        │  Post Level 4   │
                        └────────┬────────┘
                                 │
                        ┌────────┴────────┐
                        │     Deputy      │
                        │    Principal    │
                        │  Post Level 3   │
                        └────────┬────────┘
                                 │
    ┌──────────────┬─────────────┼─────────────┬──────────────┐
    │              │             │             │              │
┌───┴────┐  ┌──────┴─────┐  ┌────┴───────┐  ┌──┴──────────────┐
│  HOD   │  │    HOD     │  │    HOD     │  │      HOD         │
│Academic│  │ Technical  │  │    Life    │  │Support Services  │
│Depart- │  │Department  │  │Orientation │  │Deputy Principal  │
│ment    │  │            │  │and         │  │Psychologist      │
│        │  │            │  │Residential │  │                  │
│Post    │  │Post        │  │Department  │  │Post Level 3      │
│Level 2 │  │Level 2     │  │Post Level 2│  │                  │
└────────┘  └────────────┘  └────────────┘  └──────────────────┘
```

HOD
Academic
Department

Post Level 2

HOD
Technical
Department

Post Level 2

HOD
Life Orientation
and Residential
Department
Post Level 2

HOD
Support Services
Deputy Principal
Psychologist
Post Level 3

6 Educators
Post Level 1

6 Educators
Post Level 1

8 Educators
(Site A)
&
12 Educators
(Site B)
Post Level 1

Occupational
Therapist
Post Level 1

Social Worker
Post Level 1

Registered Nurse
Post Level 1

Each province has demarcated districts within which schools find themselves. Education Districts render education support and training to the schools under its jurisdiction. A Deputy Chief Education Specialist for Special Education Needs is responsible as district official for SYCECs. The SYCEC forms part of a circuit in the education district, which comprises of various subject and learning area advisors. These officials are responsible for curriculum support, promotion, progression and in-service training provision to the centres.

1.2.2 Educators within the Special Youth Care and Education Centre

As mentioned in the previous section, educators are employed either as a member of the Academic, Technical Skills and or Life Orientation and Residential Care Departments. The levels of qualifications vary. Some educators have a basic degree. Others have obtained professional degrees such as a Bachelor of Education or Masters' Degree in Education or Psychology. Educators employed in the Technical Skills Department have Diploma's in their field of expertise. The same can be said for some educators in the Life Orientation and Residential Care Department. Nkabinde (1997) argues that the overwhelming majority of teachers of children with barriers to learning in South African schools have had no formal training in special education. However, it was found by the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (2002) that across the board there are well qualified educators and some with quite outstanding academic and professional qualifications. Another very noticeable feature is that a substantial number of these educators and school managers have been in this sector of education for a very long time. There are substantially fewer young educators (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (2002).

De Witt (2009) writes about attributes an educator should possess. She is of the opinion that educators fulfill a number of roles ranging from being an expert in the field of instructional skills, motivator of children and manages the classroom effectively. Educators in the SYCEC should have compassion for others and De Witt (2009) explains that an educator should take an interest in the children's personal

problems and act as their counselor. They have to possess skills in dealing with young people whose behaviour is difficult at times. These educators also need to believe that the learners they teach can become the best person he or she is able to become.

Educators are responsible for the development and implementation of the curriculum at the Centre. They are also offering extra-curricula programmes such as sports, cultural activities and life skills training. Some of the educators also act as hostel parents after school, during weekends and over holidays. They fulfill the role of the parent or guardian.

Educators must be registered with the South African Council of Educators but exceptions are made with regard to educators in the Technical Skills Department and Life Orientation and Residential Care Department. These personnel can be registered provisionally and can teach at a SYCEC without a teachers' qualification. The personnel in the Learner Support Services include a psychologist, occupational therapist, social worker and a registered nurse.

1.2.3. Learners within the Special Youth Care and Education Centre

Learners at these centres are sentenced by the courts. They are between the ages of 13 and 18 years, as is stipulated within the relevant legislation, which sentences learners to these centres. This thesis will use the term "juvenile misbehaviour" to refer to the behaviour of the learners admitted to these centres instead of the term "juvenile delinquency". Bezuidenhout and Joubert (2003:7) explain that "delinquency implies criminal activities and guilt; thus many children who are involved in minor misbehaviours are labelled as juvenile delinquents." This label, in turn, causes a great deal of negative reaction from the community, which can influence the children to become involved in serious misbehaviour and crime. I believe that the term juvenile misbehaviour is a less negative label and will have a positive influence in the future behaviour of the children.

The learners at the SYCEC are young boys and girls. The aim of the centres is to allow these learners to become self reliant and law abiding members of their communities. The circumstances in which they grew up and are exposed to are not conducive to make better choices for their own lives. They mostly come from poor disadvantaged communities and families (Mokwena, 1992). Families are generally dysfunctional and the norm of single parent families where the fathers are often absent and the children are often exposed to criminal role models.

The learners stay at the SYCEC and consequently, their education is often highly disrupted. Learners are sentenced and admitted throughout the year to a SYCEC and can be discharged at any time in the year. Learners are sent to the SYCEC when arrested and sentenced for delinquent misbehaviour. They may arrive at the facility at any time of the year. This puts pressure on the institution to accommodate them in an educational programme and provide for their needs at varying times during the school year. The same problem applies to their leaving the facility as their 'release' from the facility is usually determined by the original court sentence date or the date of their birthday (they may leave the facility on their 18th birthday). Some of the learners also still attend court hearings whilst at the SYCEC. This disruption impacts on the learners' routine, school attendance, socialization and self-image.

1.2.4. Benefits of attending the Special Youth Care and Education Centre

Attending school is a normal activity in any young person's life and "normal" practices speedily change when learners come into conflict with the law. The goal of the SYCEC is to support learners to develop skills that will allow them to deal better with the challenges that face them. The SYCEC can give the learner a sense that they are still a part of mainstream activities, such as schooling. The centre becomes "in loco parentis" as the learners are removed from their families. Educators are the conduit operating on behalf of the facility and the juvenile justice system.

One goal of learning is to develop a sense of self-efficiency in a learner. Schooling is thus, beneficial for a learner at the SYCEC. Perez-Berchoff (1996) argues that school is one of the primary psychosocial aspects of support as it develops age-appropriate behaviour and emotional responses as well as cognitive skills. The South African Schools' Act, Act 108 of 1996 (SASA) stipulates that a learner has the right to compulsory basic education up to grade 9 or fifteen years of age, whichever comes first. Attending school can have a positive influence on the learner's behaviour, emotional responses and cognitive skills as argued by Perez-Berchoff (1996). Learners at the SYCEC can therefore benefit by attending school and developing the skills as outlined here.

1.2.5. Limitations of attending a Special Youth Care and Education Centre

One of the limitations of attending the SYCEC is that the learner is removed from mainstream education. This is however in direct contrast to the inclusive education policy advocated in Education White Paper 6 (EWP6) "that no child should be excluded from education and that each child should be able to participate actively in all domains of society" (DoE, 2008:262). It can be argued that a SYCEC, which is operating separately from mainstream education, can be viewed as a contradiction to the inclusion policy outlined in Education White Paper 6. The Constitution of 1996 guarantees the fundamental right of all citizens, including those with barriers to learning, to basic and further education, and forbids any form of discrimination. The law calls for an inclusive model where all children are treated the same and taught in institutions that promote inclusion on the grounds that mainstreaming is a basic educational principle. However, it appears that, in the case of SYCECs, it is deemed fit to treat these learners differently. This is argued to be for their own benefit and care or to protect other members of society. This is a contradiction in policy and practice of inclusion in South Africa, which is particularly evident in the Child and Youth Care arena.

Another limitation is the fact that the learner can only be admitted to the centres after he or she has been found guilty in terms of the Criminal Procedure Act. This labels the learner as a juvenile offender. The label of juvenile offender offers entry into SYCEC for the learners. A learner is labelled for life and that can make it difficult to turn over a new leaf in life after the learner completes his or her time at the SYCEC.

Lastly, learners are removed from their families and communities and are "treated" in isolation of the broader societal and eco-systemic factors that contributed to the learner being in conflict with the law in the first place.

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

This thesis investigates educators' perceptions of the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) for learners at SYCEC in the Western Cape. A major concern for educators working in the SYCEC arena is the fact that not much has changed in terms of curriculum provision for these learners over the past fifteen years after democracy. South Africa has one curriculum for all learners, and this study will investigate the extent to which SYCECs are operating within the framework of the National Curriculum Statement.

The Centres in the Child and Youth Care System offer different curricula from the NCS, and differences exist on more than one level in this sector. These curriculum differences pose a challenge for the learners who find themselves in the juvenile justice system.

1.4   MOTIVATION FOR THE STUDY

The increasing risk of youth becoming offenders in South Africa is a concern and warrants an in-depth investigation into the services offered to them in the Youth Care System (Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2003). These services according to the Children's Amendment Act (2008) include education. As indicated in this chapter there is a lack of research into the juvenile justice system in South Africa. It is important to extend

the boundaries of existing knowledge to encompass educators' perceptions regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum Statement for learners who find themselves in conflict with the law.

All learners with special needs and impairments have the right to relevant quality education, and this is also reflected in the international principle of Education for All (World Bank, 2008). Research in special needs education is important in order to secure relevant and quality education and support for learners with special needs and impairments. Promoting research in the field of special education will reduce some of the myths about barriers to learning. Unfounded misconceptions about the barriers to learning experienced by young people often lead to unfair treatment of such individuals. "Conducting research on various barriers to learning will give impetus to the search for ways of teaching learners with barriers to learning" (Nkabinde, 1997: 89).

Given the fact that the SYCEC's are expected by law to implement the National Curriculum, it is crucial that one unpacks the perceptions held by educators of this curriculum and the influence these perceptions have on curriculum delivery in general. The arguments put forth in this thesis are based on the premise that any curriculum must fundamentally benefit the learner.

I taught at a SYCEC for seven years and held the position of the Academic Department Head. I was concerned that the curriculum being offered was not streamlined. It became apparent that not all staff was in support of the NCS and they argued that only academic educators were employed to teach the NCS and that those in other departments were employed to do something different. I struggled on a daily basis as these colleagues offered curricula that were relevant to the learners in some respects but not applicable to the NCS and therefore they placed limitations on what learners were taught while based in the SYCEC.

1.5   RESEARCH AIMS

The research endeavours to explore educators' perceptions of the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for learners at SYCEC in the Western Cape. It aims:

- To determine what SYCECs set out as their objectives for the education and development of learners placed with them.
- To understand the perceptions of the educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum for learners at these Centres.
- To determine what curriculum is being implemented at two SYCECs and the reasons why this is prioritized.

The following questions provide the framework for the thesis:

- What are the objectives of the SYCEC for the education and development of the learners placed in these institutions?
- What are the perceptions of the educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum for learners at these Centres?
- What curriculum is being implemented at the two SYCEC in the study?
- How is this curriculum focus justified?

1.6   THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The thesis is grounded in an eco-systemic approach. This approach's most important challenge is to understand the learner and all that influences him or her. That is, to understand the intricacy of the influences, connections and interrelationships between the individual learner and multiple other systems that is linked to the learner (Govender & Petersen, 2008). This theory is based on the past and recent works of Uri Bronfenbrenner. Swart and Pettipher (2005) describe Bronfenbrenner's model as an example of a multi-dimensional model of human development. Govender and Petersen (2008) showed that this approach understands vulnerability to risk behaviour

as being influenced by multiple contexts, which are the individual or intra-personal level, the interpersonal level, the community level and the societal level.

An eco-systemic approach to understanding risk emphasizes the interdependence of factors across all levels. Thus, the reason for using this framework as a foundation within which this thesis is to be understood, is because risk behaviour should not be seen as originating from within learners only, but from within the interaction of the social context in which the learner operates and how the different systems influence one another. It is understood that the different systems relating to the learner in a SYCEC setting, the educators and curriculum, will have an influence on the development of that learner.

Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern (2005) and Cooper, Smith and Upton (1994) are in agreement that the developing influence of the eco-systemic approach can be seen as a denunciation of the medical model as it presupposes a very different conceptualization of behaviour problems. The eco-systemic approach sees the behavioural problem as emerging due to the interface between the systems surrounding the learner whereas the medical model is locating the behaviour problem as originating from within the learner only. The eco-systemic approach does not however deny that the individual may need intervention. This approach would institute interventions that would incorporate the systems around the individual which would serve as support to the individual as well even if the underlying causes were particularly individual or internal (sensory, genetic, etc.)

1.7   OVERVIEW OF RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

The research employs a case study approach. The research was conducted at two SYCECs in the Western Cape. I obtained permission from the Western Cape Education Department (Appendix A) to conduct the research at all three SYCECs in the Western Cape. Unfortunately, I could not conduct the research at the third site as the site had previous commitments they had to honour. I made use of qualitative

research methodology to gather data for the thesis. The **first phase** of the data collection was document analysis. Sources analyzed were the minutes of the curriculum committee, SMT and School Governing Body (SGB) on curriculum issues, the admission registers of the sites and profiles of the learners. I identified current curricular practice at the centres and looked at what curriculum *is* taught, instead of what curriculum is required by law to be taught. The **second phase** of data collection encompassed six focus groups, three at each site. The **third phase** of data collection encompassed fourteen individual interviews with educators at the two sites. The focus groups and interviews were tape-recorded.

The data collected from the documents was analyzed. The data from the focus group interviews and the individual interviews were transcribed. Semi-structured interviews allowed participants to raise issues they consider of value to the topic. The collected data was analyzed through content analysis where I noted patterns, categories and themes that emerged. The research process is presented in figure 2.
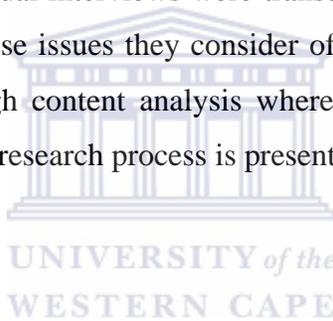
Figure 2: Research Process

Research Process

First Phase

Document Analysis

Minutes of Meetings

SGB

SMT

Curriculum Committee

Admission Records

Incident Reports

Learner Profiles

Second Phase

Focus Groups

3 at Site A

3 at Site B

Third Phase

14 Individual Interviews
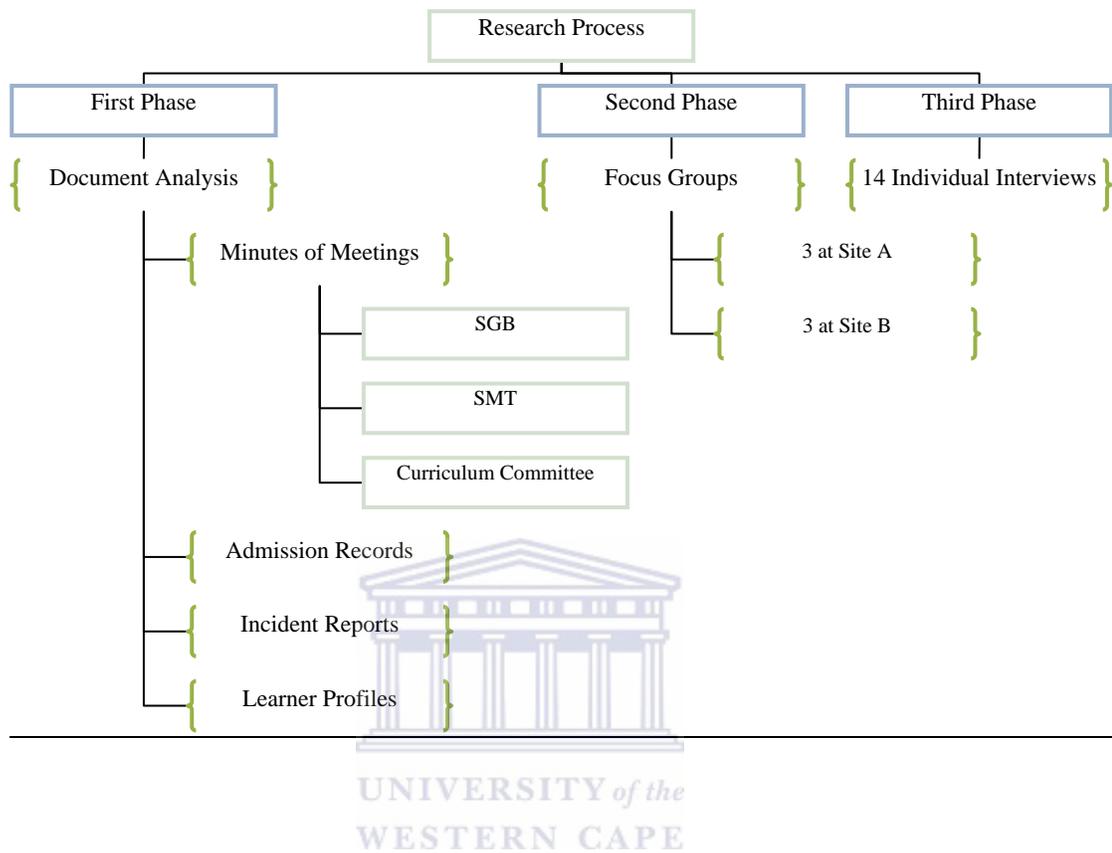
1.8   CHAPTER OUTLINE

Chapter one introduces the study. It outlines the broader context within which this research has been framed and explores the interests and questions from which the study evolved. It introduces the research question and aims and provides an overview of the research design and methodology. This chapter also introduces the historical foundation of the schools of industries and reform schools and the theoretical framework in which the thesis is grounded.

Chapter two provides the theoretical framework for the study. This chapter is the first part of the literature review that unpacks the key concepts which frame the study. Chapter two discusses the eco-systemic approach as a theoretical framework for this

study, the juvenile justice system, youth placed at risk, and Inclusive Education versus Special Education Needs.

Chapter three encompasses a literature review on curriculum, the national curriculum in South Africa and curriculum provision for youth placed at risk in residential settings in South Africa and other parts of the world. It provides an overview which facilitates some comparison as a starting point.

Chapter four outlines the methodological considerations of the study. I introduce qualitative and quantitative research methodologies and why I opted for the qualitative research methodology. I also define the case study approach and describe the sites and the participants who were involved in the project. In this chapter I focus on the data collection techniques employed, which are document analysis, focus group interviews and individual interviews.

Chapter five captures the findings of the research. It was found that the sites identified five objectives for their learners. Participants identified that relevance and appropriateness can be defined within the context of the learning material. Some participants regard the National Curriculum Statement (NCS) as appropriate and relevant for their learners at the SYCEC whilst some participants felt the opposite. The sites indicated that there is a difference in the curricula they offer. Site A offers two distinct streams for grades three to twelve, a full NCS stream and a Technical Skills stream. Learners choose either one of the two. All grade one to nine learners at Site B are enrolled for an abridged NCS stream and three Technical Skills workshop. Learners in grades ten to twelve are enrolled in neighbouring mainstream schools at Site B. This chapter identifies reasons why the curricula as explained briefly are the current curricula at the two sites.

Chapter six discusses the findings. It makes recommendations by weaving the different chapters into a concrete and synthesized piece of work. I identify challenges

facing the SYCEC and make recommendations with regard to the curriculum offerings at these sites in relation to the emerging themes in the study.

The chapter divisions are presented in figure 3.

Figure 3: Chapter Divisions

Chapter Divisions

Chapter 1
- SYCEC in context
- Problem Statement
- Motivation for the Study
- Research Aims
- Theoretical Perspective
- Overview Research Design & Methods
- Chapter Outline

Chapter 2
- Eco-systemic Approach
- Juvenile Justice System in SA
- Youth Placed at Risk
- Inclusive Education and SEN

Chapter 3
- What is Curriculum
- National Curriculum in SA
- Curriculum Offerings

Chapter 4
- Research Design
- Case Study
- The Sites
- The Participants
- The Researcher
- Data Collection Techniques
- Data Analysis
- Ethics

Chapter 5
- Objectives of the SYCEC
- Educator's Perceptions
- Curriculum Offerings at SYCEC
- Justifications for Curriculum Offerings

Chapter 6
- Discussions
- Recommendations
- Limitations
- Suggestions for Further Studies

Chapter 2 – CONCEPTUALIZING THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM

2.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter aims to explore in detail the literature on four broad sections. The first section deals with the eco-systemic approach. The second section explores juvenile justice system in South Africa. The third section the highlights youth placed at risk. The last section in this chapter deals with Inclusive Education versus Special Education Needs. These sections as well as curriculum and curriculum provision in the juvenile justice system, which is explored in the following chapter, are the boundaries in which the literature review was conducted and encompass the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study.

2.2   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Brendtro et al (2005:134) specify that the "traditional definitions of the problems of troubled children operated from a deficit perspective." However, they indicate that there is evidence that the major theories of problem behaviour are being reshaped by principles of positive psychology. Five significant ways of responding to youth at risk have been favoured in recent decades. These approaches are:

- Behavioural approaches using learning principles to teach pro-social behaviours,
- Psychodynamic approaches using positive interpersonal bonds to foster growth,
- Neuroscience approaches exploring ways to restore healthy brain functioning,
- Sociological approaches enlisting peer groups to teach pro-social behaviour and
- Ecological methods surrounding youths with environments that meet their needs.

I will focus on the eco-systemic approach because this is the theoretical framework in which the thesis is grounded.

2.2.1 The Eco-systemic Approach

Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1998) shapes our understanding of how different levels of systems in the social context interact in the process of child development. This interconnectedness is called the eco-systemic framework. Bronfenbrenner's eco-systemic model has five interacting elements as central.

Swart and Pettipher (2005:10) argue that Bronfenbrenner's model is an example of a multi-dimensional model of human development. Bronfenbrenner (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1988) views children's development as being influenced by the social context in which they live. Bronfenbrenner identifies amongst other social contexts three social contexts as crucial in the understanding of children's development. These are: the family, peers and the school. This study focuses on the latter social context, namely schools.

Bronfenbrenner's (Bronfenbrenner & Morris, 1988) theory outlines five systems that make up the eco-system of a learner. The **microsystem** is the setting in which the learner spends a considerable amount of time. This may be with his family, peers, school and neighbourhood. The individual learner interacts with others and helps to construct his or her microsystem. The **mesosytem** involves the links between microsystems, for example connections between schools and families. The **exosystem** refers to the external factors, in which the learner is not participating. These influence the learners' experience in their immediate context, which has a direct influence on the child's development. An example would be the school governing body that determines the curriculum of the school or what learning areas will be taught. The **macrosystem** encompasses culture and society at a macro level and its influence on an individual's development. The community (economic deprivation, community disorganization, availability of drugs and alcohol, pro-criminal beliefs, attitudes and criminal

involvement and a climate of violence) is considered as the macrosystem of the learner. The **chronosystem** involves the conditions impacting on the learners' development over a period of time.

According to Bronfenbrenner (1988) child development takes place through processes of progressively more complex interactions between an active child and the persons, objects and symbols in their immediate environment. To be more effective, the interaction must occur on a fairly regular basis over an extended period of time. In this model the child is at the centre and affects the environment and is also affected by the environment in which he or she spends time. According to this model the most important environment for any child is his or her family as this is the setting where they spend most of their time and it has the most emotional influence on the child. Other important settings include the extended family, early care and education programmes, the school, health care settings and other community learning settings such as the neighbourhood, libraries and playgrounds. For learners in the SYCEC, the primary micro-system becomes the SYCEC because it replaces and substitutes the family, school and community. According to the eco-systemic approach a child's development is determined by what the child experiences in those environments they spend their time in. For learners at a SYCEC, some of the key questions would be: is someone showing appropriate ways in which to behave and manage challenges? Does the learner experience belonging in the SYCEC context? Is there sufficient support for the learners? Are there opportunities where the learner experiences mastery? These experiences, which are called proximal processes that a child has with people and objects in these environments, are the primary engines of human development. Therefore, one can argue that a SYCEC would have to ensure that in the life space of learner those questions raised in this paragraph need to be satisfied. The microsytems of the learner which deal with the issues of modeling, belonging and support need to be sufficient and appropriate to enhance the development of the learner. The curriculum offered to the learner would also have to be structured in such a manner that the learner can master the tasks and the curriculum. Therefore, one can argue that

the curriculum has to take into account the strengths and weaknesses of the learner and be adapted to suit the needs of the learner, all of which are assessed on entry into the SYCEC.

Govender and Petersen (2008:381) indicate that this approach "understands vulnerability to risk behaviour as being influenced by multiple contexts" and categorize these contexts into four levels of influence, namely "the individual or intra-personal level, the interpersonal level, the community level and the societal level" These four levels of vulnerability as postulated by Govender and Petersen are depicted in figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Four Levels of Influence on Vulnerability
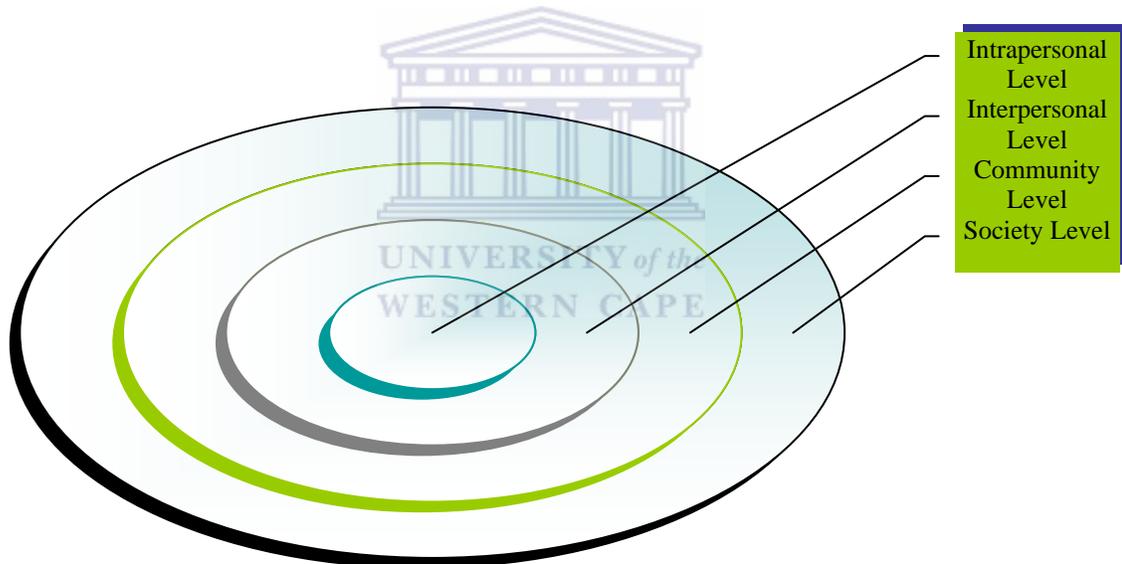
Swart and Pettipher (2005) argue that the major challenge to understand the education system, in which the learner with behavioural challenges operates, is to understand the complexity of the influences, interactions and interrelationships between the individual learner and multiple other systems that are connected to the learner.

An eco-systemic approach to appreciating learning accentuates the interface between and the interdependence of the factors across all levels. Hobb was the principle

advocate for this approach and Brendtro et al (2005) indicate that Hobb argues that barriers to learning are not a symptom of pathology in the child but a malfunction in the human ecosystem which often includes the school. Cooper et al (1994:25) concur with this view when they postulate that "within this framework, problem behaviour is not seen as originating from within pupils but from within the interaction…" of the systems in which the learner operates and the different ways in which systems influence one another. Swart and Pettipher (2005:10) argue, "Bronfenbrenner's eco-systemic model has much relevance to emphasizing the interaction between an individual's development and the systems within the social context." Thus, reminding us of the connectedness of the general challenges of development and specific challenges of addressing barriers to learning. Therefore one cannot separate the origins and maintenance of and solutions to barriers to learning and the broader social context and the systems in themselves.

It becomes clear then that the delivery of the curriculum offerings at the centres will be influenced by the learner one finds in these centres. Furthermore, how the educators perceive the NCS, its appropriateness and relevance for the learners at the centres will also influence the curriculum offerings at the centres. The curriculum is the core aspect of the school as microsystem of the learner.

2.3   THE JUVENILE JUSTICE SYSTEM IN SOUTH AFRICA

Presently, specific laws govern the juvenile justice system in South Africa. These laws are the Criminal Procedure Act of 1977, The Child Justice Act of 2008, The Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 and the Children's Amendment Act, Act 41 of 2008. There are no special juvenile courts in South Africa, so an adult court will simply be transformed into a juvenile court and the hearing will be held in camera when necessitated (Booysens, 2003). The Child Justice Act proposes, where possible that the courtroom be located and designed in a way that preserves and promotes the dignity and well being of children.

The age of criminal responsibility needs to be determined prior to a child being found guilty by a juvenile court. A child under the age of seven is presumed to lack capacity and therefore cannot be prosecuted (Booysens, 2003). Therefore children under the age of seven cannot serve a term of imprisonment, but this does not mean that they do not commit illegal acts. Children between the ages of seven and thirteen are also considered to be lacking criminal capacity unless it can be established that the child can distinguish between right and wrong, whereas children between the ages of fourteen and seventeen are deemed to have criminal capacity (Booysens, 2003). According to Booysens (2003) once a person has turned eighteen he or she is treated as an adult.

Children may be detained once they have been arrested; however, the Constitution of South Africa guarantees that detention will only occur as the last resort. Children should also be kept separate from detainees over the age of eighteen and males are to be detained separately from females (Booysens, 2003). There are two main settings in which the juvenile offender can find themselves at different stages of the criminal justice system, namely, pre-trial detention and after sentence (Booysens, 2003). After an arrest, a child may be detained in a police cell before appearing before the court. Children may only be detained for twenty-four hours.

After a court appearance children may not be detained but should be released into the custody of their parents or guardians. However, where that is not possible, a child should be accommodated in a place of safety or a correctional facility. Booysens (2003) explains that only children fourteen years an older can be detained in a correctional facility during an awaiting trial period, but only on two grounds. Firstly, if there is no place of safety near the court or, if they have been charged with murder, rape, armed robbery, robbery of a motor vehicle, serious assault, sexual assault, kidnapping, dealing in drugs, and any conspiracy, incitement or attempt to commit any of these offences (Booysens, 2003).

The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial Measures (Tokyo Rules, 1990), of which South Africa are a signatory, declares that an individual's liberty can be restricted only when it can be justified. Thus, before imposing custodial measures such as incarceration, a number of factors are considered. These include proportionality, accountability, family preservation and restoration of the relationship between the offender and the community. Public safety and just retribution would be a justification for restriction (Steyn, 2005).

Regarding what occurs "after trial"; various measures are in place in South Africa. Separate facilities have been established to accommodate children who have been sentenced to a correctional facility. A child can also be sentenced to a Reform School or a School of Industries in terms of the Criminal Procedure Act and Section 156 (1) (h) of the Child Care Act, Act 94 of 1983, which orders a learner under the age of eighteen to a secure care facility such as the SYCEC. Secure care, in terms of the Child Care Act, Act 94 of 1983 (Department of Social Development, 1983) implies that children should be physically contained in a safe and healthy environment conducive to addressing behavioural or emotional difficulties.

2.3.1 Residential Facilities in the Juvenile Justice System in South Africa

In the South African context, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed on 29 January 1993, currently serves as a point of departure for the existence of a residential facility. Other measures and guidelines applicable to the juvenile justice system include the United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty, The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for Non-custodial measures as well the United Nations Guidelines for the Prevention of Juvenile Delinquency (Booysens, 2003). The United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty notes that learners in detention should not be deprived of schooling and training opportunities, recreational activities, and contact with the wider community. It also states that initiatives promoting successful reintegration into society should be a priority.

All the learners at the institutions within the Child and Youth care arena are of school-going age. They are expected to attend school; however, the law is not specific about the nature of education that those sentenced to such centres should receive.

2.3.2   What is a Residential Facility?

A residential facility caters for more than six children outside the child's family environment and offers a residential care programme suitable for the age of the children in the facility (Department of Social Development, 2008). Wilson and Evans (1980) as cited by Cooper, Smith and Upton (1994) identify different types of care. They indicate that there are four types of care, namely:

- traditional or institutional care,
- family-type care,
- planned environmental therapy, and
- Shared responsibility.

Traditional or institutional care restricts movement of the juveniles placed by court orders through staff monitoring, locked exits and interior and exterior fence controls. The programme includes education, social and skills training on the premise of the institution.

A foster group home is a combination of the foster home and a group home and is operated by a single family rather than professional staff. It gives youth with behavioural challenges a **family-type care** and teaches them how to get along within a family. Counseling and therapy is provided to the youth.

A minimum security facility usually for not serious offences includes forestry camps, ranches and wilderness programmes are referred to as **planned environmental therapy**. Juveniles spent two to three months in these facilities and attending school daily. These programmes provide an outdoor environment for therapy and juveniles may make one or two home visits a month.

Probation is a form of **shared responsibility**. Probation is a direct judicial order that allows a youth in conflict with the law to remain in the community under court order supervision.

This study focuses and understanding, in particular curriculum offerings and debates are located within institutional care.

Cooper et al (1994:34) further identify that

> Traditional pattern of good physical standards of care, strict discipline as well as social and vocational training was typical of the approved schools for youngsters detained by order of the court for criminal offences.

In South Africa four types of institutionalized care are found, namely Clinic schools, Child care schools, Boys town and Reform Schools. **Clinic schools** were developed for children who were described as presenting behaviour problems. Their behaviour problems were seen to be difficult to change within mainstream schooling and the objective of these schools was to rehabilitate the learner (Saffy, 2003). Further misbehaviour was deemed to be unlikely to re-occur away from their family. **Child Care schools** were established for those learners who were destitute, neglected or delinquent (Behr, 1988). Behr (1988) further postulates that the purpose of these schools is to rehabilitate the learners by means of psychotherapeutic treatment with a view to their successful integration into society. **Boys Town** is a privately owned institution, which serves as a welfare organization. The school caters for learners that are underprivileged, neglected and presenting with deviant behaviour (Saffy, 2003). Boys Town's basic principle is that all children should be given responsibility and dignity so that they live responsibly and with dignity. **Reform Schools** cater for youths who were deemed as needing care and training in compliance with the Criminal Procedure Act. The primary task and objectives of these schools are to care for and train such learners as well as to educate and instruct them to become hard working, dutiful and socially adjusted individuals (Stevens & Cloete, 1996). This

study is conducted in two of the three reform schools, referred to as SYCEC in the Western Cape. This study therefore, focuses on reform schools in South Africa.

2.3.3   The history of residential facilities in the juvenile justice system

As indicated in the previous section children may be sentenced to Reform Schools, which are managed by the Provincial Departments of Education. The Union Government of South Africa established Reformatories and Schools of Industries for the first time towards the end and during the twentieth century (Badroodien, 2001). The first Government Industrial School for boys and girls was established on October 1st, 1909 in Standerton (Bester, 2009).

In 1913 the Children's Protection Act of 1913 was passed and Government Industrial Schools and Reformatories were subsequently transferred from the Department of Prisons to the Department of Education in 1917. The purpose of the transfer of reformatories in South Africa was to change their primary goal from one of detention to one of education and development. The word 'punishment' became redundant in this environment. Youth was assisted to change by means of 'treatment'. Alan Paton, a renowned writer and advocate for educational reform and the then principal of Diepkloof Reformatory supported this change (Department of Justice, 2002). This had fundamental implications for the way in which learners in conflict with the law were viewed. Although Paton later lost his principal post, his contribution to the juvenile justice sphere is undeniable and added value to the way in which learners in conflict with the law were treated.

The Ottery School of Industries was established in 1948, the first School of Industries for Coloured boys. Then in 1960 the Children's Act of 1960, Act 33 as well as Children's Acts in the Homelands were passed. The Children's Act of 1960, Act 33 paved the way for the appointment of probation officers and the establishment, maintenance and management of Schools of Industries and Reform Schools. This substantively and systematically increased the legal protection of children. As is the

case with most services in apartheid South Africa, Reform Schools were established at first for white children. In 1969 the first School of Industries for Indians was established in Newcastle (Badroodien, 2001).

During the later part of the 1990's the Child and Youth Care system underwent dramatic changes. This was due to the ratification of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in 1995 and the passing of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, Act 108 of 1996. These can be regarded as the two most decisive milestones for the increased protection of the rights of all children in South Africa. The South African Constitution, chapter 2, sections 28, 29 and 35 guarantees unambiguous rights to every child, equivalent admission to education and a "reasonable suitable management" for children and youth accused of having committed a crime.

The Transformation of the Child and Youth Care System process began in 1995 (Department of Justice, 2002). It was not a well designed process. The death of a nine year old young boy in a police cell in Robertson, Western Cape was the catalyst for this process. A call was made in response to a national crisis caused by the unmanaged release of over 1000 children from prisons and police cells following the promulgation of Section 29 of the Correctional Services Act, Act 08 of 1959 as amended by Act 17 of 1995. This Act allowed for the placement of these children in Places of Safety, which were not prepared for such huge scale admission. These admissions highlighted existing limitations in the residential care system. In June 1995 the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) on Young People at Risk was established to manage and investigate this phenomenon. The IMC consisted of a number of Government Departments including the Departments of Correctional Services, Welfare and Population Development, Health, Education, Justice and the South African Police Services. The Department of Welfare and Population Development chaired the committee. The brief of the IMC was expanded in April 1996 when Cabinet requested it to investigate and report on the availability and suitability of Reform Schools, Schools of Industries and Places of Safety for the accommodation of awaiting trial youth. This was held by a

commissioned team. The committee reported to Cabinet that the system of service provision to children and young people at risk was ineffective. "In whose best interest? Report on Places of Safety, Schools of Industries and Reform Schools" (Department of Justice, 2002) was tabled for discussion. Out of this process a number of shifts emerged which were of importance to service provision for youth at risk. The committee's recommendations included the following:

> That the system be moved from control and punishment approach to the more effective developmental care and discipline approach and that a national working conference be convened to look into formal and informal schooling of children and youth at risk with particular emphasis on the education of children in the residential and youth care system and the development of an appropriate range of educational curricula and methodologies.

The findings emerged from the committee were:

- A broader, intersectoral group of people from both the government and Non-Governmental Organization sector underwent an intensive National Transformational Leadership Course co-facilitated by international experts.
- Interim Policy Recommendations for Child and Youth Care in South Africa were compiled.
- A Draft Document of Minimum Standards for Child and Youth Care was drawn up and circulated.
- Modules for Developmental Quality Assurance (DQA) were compiled, and a team was trained to pilot the DQA in the provinces.
- Developmental Assessment Tools for assessing children were developed and provincial teams were trained on how to use them.

The investigation revealed that in 2002 (Department of Justice, 2002) there were nine Reform Schools in South Africa that offered academic and technical education. Since then, the Western Cape has reduced its facilities to four centres. Faure Youth Care

Centre that had a Reform School wing for girls that came into conflict with the law was closed down in 2008 and Kraaifontein SYCEC was closed down in December 2009. This meant that there are no centres in the country that are designated for the reception and care of sentenced girls since all the Reform Schools currently operative in South Africa are for boys. The new Reform School wing in Eastern Cape is designated for the care and reception of sentenced boys. Currently, five of the nine provinces in South Africa have no Reform Schools. They are Gauteng, Free State, Northern Cape, Limpopo and North West. Learners in these provinces who are sentenced to a Reform School are sent to centres in one of the other provinces.

The majority of Schools of Industries and Reformatories throughout the twentieth century served white and coloured youth, were mostly based in the Western Cape, and was also tied to a larger national identity and rehabilitative project. This provided the sector with a particular history, approach and institutional practice in the Western Cape that provincial policy makers have struggled to reverse or change since the late 1990s when responsibility for the sector was devolved to the WCED.

Table 1 below depicts the spread of Reform Schools in South Africa in 2009.

Table 1: Spread of Reform Schools in South Africa in 2009

Province	Reform Schools		
	Sex	Name	Location
Western Cape	Males	Eureka SYCEC	Rawsonville
Mpumalanga	Males	Ethokomala Reform School	Ogies
KwaZulu Natal	Males	Newcastle School of Industries – A designated wing for sentenced learners officially opened on 3 October 2009	Newcastle
Eastern Cape	Males	JJ Serfontein School of Industries – A designated wing for sentenced learners	Queenstown

In 2005 the Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005 was passed and the Children's Amendment Act, Act 41 of 2007 in 2007. The section that deals specifically with Reform Schools and Schools of Industries in the Children's Act as amended, section 196 (1) (d) and section 196 (1) (e) refers to the conversion and transfer of all the Reform Schools and Schools of Industries that were established under the 1911 and 1913 Acts to the Department of Education. Furthermore, all Schools of Industries and Reform Schools would be regarded as if they were established under the Children's Act as amended and would be converted to Child and Youth Care Centres. These centres would later be transferred from the Department of Education to the Department of Social Development.

When these schools were transferred to the National Department of Education in 1917, both the National and Provincial Education Departments managed them. Presently, the schools are managed by the Provincial Departments of Education. The

responsibility for their upkeep, maintenance and functioning was however only transferred to the various provinces in the late 1990s. From the late 1990s this shift raised some crucial challenges for the various provinces, not only in terms of funding that was made available for such facilities in each of the provinces, but also in the roles and functions SYCECs would play within the overall education provision set-up. This lack of clarity did not bode well for the development of the sector.

2.3.4 The child and youth care system in the Western Cape

In 2000, the WCED embarked on a wide-ranging process in response to the recommendations of the IMC to establish an effective service for educating and reclaiming young people at risk. It was acknowledged that there was a need to transform the education sector catering for youth at risk. The SYCEC have been operational since 2000 in the Western Cape (Coetzee, 2005). In 2009, this service accommodated approximately 14 000 learners with significant learning, emotional and behavioural difficulties in 68 special schools, including residential youth centres for high risk learners connected to the child justice system.

The process of restructuring the dispensation for youth at risk started with the brief of a national task team referred to as the Inter-Ministerial Committee (IMC) which investigated Reform Schools and Schools of Industries.

In collaboration with the IMC and the National Department of Social Development, the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) developed an education model in 2000, hereafter referred to as the Youth at Risk (YAR) model of the WCED, depicted as Figure 5 below.

Support to youth at risk under the YAR model of the WCED is provided on five levels. These five levels are depicted as a continuum of care with the emphasis on the first three levels of support for young people, which are prevention, early identification, and positive youth development. Youth Care Centres would offer the fourth level of support, providing residential care where necessary, with varying

degrees of restriction, depending on the learners involved. Other learners in mainstream schools would be engaged in therapeutic and educational programmes at the centres after school hours. The fifth level of support, Special Youth Care Centres, was to provide compulsory residence for young people in severe emotional turmoil or in conflict with the law (Coetzee, 2005).

Figure 5: YAR Model of the Western Cape
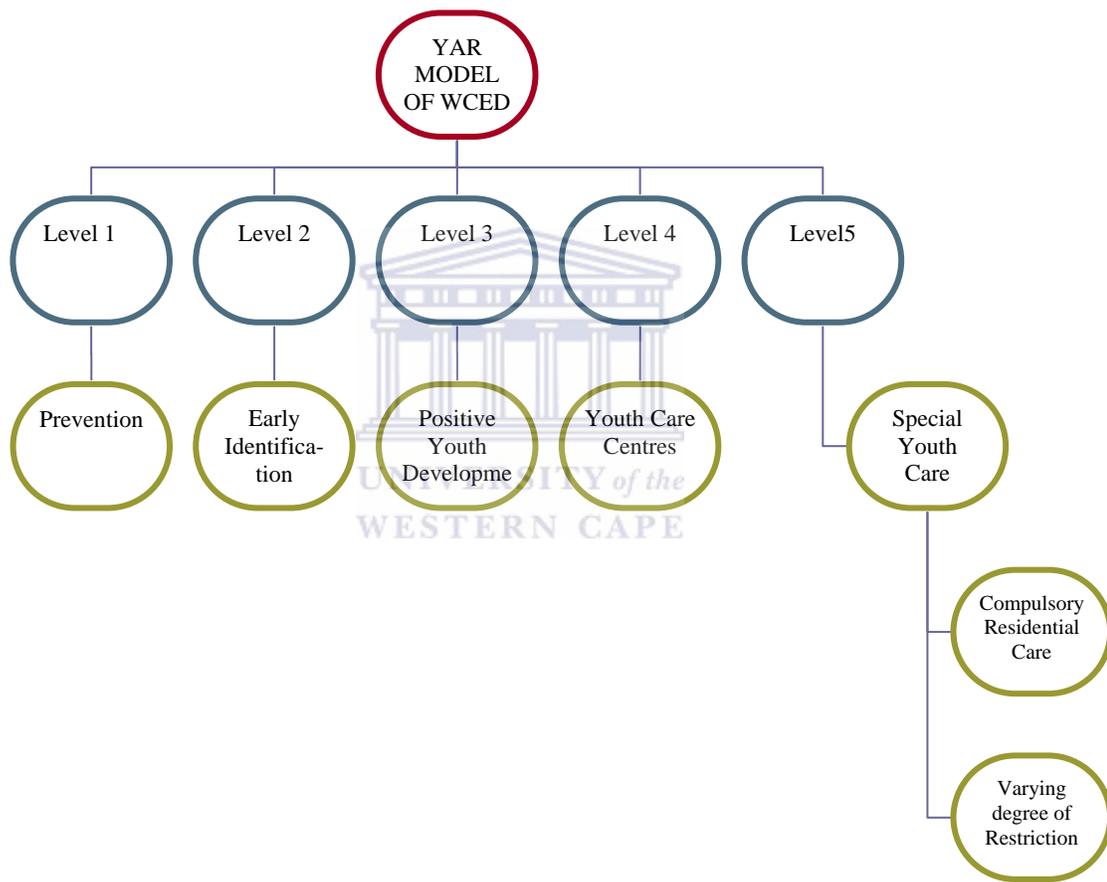
The Youth Care Centre as well as the Special Youth Care Centre, termed SYCEC in the thesis is defined as:

A public school for learners with barriers to learning and is established in accordance with Section 12 (2) (VI) of the Western Cape Provincial School Education Act, 1997 (Act 12 of 1997). It caters for the admission, care,

education and training of learners that are referred to the school in terms of article 290(1)(d) of the Criminal Procedure Act, Act 51 of 1977 (WCED, 2004: 8).

2.3.5 The aims of the Special Youth Care and Education Centres in the Western Cape

The WCED established four Youth Care and Education Centres and two Special Youth Care and Education Centres in the Western Cape which focus on reclaiming learners-at-risk by providing specialized support and therapeutic interventions on a continuum of care, ranging from the least restrictive and most empowering environment or programme to more restrictive options. This new approach to helping distressed learners reflects a change from unconstructive approaches based on reprisal and chastisement towards more affirmative strategies aimed at reclaiming and rehabilitating the individual. This approach creates prospects for healing, growth and development, with the focus on developing the individual and repairing relationships rather than focusing on punishment.

WCED aims to establish an effective service for educating and reclaiming young people at risk. Coetzee explains that SYCECs should provide developmental, educational and therapeutic programmes to cater for the needs of the troubled learners who are referred via the child justice system (Coetzee, 2005). The youth placed in these institutions should receive care, protection and education in order to assume socially constructive roles in society. They should benefit from education that provides them with the necessary skills to lead independent and responsible lives as contributing members of society.

2.4   YOUTH PLACED AT RISK

This section deals with youth that are placed at risk and are found at Special Youth Care and Education Centres in the Western Cape. Terms like lost, marginalized and alienated youth sparked debates in South Africa whilst 'youth at risk' has gained

popularity. However, Johnson argues (2005:38) that the term 'youth at risk' serves the medical model as it "places the responsibility for being at risk and for reducing that risk on the shoulders of young people". She argues that 'youth placed at risk' is a more appropriate and systemic manner of approaching the phenomena of youth who find themselves engaging in risky behaviour. Therefore, she is of the opinion that being placed at risk implies a major societal responsibility for the position these young people find themselves in. She is of the opinion that "this systemic view implies that society should put the structures in place that meet the needs of young people and in doing so, reduce the probability that young people would engage in risky behaviour" (2005:38). This view is congruent with views that I hold and for the purpose of this thesis, I will utilize the term 'youth placed at risk' instead of 'youth at risk'.

The youth one finds at the SYCEC are between the ages of 13 and 18 years. All the youth at the SYCEC are of school-going age and are called learners. A **learner** is defined as a person receiving education or obliged to receive education as stipulated in chapter 2, Section 3 (1) of the South African Schools Act (SASA), Act 84 of 1996. SASA places this responsibility on every parent to send a learner for whom he/she is responsible to attend a school from the first school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of seven until the last school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth grade, whichever comes first.

2.4.1 Deconstructing the notion of risk

Risk according to Govender and Petersen (2008) can be defined as the possibility of harm. They refer to biological, psychological, social or economic behaviours or environments that are associated with, or cause increased susceptibility to, a specific disease, ill health or injury. The risk factors are processes outside or within the individual that influence them to yield to negative behaviour. It is argued by Johnson (2005) that a risk status is a way of describing the likelihood that a given individual will attain a specific outcome, given certain conditions. Thus, it is understood that by assigning risk status to an individual it is acknowledged that the individual shares

characteristics similar to a group in which there is known likelihood of attaining a certain outcome that is greater than the likelihood in the broad population.

2.4.2 Risk Factors

Risk factors can be defined as those characteristics, variables or vulnerabilities that, if present for a particular person, make it more possible that this person will develop a disorder. Risk factors can be intrinsic as well as extrinsic. Although one can group the factors under these two broad categories, one also needs to be mindful of the fact that these factors are mutually interlinked. **Intrinsic risk factors** would refer to those factors that impact on the learners' behaviour and could include hearing and visual impairments, food intolerance and medical conditions as well as "psychological conditions such as low self-esteem, difficult temperament, psychotic disorders and levels of intelligence" (Prinsloo, 2005:450). **Extrinsic risk factors** would be factors found outside of the learner such as ineffective parenting practices, severe stress, poverty, unemployment and violence.

Booysens (2003) cited research (Bartollas: 1997 & Senna: 2000) which indicates that children from diverse background as well as high-risk behaviour increase the probability of a child coming into conflict with the law.

Factors such as age, psychological variables, school performance, family integration, drug and alcohol abuse, neighbourhood and the influence of peers (Booysens: 2003) are contributing factors placing a learner-at- risk of becoming involved in criminal activities.

1. Age: The younger the child is when he or she enters the juvenile justice system, the higher the risk is that the child will become involved in criminal behaviour.
2. Psychological variables: The more the child displays rebellious and non-conforming behaviour and has poor self-esteem, the higher the risk of showing misbehaviour.

3. Drug and alcohol abuse: The earlier the age of use, the more frequent the use and the more potent the drug, the higher the risk of engaging in misbehaviour.

4. School performance: The poorer the school achievement, the higher the number of incidences of behavioural problems and truancy, the higher the risk of becoming involved in criminal behaviour.

5. Family integration: The poorer a child's interaction with family members, the higher the risk of misbehaviour.

6. The influence of peers: The more a child's peer group is involved in misbehaviour such as truancy, drug abuse and gang-related behavior, the higher the risk of engaging in misbehaviour.

7. Neighbourhood: A neighbourhood characterized by poverty and unemployment is more likely to produce a child who is higher at risk of engaging in misbehaviour.

There are a number of factors that increase the possibility of juvenile offending (Bezuidenhout & Joubert, 2003). These factors are juveniles are living in a sub average or slum neighbourhood, having a poor self-esteem, being under the influence of criminal peer groups, experiencing school failure and becoming a drop-out increases the possibility of a child displaying misbehaviour. It is argued that being male rather than female as well as growing up in a broken home are also factors that place a youth at risk of engaging in misbehaviour. Eco-systemic factors applicable to South African youth which contribute to youth offending are:

- Growing up in an area where education is not deemed important to improve one's social status
- Having to interact with peers, in the environment one lives in (e.g. youth gangs in the Western Cape)
- Growing up in areas where role models are criminals.

(Booysens, 2003).

When interrogating the factors that place a youth at risk of engaging in misbehaviour one is able to analyze these risk factors within the context of eco-systemic theory. The next section looks at the eco-systemic approach and how these factors that place youth at risk are intricately interlinked.

2.5   SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

The previous sections in this chapter deal specifically with the juvenile justice system, the factors that place youth at risk of entering the juvenile justice system as well as the theoretical framework which facilitates an understanding of the factors that influence the youth offending. It is crucial that I discuss special education needs in South Africa as the schools found in the juvenile justice system form part of the special education needs sector. Learners who come into conflict with the law are referred to SYCEC, which are specifically designated for these learners. These learners have been convicted in a court of law and what follows is a 'sentencing' to the SYCEC. The SYCEC is in fact a contradiction of the inclusive paradigm of DoE as understood in terms of White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE, 2001). As indicated in the previous chapter the law calls for an inclusive model where all learners are treated the same and are placed in institutions that promote this approach on the premise that mainstreaming is a basic educational principle. As these learners are sentenced to a centre outside of the mainstream educational facilities for their own benefit and special care as well as to protect other members of society, a dichotomy is evident.

2.5.1   Special Education Needs in South Africa

Howell (2000:109) argues, "the history of provision for learners with special needs in South Africa reflects many of the inequalities that existed in the society as a whole." Many were suspicious of education provision for learners with special education needs prior to 1994. The government was not representing all the citizens in the country fairly. This created a lot of suspicion as policies were developed to promote the

policies of the Apartheid regime. Policies that were developed after 1994 advocate inclusion and strongly oppose any discrimination against learners with special educational needs or barriers to learning.

In South Africa, as elsewhere in the world, learners were categorized with the idea of normality in mind. Learners who had problems or experienced difficulties were referred to as "special needs learners" and were regarded as needing some form of specialized intervention. This intervention enabled them to participate in the learning process. 'Special education needs' also referred to those learners who did not cope within mainstream education. This practice informed the development of the separate education system for learners with barriers to learning. The result was a dominant mainstream education system for those considered normal and on other system learners with special needs (Howell, 2000).

The concept of special needs did not provide holistic insight into the nature of the particular needs of those learners categorized as having special needs. Amongst the learners categorized as having special needs, a diverse range of learning needs existed. Their special needs related more to their relationship to the mainstream education system than to what was required to enable them to participate effectively in the learning process (Howell, 2000).

Howell (2000) argues that meeting special needs has been seen as a specialist arena, which has been predominantly located within the medical and psychological disciplines. Naicker (1999:13) is of the opinion that the medical discourse links impairment with disability and "such a person is excluded from mainstream social and economic life because of a disability that is thought to be a natural and irremediable characteristic of the person." Dyson and Forlin (1999:26) concur with Naicker and argue "disability has been seen as an affliction from which a minority of individuals suffer and which is attributable to natural causes."

Dyson and Forlin (1999) argue that learners with special needs have limited access to employment opportunities. These learners have limited control over decisions that were made on their behalf. Such decisions include things such as curriculum offerings at the schools or even where they should attend school. The education provisions that are available for the majority of their peers are often not available for learners with special needs.

Howell (2000) illustrates that labeling presented challenges because labeling or diagnosis without intervention is meaningless. Learners who require special forms of support and intervention to access the curriculum should receive such intervention. She is of the opinion that the emphasis should be on addressing the specific learning need rather than the categorizing of learners. What is of importance is the fact that changes need to occur in the organization and provision of education as well as in the way in which we understand and deal with different learning needs within the education system .

Between 1970 and 1990 two important committee reports on Special Education were released in South Africa. During 1981 the report by the De Lange Commission pointed out that the provision for the special educational needs of learners forms an essential part of an educational system (Behr, 1988). This committee proposed a coordinated approach to special education needs, and the establishment of an infrastructure within the mainstream of education. The committee suggested a "Co-operative Educational Service Centre" which would identify, evaluate, diagnose and assist the learners who require assistance. The committee also proposed a multi-disciplinary team. The team would be comprised of specialists, amongst others a medical doctor, paramedical staff, and educational specialists in orthodidactics. This committee recommended appointing a remedial teacher and a teacher-counselor at each school. This has not been actualized although the South African Government accepted these recommendations in 1983.

Three years after the De Lange Commission's recommendations on Special Education, were accepted, saw the inquiry into the care of disabled persons in South Africa, when the government set up a coordinating committee to investigate all characteristics of the disabled in the country. During 1987 a report from this committee was tabled. Wide-ranging proposals were made which prioritised the need to improve the conditions of the disabled. Additionally, the committee suggested that education and training for the learner with special needs should match the learner's individual ability, needs and level of development and should as far as possible be accommodated in mainstream (Behr, 1988).

2.5.2   Inclusive Education in South Africa

During the 1990's major changes occurred in the special needs arena. The Salamanca Statement on Principles and Policies and Practice in Special Needs Education were some of that changes that occurred. In 1990 the World Conference on Education for All held in Jomtien placed strong emphasis on a move away from labeling learners with special educational needs to understanding learners with barriers to learning within an inclusive education paradigm. The Salamanca Statement according to Swart and Pettipher (2005:8) was to "further the objective of education as a fundamental right" and to develop "enabling schools to serve all learners, including those experiencing barriers to learning." The Education for All movement identified six goals. One of the goals is to "ensure that the learning needs of all young people and adults are met through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs" (World Bank, 2008:1).

Between December 1990 and August 1992 the National Education Policy Initiative was established as a project of the National Education Coordinating Committee. Their brief was to look at policy options in education as a whole and make recommendations within a framework, based on the ideals of the broad democratic movement for education after Apartheid (Christie, 1992). The National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training and the National Committee on Education Support

Services were established in 1996 to look at the recommendations of National Education Policy Initiative. The National Committee on Education Support Services developed those recommendations further and proposed a vision for education and training that promotes education for all. This vision fosters the development of inclusive and supportive centres of learning. This vision also enables all learners to participate in the education process. Learners will develop and extend their potential and participate as equal members of society. These proposals lead to the promulgation of Education White Paper 6 Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (DoE, 2001).

In Education White Paper 6, a commitment to providing educational opportunities in particular for those learners who experience barriers or have experienced barriers to their learning and development are spelled out. This commitment included a focus on those learners who had dropped out of schools as a consequence of the education and training system's inability to accommodate their learning needs. Inclusive education and training is defined by DoE (2001: 6-7) as:
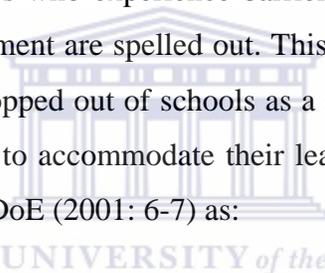
- Acknowledging that all children and youth can learn and that all children and youth need support.
- Enabling education structures, systems and learning methodologies to meet the needs of all learners.
- Acknowledging and respecting differences in learners, whether due to age, gender, ethnicity, language, class, disability, HIV or other infectious diseases.
- Broader than formal schooling and acknowledging that learning also occurs in the home and community, and within formal and informal settings and structures.
- Changing attitudes, behaviour, teaching methods, curricula and the environment to meet the needs of all learners.
- Maximizing the potential of all learners in the culture and the curriculum of educational institutions and uncovering and minimizing barriers to learning.

A distinction is also drawn between mainstreaming and inclusion in Education White Paper 6. DoE (2001) explains that mainstreaming focuses on getting learners to fit into a system and to give extra support to those learners so that they can fit in. Therefore, according to DoE (2001) mainstreaming deals with changes that takes place within the learners to make them fit in, whilst inclusion focuses on overcoming systems barriers that prevent it from meeting the full range of learning needs. Inclusion according to DoE (2001) is therefore about recognizing and respecting the differences among all learners and also about supporting all learners, educators and the system to meet the diversity of learning needs within the school and classroom.

This section deals with two diverse but inter-related concepts. Special needs education is based on the premise, as explained, that education is provided to learners with special needs in a separate school. The learner is assessed, diagnosed and labelled. The focus is on the learner and on 'fixing' the learner. The learner is removed from the context and the support is rendered outside of the context in which the challenge occurred. The learner is later allowed to re-enter mainstream education if found to fit in with other "normal" learners. The Inclusive education approach welcomes all learners into the same school recognizing their similarities instead of focusing on the differences. Inclusive education is intended to support the individuals and the system to ensure the provision of quality education to all. The focus in an inclusive education strategy includes the learner but also moves beyond the learner. There is an understanding of the systems that impact on learning and development, where the strengths as well as the needs are identified. The learner is kept in the system and the support and resources are brought to the learner. Training for educators and parents are also regarded as crucial.

It should be spelled out that although Education White Paper 6 (DoE, 2001) advocates inclusion, it is mindful of the fact that some learners will have to be educated in separate educational settings such as at a SYCEC. Department of Education (2001: 21) indicate that "special schools… provide appropriate and quality educational provision for those learners who are already in these settings or who may require

accommodation in settings requiring secure care or specialized programmes with high levels of support."

When interrogating the section on special education needs provision and inclusive education various advantages as well as disadvantages can be distinguished. Those in favour of the provision of specialized education settings for learners with special needs would argue that it is the act of labelling the learners that ensures that they would receive appropriate services and support. An added advantage is the fact that education is delivered in small class settings. Those in favour of an inclusive approach would argue that it is the label of special needs that excludes learners from the mainstream education system and society at large. As was explained in this section the provision of a special education as a separate entity has created a parallel system to mainstream education. This chapter recognizes that learners in conflict with the law would require an education setting separate from the mainstream school. However, the services provided to the learners in this separate system should be equal to what is offered in mainstream school even if such offerings are adapted as and where it is deemed appropriate.

2.6   CONCLUSION

The chapter deals with youth who are placed at risk and find themselves referred to a SYCEC. The chapter therefore, has investigated what is meant by "youth placed at risk", what are the intrinsic and extrinsic factors that places youth at risk, as well as how these factors are understood to place the youth-at-risk in terms of the eco-systemic approach of Bronfenbrenner. This theoretical framework is employed to deepen understandings of the findings of this research. This assisted me in explaining the complexity of youth placed at risk and the multi-dimensional nature of the paradigm shift that needs to occur in all areas of society, not only in the SYCEC.

The SYCEC is a school specially designed for learners who are sentenced in a criminal court and their behavioural problem is used as the criteria for designation and placement.

The chapter also describes residential facilities in the juvenile justice arena in South Africa and the youth care system in the Western Cape in particular. It is important to note that it is only in the Western Cape that SYCEC replaced Reform Schools. Nationally those schools designed for the admission of learners who come into conflict with the law is still referred to as Reform Schools.

In the chapter that follows, the notion of curriculum, what constitutes a relevant curriculum, as well as the curriculum offered at SYCECs is explored. I also compare particular educational programmes for learners who are referred to similar institutions in Malawi, China, America and Northern Ireland.

Legislative provisions can only assist in some way towards creating child friendly processes and procedures. The ultimate test is whether the intentions of legislatures find expression in the practice and delivery of appropriate services to children. It was with the aims of this study in mind that the selection of literature for inclusion in the literature review was made. This chapter and the following chapter show, discretion and human choices can be exercised at any point in the delivery of a curriculum to learners in conflict with the law.

CHAPTER 3 - CURRICULUM PROVISION FOR YOUTH PLACED AT RISK

3.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins with a conceptualization of curriculum and further explores the National Curriculum Statement offered in South Africa. It focuses on curriculum provision at residential facilities for learners who come into conflict with the law in other parts of the world. Malawi, China, United States of America (USA) and Northern Ireland were included to provide a combination of perspectives from developed and underdeveloped countries, as well as a Western and Eastern comparison. Such correlations, it was felt would provide an interesting international perspective on what is being offered to learners in conflict with the law.

3.2   WHAT IS CURRICULUM?

Christie (1992:1) states that curriculum is central to the educational process and defines curriculum as "the teaching and learning activities and experiences, which are provided by schools." Curriculum is more than just the formal programme at school; curriculum also consists of the informal programme of the school. The informal programme of the school encompasses the extracurricular programme as well as the ethos of the school which might, amongst others, include the quality of relationships at the school, the regard members have for equal opportunities; the values reflected when tasks are executed and the way in which the school is organized and managed. The curriculum of a school is more than just the activities that promote the intellectual, social and physical development of the learners. Such a broad understanding of curriculum will promote the inclusion of learners with barriers to learning into the mainstream of curriculum opportunity. This understanding encourages the equality of opportunity to all learners.

Posner (2004) supports the view that the curriculum is more than the formal part of education and argues that it comprises the official, the operational, the hidden, the null and the extra curriculum. He defines the **official curriculum** as one that is

documented in scope and sequence charts, syllabi, curriculum guides, course outlines, standards, and lists of objectives. The purpose of an official curriculum is to give teachers a basis for planning lessons and evaluating learners. The **operational curriculum** is that which the educators in classrooms are teaching. The operational curriculum can differ vastly from the official document, often as a consequence of educators' own beliefs, knowledge and attitudes. The **hidden curriculum** concerns itself with the values and norms of the school. The **null curriculum** refers to those subjects that are not taught at a school. The **extra curriculum** refers to all the planned experiences outside of the school subjects. All five curricula have an influence on the education of learners and one need to consider what influence they each have on what is taught at a school. This research is an embedded study of the official and operational curricula.

Moon and Murphy (1999:80) argue that there are many definitions of what curriculum is. Some define curriculum as "no more than a documented blueprint" whilst others define curriculum as "what learners actually experience when the blueprint is mediated in particular contexts". It can be argued that how curriculum is delivered depends on the amount of power the educator or school has. A contrast can be seen between the powers school districts in United States of America have, for example, to deliver curriculum, as compared with their South African counterparts. Not much power is given to schools or districts in South Africa, although it is identified that SYCECs have a fair amount of scope when it comes to the curriculum offerings.

Ashdown, Carpenter and Boviar (1991) point out that the goals of education are the same for all learners. The authors argue that these goals should be brought into harmony with the individual needs of the learners. They further postulate that those learners would be allowed to access the curriculum as a consequence of differentiation. A major concern for these authors is the fact that educators view a national curriculum as a one size fits all curriculum, hence the emphasis on core and foundation subjects. The core subjects in South Africa, in my opinion would include all the eight learning areas in the General Education and Training Phase and the

Languages, Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy and Life Orientation in the Further Education and Training Phase. Others might regard Numeracy, Literacy and Life Orientation as the core subjects therefore; one sees the emphasis on those subjects in various projects of the Department of Education. The curriculum should address the whole learner rather than just certain parts of the curriculum for certain learners. Ashdown et al (1991) and DoE (1997) argue that an appropriate curriculum is one that is flexible and all embracing. The DoE (1997:51) further recommends that "all aspects of the curriculum need to be developed to ensure that the diverse needs of the learner population are addressed." Curriculum content, instruction expectations, assessment, learning programmes, classroom management and medium of instruction amongst other strategies should be based on what the learner needs to progress academically and socially. Since all learners can potentially perform successfully, but not always at the same pace, curriculum content and learning programme outcomes should ideally be congruent with learners' special education needs (Naicker, 1999).

Brennan (1985) emphasizes that the learner at a special school should be exposed to the mainstream curriculum as far as possible. He argues that the special school should as a matter of priority follow the mainstream curriculum as far as possible and adapts it to suit the educational needs of the learners. Learners irrespective of their barrier to learning should be exposed to the same curriculum their peers are enrolled for. Therefore, the SYCEC should follow the mainstream curriculum as far as possible. By doing that, the learners at a SYCEC would be in a more advantageous position after they leave the centre. They would be able to further their education either in a mainstream school, Further Education and Training site or university.

3.2.1 Relevance of a curriculum

What then makes a curriculum relevant? Nelson (1999) notes that curriculum needs to take into account the learners' pre-knowledge and build on their unique circumstances. This is true in circumstances where schools are free to shape the curriculum they offer to suit the learners they teach. It appears that this is a scenario that prevails in

SYCECs. He further proposes that the learning programmes in the curriculum should take into account the real lives and experiences of past, present and future learners. Brennan (1985) concurs and suggests that the curriculum has relevance when it has meaning in the outside world as seen by the learners. He further highlights that the curriculum experience should broaden the learners' perceptions and extends the area of relevance beyond their immediate circumstances and life experiences.

Prinsloo (2005) is of the opinion that the learning content should be congruent with the children's culture and life to be meaningful to them. She further states that if the learners find the curriculum pointless and meaningless and not targeted at an appropriate level or even view the curriculum as irrelevant to their future work-related needs, they distance themselves from it. Mercer and Mercer (2005) concur with the notion of appropriate and relevant curricula content and argue that an educator needs to ask whether the content of the learning material is useful or relevant. This implies that the educator should match the learning task with the learner's aptitude when developing an instructional programme that ensures student success.

Van Schalkwyk (1988:258) argues that relevant education is "in effect differentiated education which is suited to the potential and interests of the individual as well as to the situation of the community." He explains that relevant education should have a general as well as a particular nature to it, implying that a learner from different areas should receive a general formative education as well as an education of a particular nature that is conducive for the community in which the learner lives. Van Schalkwyk (1988: 259) is also of the opinion that a relevant education is one that is "not past-oriented but should look to the future".

In order for the national curriculum to be regarded as appropriate and relevant radical reform of the national curriculum is needed to assist learners with special needs. According to Education White Paper 6 (DoE: 2001) the most important way to address barriers to learning that stems from the curriculum would be to ensure that the process of learning and teaching is flexible enough to accommodate different learning needs

and styles. Multi-level classroom instruction could be used so that educators can prepare main lessons with variations that are responsive to individual learner needs, employ co-operative learning, curriculum enrichment, and deal with learners with behavioural problems. New approaches that focus on problem solving and the development of learners' strengths and competencies rather than focus on their shortcomings will assist with accommodating learner needs and different learning styles.

This literature review captures what is understood by various authors as a relevant curriculum, this thesis' understanding of curriculum is not so broad. The use of the term 'curriculum' in this thesis is however not as broad. This study explores 'curriculum' as what *is* taught by the educators, within the context of what *should* be taught.

3.3   THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN SOUTH AFRICA

The curriculum taught in South African public schools has a legacy of a racially based curriculum and curriculum development practices grounded in apartheid. According to Christie (1992) the principles of equity and equality should be central in curriculum provision in South Africa. Furthermore, Moon and Murphy (1999: 180) postulate that South African definitions of curriculum "carry the imprint of the country's history."

After the 1994 elections South Africa entered a period of dramatic change with regard to curriculum and curriculum provision and the same is evident since the adoption of Curriculum 2005 (C2005). The African National Congress (1994) announced their intention to transform the educational system with the publication of "A Policy Framework for Education and Training". According to Geyser (2000) this policy framework for education and training of the African National Congress' intention was, amongst other goals, to ensure that everyone in South Africa would have access to education and training and to ensure that society transforms for the empowerment of all citizens in the country (1994). The African National Congress (1994) deemed the

development of a new curriculum essential to eradicate the educational system of the legacy of apartheid.

Van der Horst and McDonald (2008) explain that the new curriculum in South Africa has as its aims to:

1. integrate education and learning
2. promote lifelong learning for all South Africans
3. promote an outcomes-based rather than a content-based curriculum
4. equip all learners with the knowledge, competences and orientations needed to be successful after completing their studies
5. develop a culture of human rights, multilingualism, multiculturalism and a sensitivity to the values of reconciliation and nation building
6. produce thinking, competent future citizens

Department of Education (2000) indicates that C2005 was seen as an educational path out of apartheid education where the emphasis is on results and successes. Curriculum 2005 aimed to allow for achievement by all learners at different paces and times rather than on a subject-bound, content-laden curriculum. The document (2000) argues that the C2005 was a significant break with all that was limiting and stultifying in the content and pedagogy of education. Outcomes-based Education and C2005 was intended to provide a broad framework for the development of an alternative to apartheid education that was open, non-prescriptive and reliant on teachers creating their own learning programmes and learning support materials (DoE, 2000).

Curriculum 2005 was replaced by the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS). Naicker (2006) describes the RNCS as learner-centered. He argues that this curriculum is embedded in the framework of constructivist learning theory. According to Naicker (2006) constructivism assumes that the subject of the knowledge builds up all knowledge from scratch. Within this learning theory there are "no givens, no objective empirical data or facts, inborn categories, or cognitive structures" (Naicker,

2006:3). Naicker explains that this is a major shift from how education was previously viewed in South Africa (2006).

The present curriculum aims to reflect the learners' culture, their unique history, familiar life experiences and future work-related needs. Great emphasis is placed on the educators' task to present learning material that is relevant to the learners' life world and is engendered with meaning. Learners are encouraged to be critical and to evaluate their learning material and implement it in their frame of reference. Prinsloo (2005) is of the opinion that the new curriculum changes the focus in the classroom from subject content to vocational training, and emphasizes the developmental outcomes of each phase in the school.

The policy guidelines (DoE, 2005) suggests that the adaptation of learning programmes, work schedules and lesson plans to cater for the individual needs of the learner is achievable. The NCS has "several components that are flexible enough to allow for differentiation" and include:
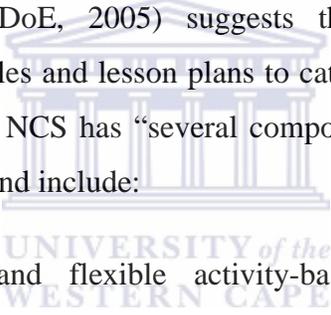
- Learner-centered and flexible activity-based outcomes and assessment standards, which can be broken down into smaller parts,
- Learning outcomes that do not prescribe content or method.
- The content and learning programmes that can be made relevant in relation to the education needs of the learners.
- Time allocation for lesson plan, assessment, completion and execution of tasks is not fixed.
- Work schedules are not limited to a year or grade.
- Learners are not bound by any communication prescriptions and expectations and ability of the learner should be in congruence with what is taught although it will be set within the framework of high expectations.
- Educators should be mindful of prevalent barriers to learning and assessment as well as the weighting in specific Learning Areas.

(DOE, 2005:9-10).

Two very important aspects of the policy guidelines which are of specific importance to this thesis are:

- Allowances should be made when developing Learning Programmes.
- The number and nature of Learning Programmes can vary at special schools.

(DOE, 2005:9-10).

The National Curriculum is divided into two education bands. The two education bands are the General Education and Training Band (GET) for learners in grades R-9 and the Further Education and Training Band (FET) for learners in grades 10-12. The GET band is divided into three phases, these are: Foundation phase for grades R-3, Intermediate phase for grades 4-6 and the senior phase for grades 7-9. The GET band consists of eight learning areas. They are Languages, Mathematics, Natural Sciences, Social Sciences, Economic and Management Sciences, Arts and Culture, Technology and Life Orientation. However, in the Foundation phase those eight learning areas are collapsed in 3 learning programmes, namely Life Orientation, Literacy and Numeracy. All 11 official languages form part of the Languages Learning Area. The FET band consists of at least seven subjects, which are divided into two sections. One section is compulsory and the other section consists of elective subjects, which learners can choose from. The compulsory subjects are a Home language, a First additional language, Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy and Life Orientation. The learner will choose three electives or more from a range of options.

The schematic design (Figure 6) provided below, presents the National Curriculum in South Africa.

Figure 6: National Curriculum in South Africa
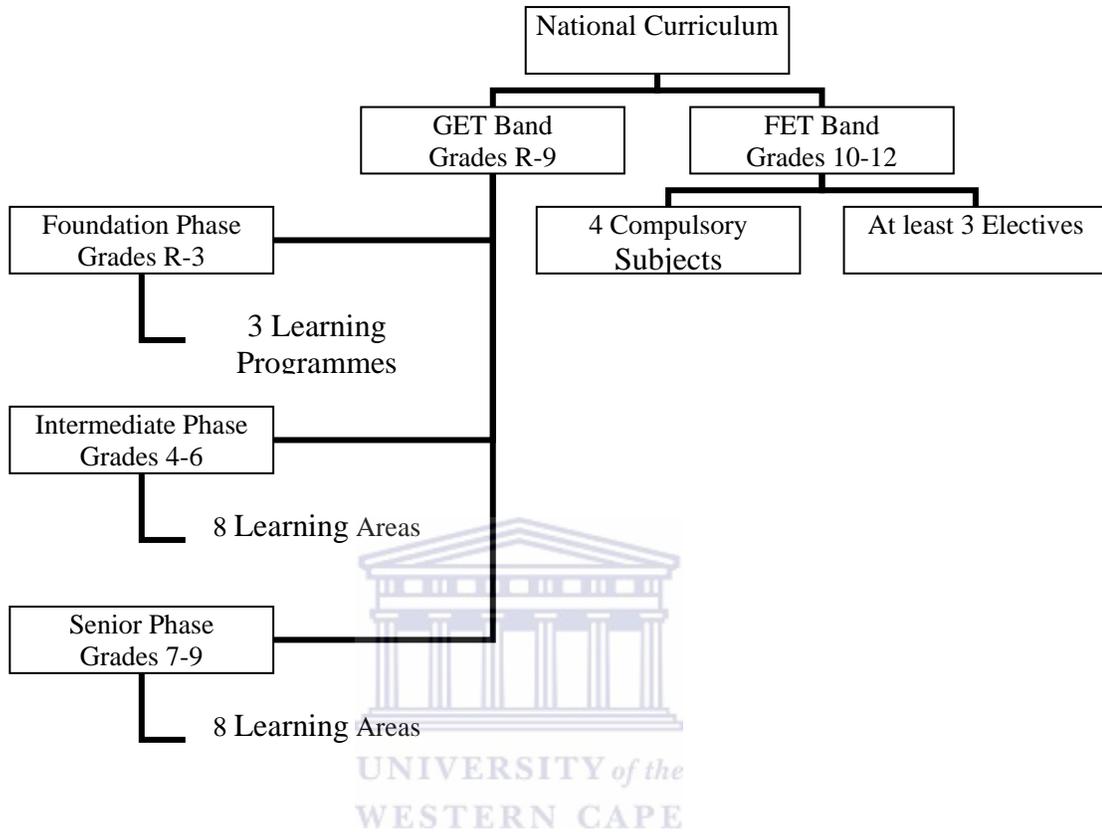
The NCS (DoE, 2005) is inherently outcomes-based. **Outcomes-Based Education** (OBE) is essentially regarded as an interactive process between the educators and learners, with the learner at the centre of the process and the teacher serving as a facilitator and mediator. The educator focuses on what the learner should know and is able to do. It stresses that co-operative learning is important especially group work and common tasks. Van der Horst and McDonald (2008) explain that outcomes-based education is learner-centered and results orientated. They mention that outcomes-based education is based on four underlying principles. The first principle deals with the notion that all learners must be allowed to learn to their full potential. This means that both educators and learners must have high expectations for successful learning. Secondly, 'success breeds success'. Van der Horst and McDonald explain that every experience of success builds the self-esteem and motivates the learner and educator to strive for more success (2008). The third principle refers to the learning environment

which is responsible for creating and controlling the circumstances under which learners can succeed. Lastly, outcomes-based education stresses that all stakeholders share in the education process. In outcomes-based education the different role players must be co-operative partners.

Van der Horst and McDonald also present four characteristics defining outcomes-based education (2008:12) which are:

1. What a learner needs to learn, is stated clearly and unambiguously;
2. The learner's progress is based on his or her demonstrated achievement;
3. Each learner's needs are catered for by means of a variety of instructional strategies and assessment tools and
4. Each learner is provided the necessary time and assistance to reach his or her potential.

Outcomes-based education has many advantages. Van der Horst and McDonald (2008) identify key advantages of outcomes-based education. Firstly, outcomes-based education requires careful planning. Secondly, learners will know what is expected of them and will be able to measure their own achievement. Lastly, educational institutions are able to accurately monitor the learner's progress in terms of the specific learning outcomes.

Outcomes-based education also aims at eliminating the notion of permanent failure, reducing rote learning and emphasizing the importance of understanding the context. The learner's ability to understand and deal with situations they will encounter after school is increased because the emphasis is on knowledge, skills and values (McGhan, 1994).

Seven critical outcomes have been accepted by the South African Qualification Authority. A critical outcome is defined by Van der Horst and McDonald as "broad, generic and cross-curricular" (2008:46). The seven critical outcomes are:

1. Learners should be able to identify and solve problems by using critical and creative thinking skills.

2. Learners should be able to work effectively with others as a member of a team, group, organization or community.

3. Learners should be able to manage themselves and their activities responsibly and effectively.

4. Learners should be able to collect, analyze, organize and critically evaluate information (that is conducting investigations and doing research).

5. Learners should be able to communicate effectively using visual, mathematical and/or language skills in the modes of oral and/or written presentation.

6. Learners should be able to use science and technology effectively and critically, showing responsibility towards the environment and the health of others.

7. Learners should be able to demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of related systems by recognizing that problem-solving contexts do not exist in isolation.
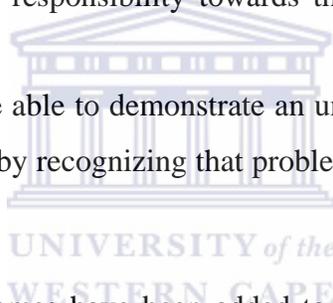
Five developmental outcomes have been added to the critical outcomes. These five developmental outcomes are:

1. thinking about and exploring a variety of learning strategies for effective learning.
2. participating in communities with the necessary responsibility.
3. being culturally and aesthetically sensitive across a range of social contexts.
4. exploring educational and career opportunities in order to achieve full potential.
5. develop entrepreneurial abilities.

(Van der Horst & McDonald, 2008:47-48)

Outcomes-based education has received criticism in South Africa. The NCS and the nature of outcomes-based education have been challenged. Jansen (1999) outlines reasons why he believes OBE will fail. These centre on language and concepts which,

according to him, are too complex, confusing and often contradictory. He also states that what official documents claim about the relationship between curriculum and society, especially OBE's assumed impact on economics, is unfounded and misleading. Furthermore, he insists that OBE's policy is based on flawed assumptions about what happens inside the average South African classroom and that there are strong philosophical arguments questioning the desirability of OBE in democratic school systems. Jansen also indicates that to focus on outcomes is contradictory to what the educational and political struggle of the 1980's valued as outcomes. Jansen argues that the process of learning and teaching was regarded as an outcome in itself. OBE, he explains with its focus on instrumentalism, enables policy makers to avoid dealing with a central question in the South African transition: What is education for? Jansen also lists administrative burdens placed on teachers and trivialization of curriculum content as issues of concern as well as a radical revision of the most potent mechanism in schools militating against curriculum innovation, which OBE requires. He stated that in order for OBE to succeed in moderate terms education improvements are required. He is of the opinion that teachers need to be trained and retrained. He also proposes new forms of assessments and classroom organization which will facilitate constant monitoring, assessment and evaluation of the implementation of OBE. Jansen further suggests additional administrative time, parental support and involvement and indicates that new learning resources and opportunities for teacher discussions and exchanges are required in the implementation phase.

Extensive retraining occurred in the country regarding outcomes-based philosophy and the NCS. There are alternative forms of monitoring and assessment proposed in the NCS, which is conducted on a continuous manner. Parental involvement and support is paramount in the philosophy of the NCS. The next section deals with curriculum provision for learners in the special youth care and education centres in South Africa.

3.3.1 Curriculum provision for learners in the SYCEC

The learner one finds at the SYCEC is of school-going age and is obliged to be at school and must be provided with an education. This section investigates the curriculum provision for those learners. It also explores what *is* offered against the background of *what is* expected by law to be offered. Therefore, this section deals with what is the operational curriculum at SYCECs against the background of the official curriculum.

The future demands a workforce competent in the skills of problem solving and logical reasoning through teamwork, outcomes that are evident in the NCS. Palmer (2004) is of the opinion that the current job markets are highly competitive and technologically orientated and that those in conflict with the law need the academic skills of reading and writing to be able to compete adequately. Therefore, there needs to be a focus on providing learners in conflict with the law with equal opportunities to learn. This places responsibility on teachers at the SYCEC to provide equitable learning environments for their learners.

Curriculum provision for learners with barriers to learning has come a long way in South Africa. The significant agreements that give learners experiencing barriers to learning in South Africa the same right to quality education, is the Salamanca Statement, the World Conference on Education for All, held in Jomtien in 1990 on an international level. Domestically, White Paper 6 (2001) proposes equal access to all learners as well as support for learners experiencing barriers to learning. The South African Constitution (1996) places emphasis on the rights of all learners to basic education whereas the South African Schools' Act (1996) promotes education to all up to the age of fifteen or grade 9. The Department of Education has also developed policy such as the Guidelines on Inclusive Teaching and Learning and the National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support (DoE, 2009). The Guidelines on Inclusive Teaching and Learning would assist the educators in the SYCEC to adapt the NCS to fit the learners in the SYCEC. The Strategy on Screening,

Identification, Assessment and Support would enable the educators to screen the learners for any support they need. By identifying the barriers to learning, educators would be able to identify the barrier to learning and assess what support is needed.

Why then is curriculum provision in the juvenile justice system considered crucial? The broader societal issues and debates in education regarding human rights, equity, and inclusion, amongst others, must inform curriculum delivery for learners in this arena. Cooper et al (1994) are of the opinion that special schools for learners with behavioural and emotional difficulties should be guided by principles reflecting the notion that education in itself should have a therapeutic function.

Cooper et al (1994) argue that a modified or alternative curriculum may signal to learners in a special school setting that they have been written off by schools. They argue that it is better to develop a curriculum for all, as it allows schools and learners alike to positively view their potential. Special schools should have as its intention always, the return of learners to mainstream education.

There is little conformity amongst the different institutions in terms of what curriculum is being offered at schools in the child and youth care arena. This is intertwined with apartheid history where apartheid policies developed an elaborate system of social engineering that included education and curriculum provision for specific ethnic and race groups, which was legislated and entrenched. This had a huge impact on the educational life of learners in the juvenile justice arena specifically and still has the consequence of the poorer learner remaining more vulnerable, since their social status is lower than the more affluent learner. Therefore, race and social class remain key determinants of success.

When looking at the curriculum at any given school in a country, ideally one would expect that mobility between schools should be attainable for any type learning. One would expect that this should even be possible between a special school and a mainstream school. This concept of mobility is stressed in the inclusive approach

(DoE, 2001). However, when investigating the curriculum of special schools it is apparent that there is one curriculum for mainstream schools and a separate one for special schools.

In the past, Reform Schools and Schools of Industries offered a curriculum including an academic stream and a technical stream (Department of Justice, 2002; Behr, 1988). Badroodien (2002:312) argues that after "World War II the government resolved to address the trade-training needs Coloured children have within the context of Coloured indigence and delinquency." He explains that during this time "trade training and teaching people the habits of work" were indispensable components of the State's policy (2002:12). Palmer (2004) concurs with these views and argues that traditional vocational skills are still provided with no regard for their appropriateness, developmental value and transferability after learners, in conflict with the law, are returned to communities that are often plagued with unemployment and poverty.

The Child Justice Project (Department of Justice, 2002) identifies the following educational streams being offered at youth care centres. All the centres in their study offer the RNCS from grade 1 to grade 9. A few schools also offer a formal technical education stream, enabling the learners to complete the N1, N2 and N3 certificates, all of which are nationally recognized qualifications. Some schools offer pre-matric subjects. Those subjects are Languages, Mathematics, Biology, Accounting, Science and Business Economics. The study also identifies a non-formal component, which is taught at these centres and includes courses, like Arts and Crafts, Entrepreneurship, workshops and skill courses.

One of the recommendations of the study that was undertaken by the Child Justice Project was that all Schools of Industries and Reform Schools should offer the same outcomes-based curriculum as is offered in mainstream schools. The Child Justice Project argues that this would ensure a degree of equality and facilitate the re-integration of young people into community life after their time spent in the Child and Youth Care Centre. Furthermore, it was recommended that educators attend the same

in-service training that mainstream educators are exposed to in their districts. This would guarantee that educators at these centres remain in touch with the latest developments and trends in mainstream education where these learners come from and will hopefully return to.

3.4 CURRICULUM OFFERINGS FOR LEARNERS IN CONFLICT WITH THE LAW

The literature review for curriculum offerings for learners in conflict with the law focuses on developing countries as well as developed countries. South Africa is a developing country and it was regarded as crucial to understand what is happening in other developing countries regarding curriculum offerings for learners in conflict with the law. It was also regarded as important to understand what curriculum is offered to learners in developed countries who find themselves in conflict with the law, to gauge whether this is what we ought to be striving for.

3.4.1 Malawi

Degabriele (2001) explains that in November 1999 a draft model for juvenile justice in Malawi was agreed upon and stakeholders committed themselves to it. She investigated learners who are in conflict with the law in Malawi and the residential schools they attend and in her work describes two residential schools for learners who are in conflict with the law. Chilwa Approved School caters for learners between the ages 15 and 18 years whereas the Mpemba Boys' Home has learners between the ages 7 and 14 years. Both institutions' programmes focus on education and training and aim to make the most of the resources available for the benefit of the learners.

The purpose and functions of the two centres are spelt out in the Chief Justice's memo of 1946 (Degabriele, 2001) where he indicated that the institutions should keep juveniles out of prisons and keep them out of association with adult offenders. Furthermore the detention is seen as a form of punishment, which will lead to reform

of the learner. The primary aim of the centres according to Degabriele (2001: 68) is to "facilitate the integration of the juvenile back into society."

Degabriele (2001) identifies shortfalls in the service delivery at the institutions. These include problems around uniforms, diet, holidays, academic classes, training in trades, recreation, cleanliness, infrastructure, temporary home, counseling, parental visits and absconding, aftercare services. This changed when managers and administrators aimed

> to encourage behavioural treatment and correction through formal education and vocational training in trades intended for returning the juveniles to the families and community as good citizens capable of participating in the activities of the community

(Degabriele, 2001:15).

The curriculum in addition to formal subjects, includes skills training like agriculture, bricklaying, tailoring, carpentry and joinery as well as leatherwork. The school routine includes academic classes and moral talks, trade training, counseling, organized sports, indoor games, drama and songs. The Centres follow the same curriculum as in mainstream schools. The curriculum is relevant and responsive to the needs and the characteristics of the learners (Degabriele, 2001). The curriculum has an eight-year cycle with three phases: infant (standards one and two); Junior Phase (standards three and four), and senior phase (standards five to eight). There are seven subjects which all learners receive in the infant phase and nine subjects in the remaining two phases.

The curriculum's emphasis is on literacy, numeracy, expressive arts and continuous assessment. Therefore, it is assumed that the major focus for the curriculum that the learners in the two Centres receive, focuses on mastery learning of skills and competencies that will make the learner a productive citizen in all undertakings (Degabriele, 2001).

Degabriele (2001) is of the opinion that these schools ensure that a learner becomes a productive member of his community after discharge, by ensuring that the learner attempts a Government Trade Test for Grade three and only after successfully passing can the learner be discharged. All learners are provided with a set of tools, a Khaki uniform and some money to start afresh on termination. As soon as these learners are released, they go home to become an employed or self-employed member of the community. The vocational training offered is linked to the kinds of job opportunities that are found in the learner's community. Therefore, transition from school to work becomes more attainable after the learner is discharged from the reform schools in Malawi. According to Degrabriele (2001) the learners can choose their trade after two months at the school. The trade is most suited to their capabilities and to the needs prevalent in their communities. It should be noted that a learner below the age of 16 years is obliged to continue with his formal education. Thus, learners younger than 16 years will be encouraged to continue with their school career.

Degabriele (2001) argues that poor parenting is one of the contributing factors in youth offending and emphasises the role parents and guardians have to play in preventing youth offending and re-offending. She argues that parents and guardians should support juveniles going through a trial process and should encourage them to look at life positively.

The schematic design (Figure 7, 8 and 9) provided below, presents the curriculum offered at this residential school for learners who have come into conflict with the law.

65

Figure 7: Extra Curriculum Offerings of Reform Schools in Malawi
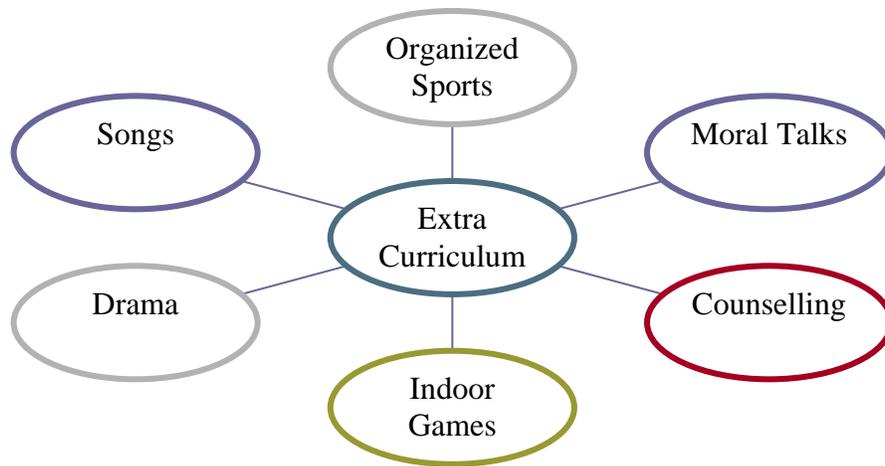
Figure 8: Academic Curriculum Offerings of Reform Schools in Malawi
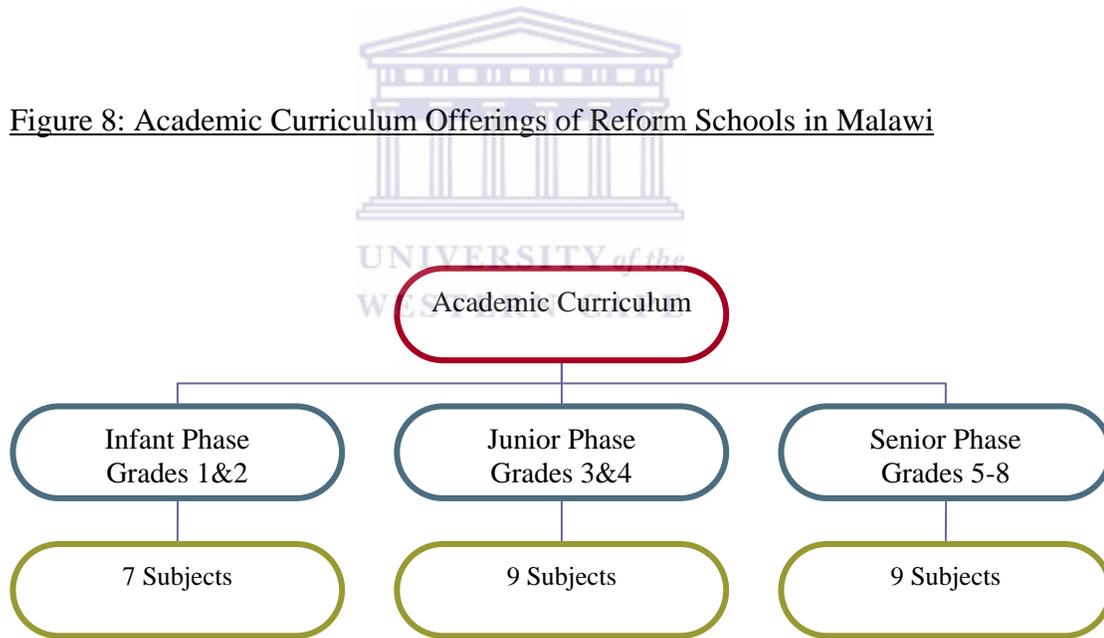
Figure 9: Skills Training Curriculum Offerings of Reform Schools in Malawi
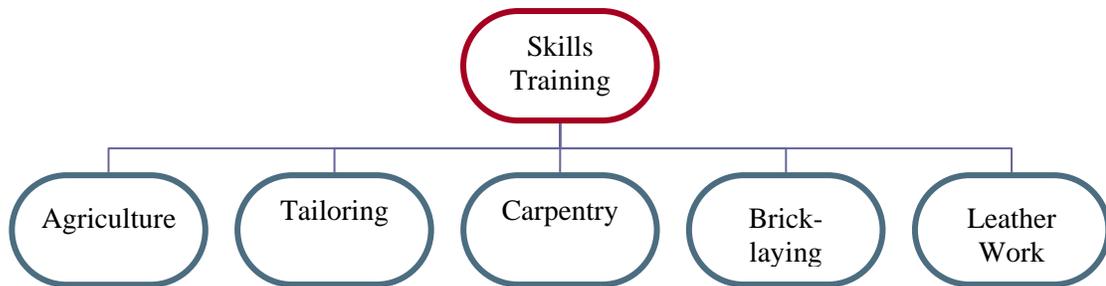
It is understood that the juvenile justice system in Malawi is rendering educational services to learners in conflict with the law in two schools, The Chilwa Approved School and the Mpemba Boys School. The schools are catering for learners between the ages of 7 and 18 years. It was seen as important to keep juvenile offenders from adult offenders, however, the country also regard detention in these schools as a deterrent for recidivism.

The curriculum offered to the learners in these centres are divided in two sections, one section focuses on academic subjects found in their mainstream school, but learners are also obliged to participate in skills training.

3.4.2 China

Epstein conducted a study in China in 1984. The academic component (See Figure 10) of the programme at the Guangdong Juvenile Reformatory Institute at Shijing and the Fangcun in Guangzhou includes instruction in basic skills as well as manual labour. The subjects taught include Chinese, mathematics, history and music. Manual labour activities include work in the automotive shop, fishing, growing beans and peanuts, gardening, flower cultivation and arrangement, and completing construction work. He argues that the activities learners are exposed to will be difficult to transfer to their daily living as the learners are mostly from urban areas and the activities are mostly

found in rural areas. He also found that the manual labour activities were disconnected to the academic programme of the institution.

Epstein indicates that the work-study factory class at Fangcun in Guangzhou aims to educate rather than to punish. Political education at these classes includes legal and health education although the factory discipline teaching is ranked higher as it is presumed that these learners, at best, would be future factory workers.

The academic programme (See Figure 11) includes Putonghua, the national language, and mathematics with rudimentary literacy classes. Some History and Geography is included in the literacy classes. It is claimed that the general curricular content mirrors that which is offered in mainstream education.

Vocational training (See Figure 11) includes arc welding, model making, wine making, and photographic machine operation and repair. However, Epstein indicated that most of the time learners engaged in common factory work of a tedious nature.
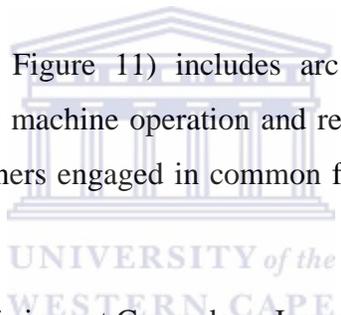
Figure 10: Curriculum Offerings at Guangdong Juvenile Reformatory Institute
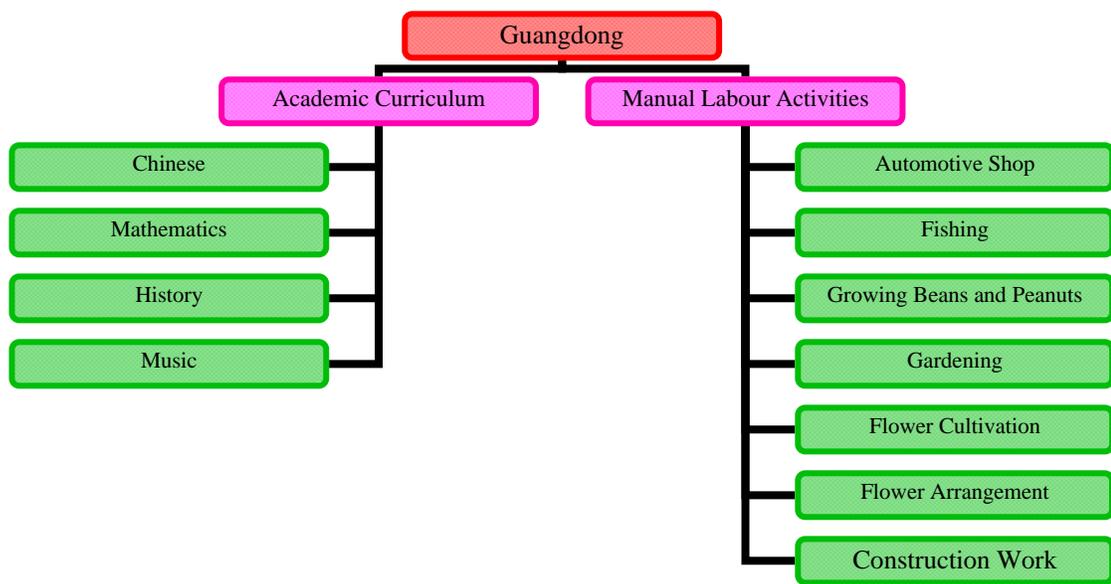
Figure 11: Curriculum Offerings at Fangcun Juvenile Reformatory Institute
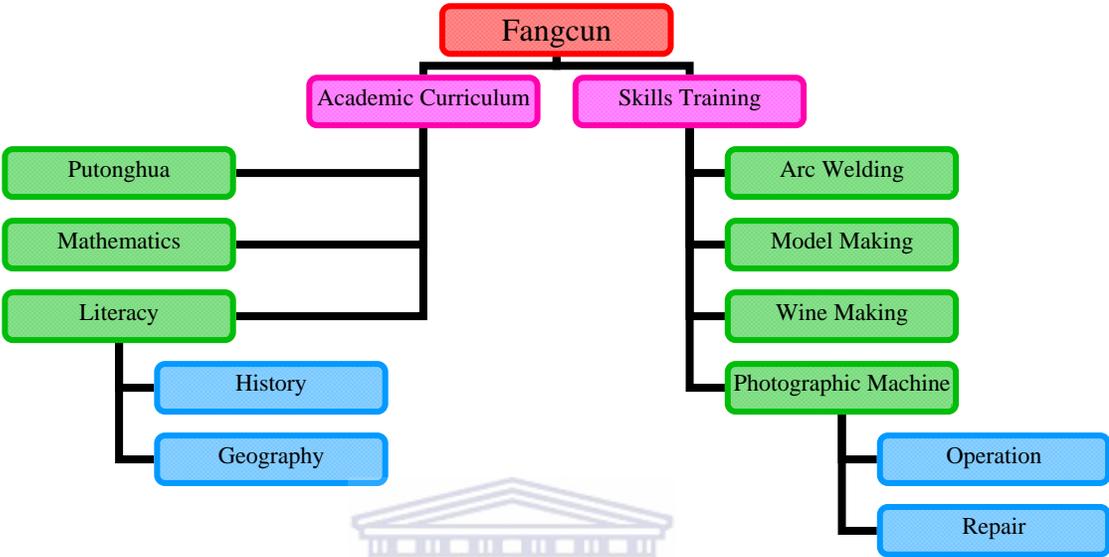
The juvenile justice system in China renders educational services to learners in conflict with the law in two schools, the Guangdong Juvenile Reformatory Institute and the Fangcun Juvenile Reformatory Institution. The schools have as an aim to educate rather than to punish. The curriculum offered to the learners in these centres are divided in two sections, one section focuses on academic subjects found in their mainstream school, but learners are also obliged to participate in manual labour activities such as fishing, flower arrangements, wine making. It appears that the manual labour activities are somewhat disconnected from what is offered in the academic curriculum. It was also found by Epstein that most of the time learners are engaged in common factory work of a tedious nature.

3.4.3 United States of America

Cutting, Barlotta, Mason, Wilson and Leone (2008) presented an analysis of education policies at a conference in 2004 on all 50 states of the United States of America (USA)

and the District of Columbia. They made the following observations with regard to curriculum and related issues.

Cutting et al (2008:11) found that the goal of the educational programmes for youth in correctional facilities is to "contribute to the overall desired result, namely reduced recidivism, preferably coupled with further education and enhanced employability after release of these offenders." The analysis found that education in correctional facilities is provided on a continuum, with a variety of educational options. The services include provision of a high school diploma, which will assist learners to return to mainstream schools and to complete the high school diploma requirements within the residential facility. They found that of the fourteen states that offered an educational curriculum, nine of them align with the state or community standards. They stipulated that the state of Florida indicates that their educational programme shall consist of basic academic, career, or exceptional curricula and related services. The educational programme supports the notion of re-entry into the community. This may lead to completion of the requirements which include the receipt of a high school diploma or an equivalent thereof.

Blomberg (2004) investigated the role of educational opportunities in a youth's transition back into their home communities. He explains that there are approximately 200 facilities with education services provided on site in residential schools. The local school districts are responsible for all educational services. He found promising educational practices, which include initial assessment and educational planning. He states that individualized curriculum, vocational programming, special education provision and General Education Diploma preparation is also evident in these residential schools.

Some residential facilities like the Osborne school, an educational institution on the grounds of Santa Clara's County Juvenile Hall have a curriculum which is structured according to themes based on values such as respect, responsibility and integrity which are taught through the medium of story telling and other creative strategies. In

addition, the curriculum also focuses on skills such as reading, writing and life skills such as anger control, understanding the difference between needs and wants, and moral imagination. The standard and coherence of the curriculum were found to have improved the academic results in the court county school system.

The Osborne school trains all their educators in the Character-Based literacy curriculum. Schulman (2008) explains that the Character-Based literacy curriculum combines teaching language with teaching values and is also used at alternative and court-community schools in some counties in the USA. Youth placed at risk are challenged to improve their performance, both academically and ethically.

A challenge when introducing the Character-Based curriculum was the fact that the learner population are not staying in one place but moves around. The curriculum is offered in the juvenile halls, alternative community schools and the surrounding counties. This ensures continuity so that learners who often move from place to place can continue with the academic programme.

The juvenile justice system in the United States of America is rendering educational services that are congruent with mainstream education. The aims of the schools for learners who find themselves in conflict with the law focus on reducing recidivism, enhanced employability through the provision of further education. The educational services provided to the learners assist the learner in obtaining a high school certificate and the learner can continue with his or her education even after discharge from a juvenile justice facility. Learners are also offered a character-based curriculum that is values-driven. Themes such as respect, responsibility and integrity are taught to the learners.

3.4.4   Northern Ireland

Background

During 2001 a decision was made to close the Lisnevin and Rathgeal Juvenile Justice Centres and amalgamate them to form Rowan College (Kilpatrick and Harbinson, 2003). A need arose to look at how best to meet the educational needs of the young people in the juvenile justice centres. The Department of Education of Northern Ireland thought it best to commission research to examine:

- the young people' previous and current educational experiences,
- their educational expectations,
- their experiences on release from custody and
- the support and information requirements of Juvenile Justice Centre's staff in planning and implementing of educational provision.

Curriculum offerings
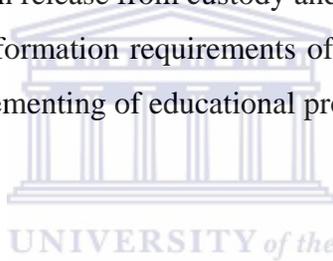
Rowan College provides a child-centered education programme. Each learner is offered an individualized learning programme (ILP). A diverse school curriculum assists the Rowan College to accomplish this. Since young people are co-writers of their ILP, they are often more responsible towards their own education. The programme focuses on the strengths of the young persons placed in Rowan College. Rowan College has a differentiated approach to learning and adjusts the level of difficultly to the level of the learner. (Youth Justice Agency, 2008). The targets and the goals are used in each subject to provide focus to the learners' learning programme (Kilpatrick and Harbinson, 2003).

Rowan College also provides general and enrichment experiences in the core subject areas of the curriculum as well as a vocational educational programme (Youth Justice Agency, 2008). This will assist the learners to function in the world of work. The institutions in Northern Ireland are ensuring that the learners receive quality education

and training, which will enable them to live a life away from crime by stating that each learner in their facilities should have an individualized learning programme. The ILP according to the Youth Justice Agency (2008) would ensure a curriculum that supports each individual's personal development, tackles the reasons for their offending behaviour and would consequently reduce the risk of re-offending.

Five key strategies are used at the Rowan College to meet the individual needs of the class group and the individual learner. These are differentiation, individualization, adaptation, enhancement and elaboration (Kilpatrick and Harbinson, 2003). Rowan College has a programme, which aims at building the self-esteem of the learners placed in their institutions. Core and vocational subjects are offered to the learners (Youth Justice Agency, 2008). The core subjects are English, Mathematics, Information Computer Technology, Science, French, Art, Geography, History, Careers Education, Physical Education and Social Education with Citizenship (See Figure 12). They offer four enrichment programmes (See Figure 13) to the learners. These are Vocational Skills, Woodwork, catering and the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme.

Figure 12: Core Curriculum at Rowan College

English

Social Education

Mathema-tics

Physical Education

Science

Core Curriculum

Careers Education

Information Computer Technology

History

French

Geography

Art
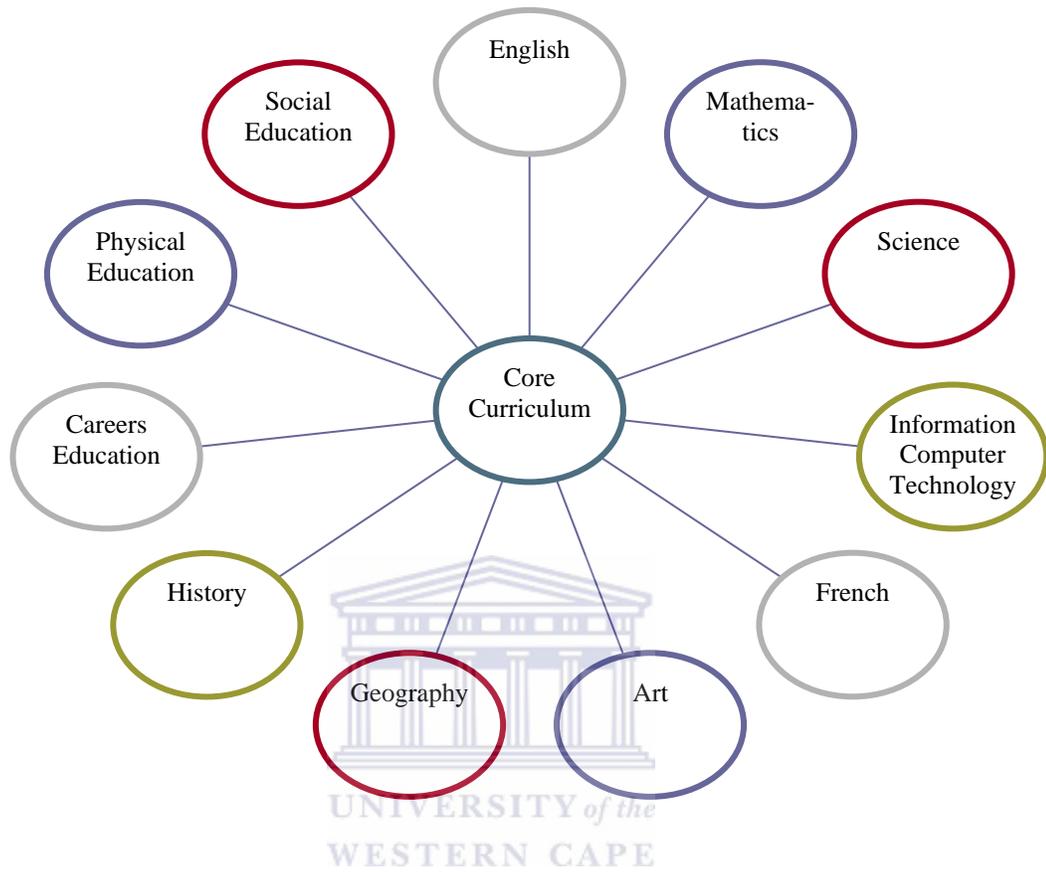
Figure 13: Enrichment Programme at Rowan College

Vocational Skills

Duke of Edinburgh Scheme

Enrichment Programme

Woodwork

Catering
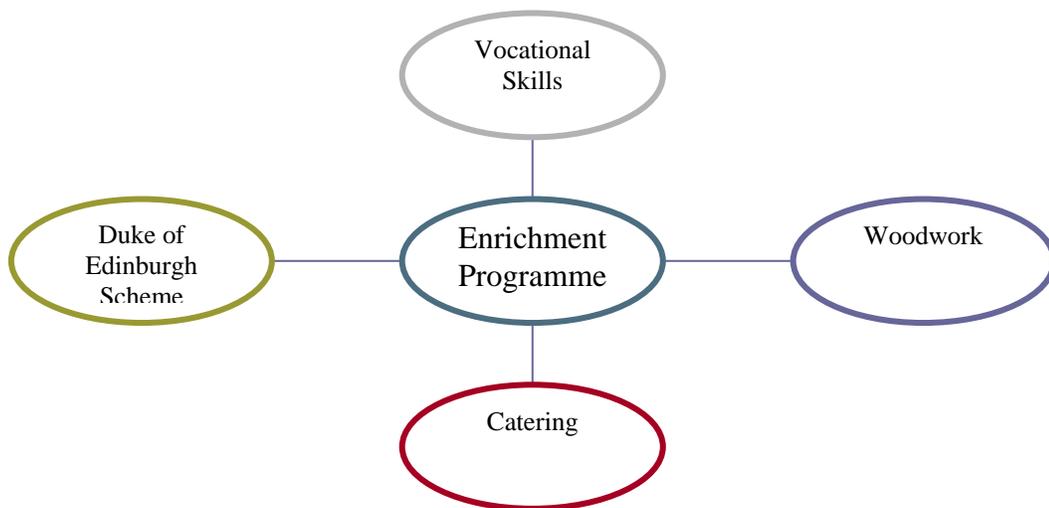
The perceptions of the staff towards the curriculum are one of "delivering a curriculum that is not designed to meet the needs of young people who had an extremely chequered educational career" (Kilpatrick & Harbinson 2003:4). Other factors impact on this, such as the large numbers of the classes that do not allow for much individual intervention to occur. Such individualised intervention would entail working with individual learners to support them in overcoming or reducing the challenges they face. Educators regard the mainstream curriculum as inappropriate for their learners and believe that their learners are amongst the most challenging in the education sector. The staff believes that flexibility to innovate in delivering the curriculum is important in order to engage them in education. A need is expressed to forge links with outside bodies such as Colleges for Further Education, as well as Career Services which they believed would enhance the vocational aspect of the education provided to the learners.

The learner's perceptions of the curriculum seemed to be varied. Some reported that they felt positive about the curriculum offered whilst others felt that it was not challenging enough. A range of vocational skills training is on offer and this was welcomed by the youth. Some learners indicated that they wish to continue with their education while others were of the opinion that there was not much value in the educational programme they were offered.

The juvenile justice system in Northern Ireland is rendering educational services to learners in conflict with the law in the Rowan College which is an amalgamation of the Lisnevin and Rathgeal Juvenile Justice Centres. It was regarded as important to provide a child-centered education programme that is based on an Individualised Learning Programme. The curriculum offered to the learners in these centres is divided into two sections, one section focuses on academic subjects found in their mainstream school, but learners are also encouraged to participate in enrichment programmes linked to vocational educational programmes. Differentiation, individualization, adaptation, enhancement and elaboration are used to meet the individual needs of the learners in the Rowan College.

Below are tables (Table 2 - 4) that schematically illustrate the key similarities and differences between the curriculum offerings to children who come into conflict with the law in Malawi, China, USA and Northern Ireland.

Table 2: Aims and functions of the Centres in Malawi, China, USA and Northern Ireland

Aims and Functions of the Centres	Countries
Ensures that youth becomes productive members of the community. Enhanced employability for youth who come into conflict with the law after their release.	Malawi, USA, Northern Ireland
To keep youth who come into conflict with the law out of prison. Contribute to the reduced recidivism. Ensure that learners receive a quality education and training which will assist for a life away from crime.	Malawi, USA, Northern Ireland
To keep youth who come into conflict with the law away from adult offenders.	Malawi
Detention is regarded as punishment that will reform the youth who come into conflict with the law.	Malawi
Focus is on education rather than punishment. Ensure that learners receive a quality education and training. Enhanced further education for youth who come into conflict with the law.	China, Northern Ireland, USA

Table 3: Academic Curriculum Offerings of the Centres in Malawi, China, USA and Northern Ireland

Academic Curriculum Offerings	Country
English, Chichewa, Biology, Mathematics, Agriculture, History, Geography, Physical Science and Bible Knowledge	Malawi
Guangdong: Chinese, Mathematics, History and Music **Fangcun:** Putonghua, Mathematics, Literacy that include History and Geography	China
Providing a high school diploma curriculum. Curriculum combines teaching language arts with teaching values. Curriculum is divided in themes. Themes are based on respect, responsibility and integrity. Skills such as reading and writing are focused on.	USA
Each learner should have an IDP. Diverse school curriculum. English, Mathematics, Information Computer Technology, Science, French, Art, Geography, History, Careers Education, Physical Education, Social Education with Citizenship	Northern Ireland

Table 4: Skills Training Curriculum Offerings of the Centres in Malawi, China, USA and Northern Ireland

Skills and Life Skills Curriculum Offerings	Country
Agriculture, Bricklaying, Tailoring, Carpentry and Joinery, Leatherwork as well as Moral Talks, Organized Sports, Indoor Games, Drama, Songs	Malawi
Guangdong: Fishing, Gardening, Flowering Cultivation, Flower Arrangements, Construction Work, Growing Beans and Peanuts, Automotive Shop Fangcun: Arc Welding, Model Making, Wine Making, Photographic Machine Operation and repair	China
Other skills such as anger control, understanding the difference between needs and wants, and oral imagination are included in the curriculum.	USA
Vocational Skills, Woodwork, Catering and the Duke of Edinburgh Scheme	Northern Ireland
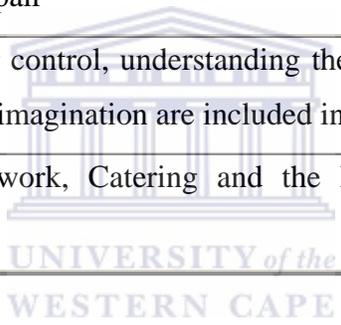
3.5   CONCLUSION

The study investigates educators' perceptions with regard to the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS. It was important to gain insight into what curricula are offered to learners in similar circumstances in other countries. Reviewing the literature has allowed me to learn from international experiences in order to reflect on what may be best for the South African context. It provides a reference point for understanding educators' perceptions of what kind of curriculum may be most appropriate and relevant for youth who are placed at risk.

This chapter includes an exploration of definitions of curriculum, its relevancy and what curriculum is offered at the schools in this arena. It was found that the

educational programmes for youth who come into conflict with the law are interrupted due to learners attending court hearings and moving from one institution to another. Differences were found between curriculum offerings for youth placed at risk in the countries investigated. I found that youth placed at risk can be exposed to the mainstream curriculum and enrichment programmes, or to a primarily skills training programme and some academic work. I also found that China is advocating that learners who come into conflict with the law should be exposed to academic work although the factory discipline teaching is ranked higher as it is presumed that these learners, at best, would be future factory workers.

It was found that developed countries have a different approach to education for learners who come into conflict with the law than developing countries. The developed countries offer the same curriculum to learners in conflict with the law in institutions such as the Rowan College in Northern Ireland or the institutions in USA as that which is offered in mainstream schools. The mainstream curriculum is duplicated in the centres for learners in conflict with the law. This enables the learners to continue with their education after discharge, allowing them to achieve the same outcomes as learners in mainstream education. Learners in conflict with the law in developed countries are also offered enrichment programmes. These assist learners to reduce recidivism, and enhance employability after discharge.

In the chapter that follows the research design for the study is presented, detailing methodologies used and the research tools employed. It provides justification for why this design was deemed most appropriate for this study.

CHAPTER 4 - RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1   INTRODUCTION

This chapter acts as a bridge between the theoretical and literature discussions of the previous chapters and the findings emanating from this research. This chapter includes three major sections. First the research design is presented, wherein qualitative research methodology is described. According to Hook, Mkhize, Kiguwa, Collins, Burman and Parker (2004) methodology is about considering the context in which the research takes place. It is about the fundamental theoretical and philosophical assumptions pertaining to the research. They argue that methodology speaks about the manner in which researchers collect data and how the collected data are analyzed to consequently contribute to the greater whole. The second section includes a description of the research population, the sites in the study, the researcher as a research tool and the time span involved in the collection of the data. The third section includes a description of the methods employed with focus on document analysis, focus group interviews and individual interviews as the data collection techniques used in this study. Related subsections relate to trustworthiness and triangulation. The fourth section looks at the process of data analysis.

The reader is reminded of the central research question as well as the aims of the research:

The central research question is 'What are educators' perceptions of the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum Statement for learners at Special Youth Care and Education Centres in the Western Cape?' This question is explored through directed efforts to achieve the following research objectives:

- To determine what SYCECs set out as their objectives for the education and development of learners placed with them.
- To understand the perceptions of the educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum for learners at these Centres.

- To determine what curriculum is being implemented at the two SYCEC and the reasons it is prioritized.

These objectives were operationalised in the following research questions:

- o What are the objectives of the SYCEC for the education and development of the learners placed in these institutions?
- o What are the perceptions of the educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum for learners at these Centres?
- o What curriculum is being implemented at the two SYCEC in the study?
- o How is this curriculum focus justified?

The rationale behind the approach was to gain inside and in-depth knowledge of the human phenomena in the study. I wanted to understand what is being taught and why the educators choose to teach this content in the way that they do.

4.2   RESEARCH DESIGN

Research serves many purposes. Three of the usual and most beneficial purposes are to explore, describe and explain. This research attempts to explore the perceptions of the educators regarding the National Curriculum Statement and its appropriateness and relevance for the learners at their centres.

Two broad research approaches can be used to investigate any phenomenon. These are quantitative and qualitative research methods. Quantitative research methods produce data in the form of quantitative indices and statistical analysis, whereas qualitative research methods produce contextual data in order to understand phenomena often drawing on the perspectives of the research participants (Townsend & de la Rey, 2008). Creswell (2005) compares the opposing assumptions of quantitative and qualitative research. Table five below depicts the difference between qualitative and quantitative research.

Table 5: The difference between qualitative and quantitative research

Quantitative Research	Qualitative Research
Starts from a theoretical base.	Develops theory as the research proceeds.
Gathers quantifiable data.	Relies on descriptive data reports.
Makes generalizations about the research topic.	Aims to gather more specific data.
Has a clear idea of the research procedures to produce data.	Has a general idea of the research design. It is more flexible and emerges as the research proceeds.
Requires that the reliability and validity of the measuring instruments be established prior to the research being undertaken.	In qualitative research the researcher attempts to verify the data through various means such as the use of thick description.

Townsend and de la Rey (2008) identified six steps taken in a research project. These steps are:

Step 1: Planning the research

This is the conceptualization stage of the research where I identified the research topic. This research as mentioned earlier in this chapter aims to explore the phenomena under scrutiny. I formulated the four research questions and identified the outcomes I would like to reach from the research. I also developed the research proposal, which encapsulates the framework for the study.

Step 2: Deciding on research methods

I employed a case study approach in the qualitative research methodological framework. I also decided upon the data collection procedures, which are document analysis, focus group and individual interviews.

Step 3: Step 3: Data Collection

This is the step where I operationalised my study. I conducted the study at the two sites (Site A and Site B). This involved analysis of School Management Team, School Governing Body and curriculum committee meeting minutes, admission records, learner profiles and incidents reports. I conducted six focus group interviews, three at site A and three at site B. I also conducted 14 individual interviews, six at Site A and eight at Site B. I also processed the data by transcribing and coding it.

Step 4: Data Analysis

I made use of content analysis for the data collected in the document analysis, focus group interviews and individual interviews. Content analysis is defined by Devlin (2006:7) as "a coding scheme you create based on themes that emerged from qualitative data". Here I interpreted the data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect the interests, ideas and theory that initiated the research.

Step 5: Findings

After conducting the actual research I identified themes and sub-themes that emerged in the research. I grouped the various themes and sub-themes together for the purpose of reporting.

Step 6: Theory Building

I was able to make sense out of the data collected and analyzed. I could synthesize the findings with the literature review.

4.2.1   Qualitative Research Methodology

I employed a qualitative research methodology in this study. Lichtman (2006) explains that qualitative research means many things to many people. Qualitative research is sometimes associated with methodologies instead of realities. They will, according to Lichtman (2006) identify ways to analyze data and will identify themes accordingly. According to Swann and Pratt (2003) qualitative research can be defined as being concerned with the quality rather than the quantity of something. Qualitative research is often used in educational research to typify a particular paradigm.

Lichtman (2006) identifies ten significant elements of qualitative research. In this study it includes description, identification and understanding of the manner in which educators at the SYCEC perceive and understand the NCS. The appropriateness as well as relevance of the curriculum for learners at SYCEC is one of the questions this study wanted to answer. Presenting a comprehensive account of educators' perceptions of their learners and the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for learners in SYCEC did this. Qualitative researchers will ask "why" questions and because they want to explore meaning and interpretation they normally do not deal with hypothesis. These researchers often do not test a hypothesis or generalize beyond the group they are researching.

Lichtman (2006) notes that the methods used should be able to identify the interaction between the views of participants and the issues themselves, and the influence each has on the other. The rationale behind the approach was to gain inside and in-depth knowledge of the human phenomena in the study. I wanted to understand what is being taught and why the educators choose to teach this content in the way that they do.

Qualitative research methodology as understood by Lichtman (2006) has a strong tendency to place emphasis on detail. I could focus on the reasons and validations

educators gave in the study regarding the choices they make in terms of the NCS, learning areas and learning programmes.

Lichtman (2006) further explains that word rather than numbers characterize qualitative research methodology. The themes that emerged in the study were developed from the data that was collected. Due to the fact that the research methodology relied on the views of the educators in real life settings and is articulated in words, I had the opportunity to describe and analyze these words for emerging themes and allow for the inquiry to explore and understand the central phenomena.

Another characteristic that was appealing was the fact that qualitative research does not necessarily follow a linear approach. This means that the research was continuously informed by the data collected. This research methodology allows for moving to and fro between data collection and data analysis. There is no prescribed manner in which qualitative research has to be undertaken, thus allowing for flexibility and fluidity. I could make connections between the various data collection and the data analysis. The process was not a linear one. I could go back to the literature when I discovered data of relevance and make connections between them and literature reviewed.

4.2.2   Advantages and Disadvantages of Qualitative Research Methodology

One of the most important advantages of this methodology would be its emphasis on detail. It makes use of verbal and non-verbal behaviour in order to break down barriers, to evoke meaning and highlight the complexity as well as subtlety of the phenomena under study. The data that is collected depicts perspectives, perceptions and views about the research object. It also has the ability to highlight the feelings and experiences of participants about a particular issue or phenomena. Actions of participants in qualitative research are contextualized with regard to time and situations (Woods, 2006).

There are some limitations I would like to highlight for the reader about the chosen methodology for the study. Woods (2006) alludes to the fact that qualitative studies can be subjective and biased. I made a concerted effort not to impose my views on the participants. This is discussed in a later section where I reflect on my role as a researcher in this process. I ensured anonymity by coding the sites and the participants in the study. I therefore ensured that no identity or identifying information about the sites and participants are revealed. I ensured that the data gathered in the document analysis, focus group interviews and individual interviews was safeguarded and protected. I had access to the data and only made it available to a colleague at my previous school to assist with confirming the authenticity. I kept all the data gathered locked up.

4.3   CASE STUDY

Various authors (Lichtman, 2006; Swan and Pratt, 2003; Freebody, 2003; Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007; Opie, 2004 and Cohen et al, 2007) identify different aspects of what defines a case study. Some identify it as a single individual or organization being studied, but it might also be a period of time rather than a phenomena. A case study is regarded as an investigation in considerable depth into one or a few cases in naturally occurring social situations.

A case study can focus on one particular instance of educational experience and attempts to gain theoretical and professional insights from a full documentation of that instance. Case studies are about real people in real situations A case study is perceived as an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a specific and detailed study of the case and it might be limited to a characteristic, trait or behaviour (Merriam, 1998; Lichtman, 2006).

Case studies may be intrinsic, instrumental and collective (Denzin and Lincoln, 2003; Stake, 1994 Merriam, 1998 and Cohen et al, 2007). They are also described as exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Yin, 1984) or descriptive, interpretive and

evaluative (Merriam, 1998). This study was an intrinsic case study. I wanted a better understanding of the particular case. It is also argued (Merriam, 1998 and Cohen et al, 2007) that a case study is intrinsically bounded and one way of assessing its boundedness is to investigate whether there is a limit to the number of participants involved, and the time in which the phenomena will be studied. The case study involved 38 educators of the two sites and the study was conducted over a period of six months.

4.4 PARTICIPANTS

The teaching staff includes principal, deputy principal and qualified educators. A learner support team consisting of a psychologist, a social worker, registered nurse and an occupational therapist are employed at both sites. Thirty-eight out of a possible total of 52 teaching and support staff from the two centres participated in the second phase of the study and fourteen participants in the third phase. Participants represented academic, technical skills, residential care and learner support departments. Participants in the third phase were purposively selected after the initial focus group interviews, which they had participated in, had been analyzed. Purposive selection of participants was based on the fact that I wanted to discover, understand, and gain deeper insight and needed to select a sample from which the most could be learned (Merriam, 1998).

The sample included curriculum managers, learner support staff, representatives from residential care, academic and technical skills departments. I interviewed three residential care educators, two academic and three technical skills educators in total at both centres as well as four members of the SMT. I also interviewed two learner support staff. Educators were selected for having strong views either for or against the NCS and the appropriateness and relevance thereof for the learners at the centres in the case study. I also wanted to gain more insight into why the Technical Skills Training and the Life Orientation and Residential Care Departments are following

curricula that it is not congruent with the NCS. The advantage of purposive selection of participants in this case allowed for many rich and in-depth insights to be gained.

4.5   THE SITES

The sites that are the focus of this study are referred to as Site A and Site B, two SYCEC's in the Western Cape. Both centres admit learners by means of a court order, which sentences the learner to the centre after he or she has been found guilty in a Criminal Court procedure. Site A caters for boys and Site B caters for boys as well as girls. Site B has a sixty-bed accommodation for boys and a sixty-bed accommodation for girls. Site A has a bed capacity of one hundred and twenty beds for boys. These centres are often far from the homes of the learners.

Site A is located near a town whereas Site B is situated in the community. Both centres however have little contact with the communities within which they are situated. The buildings of both centres are adequate for the services they need to deliver to the learners. Each centre has an administrative block, academic classes, technical skills workshops, a kitchen, a laundry, a clinic and a hall. The administration buildings have reception areas for visitors. The learner support staff and the School Management Team have adequate office space and are able to render quality services from these offices. Some of the buildings, however, are in a poor condition. Roof tiles are missing in large quantities. The ceilings in some offices, classes and workshops have holes in them and some have been ripped out completely and many areas are in need of repair including the hostels.

Both sites exercise tight security control with entry and exit monitoring on a 24-hour basis. Access to the hostels at both sites is through security gates. Site A has four hostels. One of the hostels is used to house the classrooms of the Life Orientation and Residential care. As regards furnishing, some rooms in the hostels have only beds and other rooms have tables and chairs as well. None of the windows are curtained. The learners are trying to beautify their rooms by putting up pictures. The recreation room

at the back of the hostel is an open space with a television set in a steel box. There are no chairs to sit on when watching television, no table or space to do home work, and because of this no recreation of any kind takes place in the rooms since the rooms are empty. Nothing outside of the hostels at Site A beautifies the surroundings apart from the lawns which are kept cut and neat.

At Site B the learners are grouped in smaller cottages. Each cottage consists of a lounge with a lounge suite, an office for the Residential Care Educator, bathroom facilities and six bedrooms. Rooms are shared, with the biggest room accommodating six learners. Curtains hang on all the windows and rooms are furnished in a standard manner. Each learner has a bed and bedside table and cupboard. Learners beautify their rooms, the bathroom and lounge with paintings and pictures.

Site A has one field that is used for cricket, soccer and rugby. No other amenities are available on site. At Site B the learners have access to a swimming pool, two netball courts which also serve as basketball courts, two tennis courts, a rugby field and a soccer field.

At the time of conducting the research there were three SYCECs in the Western Cape and I obtained permission from the WCED to conduct my study at all three centres. I was unfortunately unable to gain access to one of the centres. The staff and management here had prior commitments that prevented them from participating in the research study.

4.6   THE RESEARCHER AS RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

I was employed at a School of Industries, currently referred to as a Youth Care and Education Centre from 1990 to 1991 as a School Counselor and have, from, 2002 to March 2009 been a member of the School Management Team as the Academic Department Head at a SYCEC in the Western Cape. I served on the Curriculum Committee at the institution. During 2004 the educators at the centre investigated what curriculum should be taught to learners at the SYCEC and made

recommendations to the broader staff at a School Development Team meeting. The committee proposed that the Technical Skills Department should teach Technology and the Life Orientation and Residential Care Department should teach Life Orientation and Arts and Culture. The remaining five Learning Areas, namely Languages, Natural Sciences, Mathematics, Social Sciences and Economic and Management Sciences were assigned to the Academic Department.

I believe that all learners have the capacity to learn and that this applies as well to the learners which one finds the SYCEC. I further believe that their coming into conflict with the law is often due to eco-systemic factors such as poverty, unemployment of their parents and poor social and community cohesion. I have remained committed to providing these learners with support so that they can become fully functioning community members. I believe that giving them access to the same curriculum which is taught in mainstream school would be beneficial to them and would make their re-entry into mainstream a positive and easier experience. I found it extremely difficult to understand why some of my colleagues insisted on offering a 'watered down' curriculum to learners whom they believed would never get back into mainstream education, whilst I believed the opposite. This served as a strong motivation to investigate this question and in the process to challenge my own beliefs and assumptions about the learners, the educators and the curriculum offered in SYCECs.

I was actively involved in various fora and training that dealt specifically with the curriculum provisions at these centres. One such forum, the Youth Care Forum under the auspices of the Transforming Institutional Practices at the University of the Western Cape grappled with these issues regarding curriculum provision for learners in conflict with the law. A symposium that looked at pertinent issues regarding curriculum delivery amongst other matters was host by the Transforming Institutional Practices at the University of the Western Cape in 2007. The forum deliberates curriculum issues on a regular basis.

Although I have strong views on the appropriateness and relevancy for the learners at SYCECs I made every effort not to impose my views. As mentioned in a previous section I made use of a colleague to assist me with authenticity checking to reduce bias.

4.7   DATA COLLECTION TECHNIQUES

I made use of three different data collection procedures, namely document analysis, focus groups and individual interviews.

4.7.1   Document Analysis

According to Mertler & Charles (2005) document analysis utilizes private or public records that a qualitative researcher can obtain about a site or participants in a study. These documents as highlighted by Mertler et al (2005) can be anything from newspapers, journals, policy documents to even photographs. This study focused on documents pertinent to the research questions, which included:

- minutes of the curriculum committee meetings,
- minutes of the School Governing Body,
- minutes of the School Management Team,
- curriculum and learning programme policies,
- learner Profiles,
- incident reports and admission records and
- vision and mission statements.

The analysis of these documents focused on answering the question that relates to what objectives are set for the learners at the centres.

4.7.2   Interviews

Interviews enable participants to discuss their views of the world, and to express how they regard situations. Thus, according to Cohen et al (2007:349), "the interview is not simply concerned with collecting data about life: it is part of life itself, its human embeddedness is inescapable".

The interview is seen as a flexible tool for data collection and the order may be controlled while still giving space for spontaneity. Cohen et al (2007) postulate that interviews may serve three purposes, namely, it may be used as the principal means of data collection, it may be used to test hypotheses and lastly it may be used in conjunction with other methods in a research undertaking. I made use of interviews in conjunction with other methods in the research.

Various types of interviews can be employed namely, standardized, in-depth, ethnographic, elite, life history, focus group, structured, exploratory, open-ended, closed quantitative, informational conversational and interview guide interviews (Cohen, 2007). I employed focus group and individual interviews in the study, which was based on an interview guide approach. Topics and issues to be covered are made specific in advance, in outline form; the interviewer decides sequence of questions in the course of the interview. I found that the outline increases the comprehensiveness of the data and makes the data collection somewhat systematic for each respondent (Cohen, 2007). Logical gaps can be anticipated and closed. Interviews remain fairly conversational and situational. All the interviews were audio-recorded with the permission of participants. I also, as a back-up measure, recorded the responses of participants in writing.

4.7.2 (a)   Focus Group Interviews

A **focus group** can be defined as a strategy to understand phenomena better by interviewing a sampled group of people rather than an individual. The social

environment of the focus group interview stimulates participants in the group as the views of some participants stimulate the sharing of the views of others.

Krueger and Casey (2000) argue that a focus group is a special group of people in terms of size, purpose, composition and procedures. The participants in the focus group have common characteristics pertaining to the research and that created a comfortable, permissive atmosphere. The framework in the interview schedule guided each focus group. Cohen et al (2007) indicate that it is through the interaction of the group that the data emerges. A lively discussion ensued in the focus groups and the data was derived because of participants' engagement and debate in this context.

The focus group can be defined as a well-structured and targeted meeting or workshop. These meetings were designed in such an order to gain maximum output. Thus, allowing me to encapsulate the views, understandings and perceptions of the participants.

Focus groups encourage self-disclosure. When the participants became comfortable it enhanced the quality of disclosure in the focus group interviews. It was however apparent that not everyone was comfortable with sharing information in the group setting. I included some of those individuals in the individual interviews in order to gather data in a more secure environment.

Employing focus groups allowed me to generate an array of ideas and opinions about the research topic. This approach also allowed me to explore and understand the different perceptions that exist at each site. The focus group interviews also contributed to uncovering factors that contributed to opinions, behaviour or motivation of the participants. Focus group interviews contributed to highlighting the bigger picture rather than only parts of the picture. I gained in quality by tapping into the shared views of the participants in the focus group without losing the voice and perceptions of the individual participant.

New questions that arose during the focus group interviews were jotted down and I incorporated those to my individual interviews to gain a deeper understanding of the perceptions of educators regarding the curriculum delivery at the two Centres.

Disadvantages of Focus Group Interviews

Having defined and described focus group interviews and the benefits of their use in the study, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this data collection process. It is argued that focus groups operate more successfully if they are composed of relative strangers rather than friends (Cohen et al, 2007). The following are identified as disadvantages of focus group interviews:

> They tend not to yield numerical, quantifiable or generalizable data; the data may be difficult to analyze succinctly; the number of people involved tends to be small; they may yield less information than a survey; and the group dynamics may lead to non-participation by some members and dominance by others; the number of topics to be covered may be limited; intra-group disagreement and even conflicts may arise; inarticulate members may be denied a voice; the data may lack overall reliability.

I compensate for the disadvantages of the focus groups by grouping the data around emerging themes. The focus groups were kept small but I conducted three focus group interviews at each site in order to include as many participants as possible. In order to draw in those participants that were less vocal, I made a conscious effort to include them in the focus group discussion by addressing them directly as the process progressed. If, they did not participate in the focus group discussion I invited them to participate in the individual interviews.

4.7.2 (b) Semi-structured Individual Interviews

Semi-structured interview informed the final phase of the data collection**.** These interviews are more flexible but I was in a position to control the interview without

being too rigid. Semi-structured interviews allow for a combination framework of analysis (Opie, 2004 and Wellington, 2000). Semi-structured interviews are halfway between the ends of the continuum, which is between structured and unstructured interviews. Questions were phrased in such a way that there was a combination of more and or less structured interview questions. Most of the interview was guided by an inventory of issues that the researcher wanted to explore.

One usually employs semi-structured interviews when participants are from different backgrounds or the topic is of a controversial nature. This method of data collection therefore allowed me to interview a range of participants and for varied reasons. I included participants from all the different departments as well as different post levels to participate in this third and final phase of data collection. I also included those participants who expressed strong views, as well as those who expressed no views on the research questions.

After the completion and analysis of the focus group interviews I selected particular individuals to participate in **individual interviews**. I selected at least one participant from each focus group but not more than two participants for individual interviews. These participants assisted with further exploring issues that were discussed in the focus group interviews but which were not completely resolved or covered. The following criteria were used to select those who would participate in individual interviews:

- Participants that expressed very strong opinions about the topic.
- Participants that did not participate optimally in the focus group interviews.
- Participants that would be able to give a specific perspective on the research topic due to the position they occupy in the organization.

The interview schedule consisted of a set of specific questions and this was because it kept the process focused on the information that was required. The interviews took the

form of in-depth conversations with the selected interviewees. All the interviews were audio-recorded and I also took notes during the interview.

Advantages and Disadvantages of the Individual Interviews

The individual interviews highlighted individual versus group perceptions. Topics that were not addressed or not fully explored in the focus group interviews were teased out in the individual interviews. It allowed me to identify divergent perceptions and or experiences regarding the topic.

Due to the smaller size of the sample in the third phase of the data collection and because they were selected on purpose it could have had a negative impact regarding validity and reliability and generalization.

4.7.3   Timeline for Data Collection

During the month of January 2008 I started to negotiate entry into the sites. This was done by means of telephoning the principal of Site B and speaking to the principal of Site A. Thereafter I had an interview with the principal of Site B where I was given permission to conduct my research at the centre. The principal gave me permission to liaise with his deputy principal on the times and dates approved after my meeting with the staff. The principal of Site A immediately gave me permission to conduct my research. I also made a telephonic appointment with the centre that is not part of this study. It was understood as explained earlier in this chapter that the SYCEC would not be able to participate in the study due to prior commitments.

Data collection took place from March 2008 to September 2008. During this time I conducted three focus groups at each site. I completed the focus group interviews at each of the sites over three days. The time I spent to complete the focus groups at both sites amounted to 12 hours.

I then forwarded the names of the staff that I would like to have at an individual interview. These individual interviews took place between July and September 2008. One and a half hours was allocated for each individual interview.

4.8   DATA ANALYSIS

Cohen et al (2007:461) indicate that "qualitative data analysis involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data in terms of the participant's definitions by noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities." When one is analyzing data it should be a systematic and rigorous process and it should reflect the views of everyone in the study. Data collection and data analysis are discussed separately but they often run concurrently with one another which were the case in this study. This modus operandi enabled me to detect gaps and loopholes in the data collection which I was able to follow up in subsequent phases.

The qualitative study chosen influences the data analysis. Cohen et al (2007) argue that a "case study may be most suitably written as descriptive narrative, often chronological, with issues raised throughout" through which a grounded theory and content analysis will be derived. Content analysis is a process of systematic analysis that includes coding and categorization, until theory emerges that explains the phenomena being studied. The number of data sets and people from which data have been collected are also a factor when analyzing data. Qualitative data often focus on smaller numbers of people than quantitative data, yet the data can be detailed and rich (Cohen et al, 2007). Data analysis can be identified and presented in five ways. The first two methods are by people, the next two by issue and the final method is by instrument.

Following Creswell (1998) I read through all the data I collected from the minutes of the curriculum committee, the school governing body and school management team, learner admission files, learner portfolios and incident reports. Through this activity I could get a sense of the whole. Thereafter, I wrote memos and reflective notes as an

initial sorting process and developed initial codes. This assisted me to further adapt both the data collection and data analysis process as a strategy of inquiry.

Once the document analysis was completed and focus group interviews facilitated, I listened to the tape recordings of the focus groups and the individual interviews. This was done several times to get a clear understanding and to search for initial themes. The audio-recorded data was transcribed after the interviews were conducted. Content analysis was used to examine the documents collected and to determine a system for recoding specific aspects of it. The process of labeling the various kinds of data and establishment of an index was the first step in content analysis. After all audio-recorded data were transcribed; the audio recordings were listened to again and crosschecked with the notes kept during the interviews to ensure that all data was captured. I had broad themes that emanated from the research questions. The data was encoded to facilitate the identification of common themes. A table which listed all responses was constructed. This assisted me in establishing similarities in participants' responses. After this process of listening, writing and coding I sorted the data according to the themes that emerged. The data collected was used in the following manner to answer the research questions. Research question 1, which dealt with the objectives of the SYCEC for the education and development of the learners placed in these institutions, was answered with the assistance of the document analysis and focus group interviews.

Research question 2, which focused on the perceptions of the educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum for the learners at these centres, was answered by way of focus group and individual interviews. Document analysis and focus group interviews assisted me to the answer for research question 3. The last research question, which looked at the reasons why this curriculum, as it was highlighted in the documents, was regarded as a priority, was answered in the data that was collected during the focus group and individual interviews. The table below provides a schematic illustration of how the various research tools were employed to answer the research questions.

Table 6: Research Tool and Research Question

Research Tool	Research Question
Document Analysis Focus Group Interviews	Research Question 1: What are the objectives of the SYCEC for the education and development of the learners placed in these institutions?
Focus Group Interviews Individual Interviews	Research Question 2: What are the perceptions of the educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum for learners at these Centres?
Document Analysis Focus Group Interviews	Research Question 3: What curriculum is being implemented at the SYCEC in the study?
Focus Group Interviews Individual Interviews	Research Question 4: Why is the curriculum regarded as priority?

4.8.1 Trustworthiness

In qualitative research the requirements of trustworthiness is under enthusiastic discussion. Some argue that traditional methods of trustworthiness are not applicable to qualitative research whilst others believe that the same criteria for qualitative and quantitative research should be used. Gibbs (2002) argues that the issue of trustworthiness cannot be avoided whatever the approach of the research.

In order for this study to be regarded as trustworthy, credible and valid I made use of triangulation. Triangulation can be described as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour (Cohen et al, 2007). I made use of across methods triangulation by combining document analysis, focus group interviews and individual interviews. As mentioned earlier in this chapter the three methods of data collection answered the three research question.

Due to the fact that each type and source of the data had their own strengths and weaknesses, using a combination of data types it increases validity, as the strength of one approach can compensate for the weakness of another. I found that the initial data gathered from the document analysis was supported and enhanced when I conducted the focus groups. I also found that individual interviews were able to elicit richer and more detailed information as some participants felt more protected in the individual interview setting.

I also listened to the tape recording more than once and correlated what I heard with what I wrote during the interviews. I identified the boundaries in which the study was done, and the questions were derived from literature and the objectives of the study. Being the only data collector ensured consistency and I could extract numerous quotations from the transcripts of the interviews.

4.8.2 Ethical Considerations

Due to the fact that case study research shares an intense interest in personal views and circumstances, one can understand that the data collected could be potentially embarrassing and have the potential risk of exposure, loss of standing and even self esteem (Cohen et al, 2007 and Denzin and Lincoln, 2003). These risks for the participants were dealt with by means of the contract that was entered into between the participants and me. Ethical considerations are of utmost importance when conducting research. Cohen et al (2007) identify three main areas of ethical issues, whereas Bless

and Higson-Smith (1995) identify six principles for ethical considerations. These are integrated and presented below.

Informed Consent and Principle of Autonomy

All participants were requested to give voluntary consent to participate in the study. Informed consent meant that participants had the capacity to consent, were free from coercion and could comprehend the risks and benefits involved in participating in the research. I explained before the research began that they could withdraw from the research if and when they wanted to without any penalties. I gave each participant an information sheet (Appendix B) and consent form (Appendix C) wherein all the conditions explained above were specified. I gave them a copy to file and I received the consent form for my research purposes.

Confidentiality and Protection from harm

As explained earlier in this chapter the confidentiality of the sites as well as the participants were protected by referring to the sites in the study as Site A and Site B. Information of the sites that could identify them were not included in the presentation of the data. Participants were not required to identify themselves on the consent form. Participants were also not identified whilst conducting the interviews and analysis and were therefore protected from harm.

Consequences of the Research

Participants were aware that the project they would participate in was research process. I identified the purpose of the research and what it would involve if they participate, in information sheet. When I met participants at the two sites I explained in terms of their time and the possible consequence of participation in terms of the intended outcomes.

The Principle of Justice

I satisfied this principle by ensuring that all three SYCEC's in the Western Cape could participate in the study. I made appointments with all three principals. Unfortunately one of the SYCEC could not participate due to prior commitments of the centre. I held a meeting with all educators employed in all four departments at the two sites requesting their participation. I did not discriminate against any of the centres and or any educator on any characteristic at any point in the research process.

The Principle of Fidelity

This principle focuses on the fact that participants must be able to trust and have faith in the researcher. I ensured that my participants could trust me by building a rapport with them. I clarified my role as a researcher and discussed what would be expected from the participants.

The Principle of Beneficence

This principle identifies that research must be beneficial not only for the participants in the study, but to others as well. This principle was communicated to the participants. I identified in my information sheet that I am a Masters student at the University of the Western Cape and that they will contribute to the completion of the degree. It was also communicated to all, that the findings will be shared with the third SYCEC and that other centres, schools and researchers might use the thesis for referencing purposes. The hope is that provincial and national education departments at a macro level and a micro level, that centres will use this research to review curriculum offerings and objectives set for learners who come into conflict with the law.
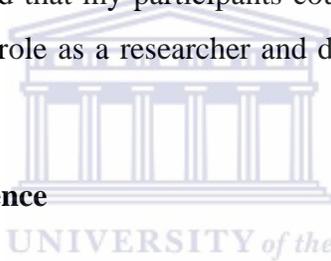
The Principle of Respect for Participants' Rights and Dignity

All human beings have legal and human rights and should not be compromised. The preceding principles ensured that every participant's rights and dignity was upheld.

In order to keep to the ethical considerations, I supplied each centre with a copy of my research proposal prior to the data collection. I also explained and discussed how I would report on the data I collected at the two sites. Participants understood that I would write a research report which will be handed to the University for examination purposes.

The languages used in both focus groups, as well as individual interviews were Afrikaans and English. Participants were allowed to respond in the language of their choice. I translated into English or Afrikaans when necessary to ensure that all participants were fully informed of the discussion.

4.9   CONCLUSION
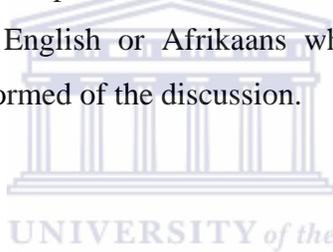
This chapter introduced the research design and identified the differences between quantitative and qualitative research. I then focused on qualitative research methodology as this is a qualitative case study. This chapter also identified and discussed the case study by introducing to the reader the participants and sites in the study as well as to the researcher as research instrument.

The fourth section in this chapter deals with the data collection techniques employed in this research and the timeline of data collection. The data collection procedures I used were document analysis, focus group interviews and individual interviews. By employing the three data collection techniques I ensured that the study is reliable, valid and trustworthy. I collected the data from March 2008 to September 2008. The document analysis focused on:

- minutes of the curriculum committee meetings,

- minutes of the School Governing Body,

- minutes of the School Management Team,

- curriculum and learning programme policies,

- learner Profiles,

- incident reports and admission records, and

- vision and mission statements.

I conducted six focus group interviews with thirty-eight educators and also conducted fourteen individual interviews.

The data analysis was conducted concurrently with data collection. I ensured that I reported the findings correctly by reading and coding of the document analysis, transcripts of the focus groups and individual interviews. I requested a colleague to assist by crosschecking my transcripts against what I recorded under the emerging themes. Having conducted the document analysis and interviews meant that I spend some time with the participants in this study. I was always warmly welcomed. I could feel the appreciation of the staff of the sites for the little I brought them in the form of an opportunity to talk about the NCS, their views, their learners and the pleasures and difficulties they experience in the delivering of a curriculum to the learners.

The chapter that follows the findings of the research is reported on. This is done in relation to the four research questions and the patterns and themes that emerged. The first section identifies the objectives of the sites for their learners. Secondly, the perceptions of educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for their learners are reported on. The curriculum offerings at the two sites are identified and lastly, justification is provided why those curriculum offerings are prioritized.

CHAPTER 5 - FINDINGS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I report on the findings of the investigation that I conducted against the backdrop of the literature review that I carried out. I scrutinized minutes of SMT, SGB and curriculum committees meetings of both the Sites. I could also access the DQA report of Site A, but unfortunately could not access the same report of Site B. The vision and mission statement of one of the Sites was provided and the objectives of the other site were made available to me in the data collection. I also analyzed admission records and incident reports relevant to the research questions. Furthermore, I conducted six focus groups at the two Sites in the study and completed fourteen individual interviews.

I report the findings of the data collected in the following manner. The findings are presented according to the research questions. Patterns and themes that emerged are reported. The first section identifies the objectives of the sites. Thereafter, I present the perceptions of educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for their learners. Thirdly, I outline the curriculum offerings at the two sites and lastly, provide reasons why those curriculum offerings are prioritized.

5.2   WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SYCEC?

The participants identified five broad themes in terms of what objectives they believe their sites have set for their learners. These are:

1. To provide a service that is comprehensive and professional,
2. To establish a safe haven,
3. To build confidence,
4. To return to mainstream schools, and
5. To become productive citizens.

Two of the objectives that sites identified, are applicable to the centre as a system and the other three objectives are applicable to the learners. The two objectives that are applicable to the centre as a system are to provide a service that is comprehensive and professional and to provide a safe haven. The three objectives that are applicable to the learners are to build confidence, to return to mainstream schools and to become productive citizens.

Although one would expect that participants identify 'to educate' as an objective, this is an objective not articulated clearly by the participants. However, the objective 'to return learners to mainstream schools' implies $that the participants identifies education as a priority concern for the learners at SYCECs, even though it is not phrased as such.

5.2.1   To provide a comprehensive and professional service

Both sites identify that they want to provide a comprehensive and professional service to their learners. This service will also be a quality one which will be rendered by a variety of staff members in a holistic manner. The staff members rendering this service the educators refer to, have different functions within the multi-disciplinary team. The educators believe that rendering a service to the learners, as described; they would be able to support the learners in making better choices in the future.

"D*eliver a comprehensive and professional service"* (Vision and Mission Statement).

"This is prevalent in the developmental paradigm where a variety of personnel will render services in a holistic manner to assist the learner" (Support Services Department Educator).

"We operate as a multi-functional team to provide a quality service to our learners" (SMT Member).

5.2.2   To provide a safe haven for the learners

Educators want their learners to feel safe at the centres. This was seen as a priority amongst most of the participants. Most of the educators identified that the centres are fulfilling this objective and mention that their centres provide the learners with food to eat, clothing to wear, a roof over their heads and a bed to sleep in. Some educators indicate that their centre is like a home away from home for their learners. The educators believe that they need to do everything to ensure that the centre is a safe haven and even take extra precautions to let this objective become a reality at the centre.

"We strive that our centre is a safe haven for our learners" (Vision and Mission Statement).

"We provide food to eat, clothes to put on, a roof over their heads and a bed to sleep in" (SMT member).
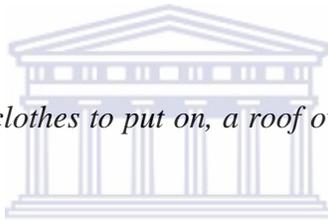
Staff members employed by the state are on duty from 06H00 in the mornings until 21H00 at night. After 21H00 learners are in the care of security guards. This is raised as a concern by the staff as they consider ways to make learners less vulnerable.

"We need to see whether we cannot ask our level three supervisors to do duty after 21H00 when our residential staff leaves the centre. The security staff would then work in collaboration with an educator. That will take care of the safety of our learners." (SMT member)

"How safe is our children really? If the contract of this security company has to be re-considered, maybe we should think of employing our own staff after nine o'clock and over weekends. Like child and youth care workers that understand how to work with children and youth" (SMT minutes).

5.2.3   To build confidence in the learners

One of the objectives that emerge in the document analysis is that the Sites would like their learners to develop confidence in themselves. The focus groups were also clear that the centres should teach the learners emotional, social and development skills because it will assist in building the confidence of the learners.

Educators in the focus groups debated how one can build confidence. Participants indicate that various ways can be used to build the confidence of their learners. Most educators support this objective by utilizing practical and relevant situations as part of the learning and development process which provide opportunities to build confidence. Learners are exposed to everyday experiences that children in the communities are exposed to. These experiential, relevant and simulated learning experiences are structured in such a way that learners experience success which contribute to their self confidence.

"Develop confidence in themselves" (Vision and Mission Statement).

"Would assist them in adapting to the broader community. The skills are important in handling challenges, which the learners might experience after leaving the centre" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Educator).

"We hope that our learners will be able to handle their previous challenges in a better manner" (Support Services Department Educator).

"They would be able to mend any broken relationships that might have failed and were harmed whilst being at the centre" (Support Services Department Educator).

"There are different ways in which one can build confidence" (SMT member).

"*We took them to Parliament and they could answer the questions. They bragged afterwards to the staff that did not accompany us. Yes, man, if they see they can do*

*things right then they felt good about themselves" (*Life Orientation and Residential Care Educator).

"Take the learners off the premises and let them do things so that they can experience success" (Academic Department Educator).

"We structure their activities at the centre in such a manner that the learners experience mastery" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

"By experiencing mastery learners will build confidence" (SMT member).

"Our learners do things like the children in the community that builds their self-confidence especially if they do it right" (Support Services Department Educator).

"It is crucial to let learners learn in real situations or if that is not possible to create a similar situation at school. Learners will understand the learning material much easier and that breeds success" (SMT member).

5.2.4   To return learners to mainstream schools

The curriculum committee minutes, SMT minutes and focus group interviews reflect that the centres want their learners to return to mainstream schools. This is evident in the minutes of the curriculum committee and most of the educators agree that they work towards returning their learners to mainstream schools. This objective is something that most of the participants support and whilst learners are still enrolled at the sites some of them continue their school career at neighbouring schools.

"Those that have the capabilities, to go back to mainstream schools" (SMT minutes)

"We have to agree, as a school, that we have to work towards getting our learners back into mainstream schools" (Curriculum Committee minutes).

"It is because we believe that some of our learners can continue with their education after they leave our centre, we work tirelessly to get them there. See, we even enroll our FET learners at neighbourhood schools" (Academic Department Educator).

5.2.5   To become productive citizens

They indicate that they envisage their learners becoming law abiding, responsible, self-reliant and productive citizens. The sites agree that their learners should be given the essential skills which will help them becoming a citizen that can care for him or her. Curriculum meeting minutes indicate that the educators would like their learners to make positive and responsible contributions to their immediate families, immediate communities, and the broader communities.

"Guide and equip our learners with the necessary skills enabling them to become fully functional independent and law abiding individuals who can make a contribution in the community" (Vision and Mission Statement).

"Learners to participate in their communities" (SMT member).

"I would like our learners to be able to fend for themselves and to provide for their own financial needs after they leave our school" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

"We would like our learners to find employment in the formal sector" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

5.3 EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE APPROPRIATENESS AND RELEVANCE OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT FOR LEARNERS AT SYCEC

When this notion was discussed, I first identified how the educators in the focus groups define appropriateness and relevance. Thereafter, I engaged them in a discussion of the NCS of South Africa and whether they would regard the NCS as an appropriate and relevant curriculum for the learners at their centres. I also prompted them to discuss the reasons why they would see the NCS as appropriate and relevant or not for the learners at the youth care centres in the study. In the individual interviews I was able to explore in more depth the nature of the modifications that is needed to the curriculum to achieve more relevance and appropriateness.

5.3.1 Defining Appropriateness and Relevance

Participants define appropriateness and relevance in relation to:

1. The learning materials and the context in which the learning material is delivered.

The learning materials and the context in which the learning material is delivered

Participants spoke about learning material that should be appropriate and suitable. Most of the participants indicate that the learning material should at all times take into account where the learner comes from. Most of the participants in the focus groups feel that the learner must be able to make a connection between what is being taught in school with what they know. The focus groups indicate that learners are able to make more sense of the learning material if they know what is being taught and they have an understanding thereof.

"Learning material should take into account the learners' background and challenge's and that "the learning material, content and learning outcomes should be connected to the world of the learner" (Academic Department Participant).

"Relevance means that the learner must be able to connect with what is being taught and that the learners must be able to make a connection between the learning material and their reality" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

"The differentiation of learning material should take into account where they came from as well as make the connections between what is taught and their reality. I mean, you can teach a child from urban areas things like cows and how they are milked, but it will make much more sense to a learner who comes from a farming community" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

"Things make sense to the learners if you teach them things they know about and understand" (Academic Department Educator).

Most of the participants agree that the learning material should be on the level of the learner. It was also agreed in the focus groups that the learners must show an interest in the learning material and therefore participants agree that they go to extra-ordinary lengths to find learning material that learners would like and identify with. Most of the participants indicate that appropriateness and relevance is context-bound and what is appropriate and relevant to one child, might not be appropriate and relevant to another. Therefore, the participants feel that they have to take into account the background, interest and level of the learner in determining what learning material is relevant and appropriate for that learner.

"I sift through numerous books to find those that the learners prefer even if it is comic books" (SMT member).

"What is appropriate and relevant in one context is not necessarily appropriate and relevant in another" (SMT member).

5.3.2 Appropriateness and Relevance of the NCS

Differences emerged in the study regarding the perceptions of the participants about the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS. Most of the participants express, that any learner, irrespective where that learner is taught, should be following the NCS curriculum.

The NCS as appropriate and relevant

As mentioned in the previous section most participants believe that their learners should follow the NCS curriculum. These participants indicate that they believe the NCS is appropriate and relevant because it is the curriculum which is taught in mainstream schools and it is flexible enough to accommodate the learners in the study.

"The NCS is as relevant to our learners as it is relevant to other learners in South Africa" (Academic Department Educator).
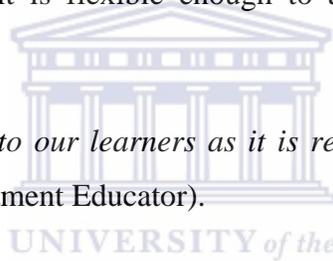
Focus group interviewees felt that the learners who are in their centre have been excluded from mainstream society by being placed in the SYCEC, and should not be excluded from the mainstream curriculum by default. Although one can argue that being at a SYCEC is in effect 'being out of education'.

"Our learners are not second-class citizens. Why must they have a different curriculum than other learners in our country? They are able to meet the outcomes as specified in the learning areas. Their barrier to learning is their behaviour. Should they be excluded from the national curriculum just because they came into conflict with the law?" (SMT member).

Some participants also indicate that some learners went back to mainstream schools and that such a transition would have been difficult had they not been exposed to the NCS.

"It would have been difficult for those grade ten and eleven learners to attend school in the community after they left our centre. They could continue with their education, because we followed the NCS, the same curriculum which is taught in any other school in South Africa" (Academic Department Educator).

Another issue that was identified as helping to define the NCS as appropriate and relevant was its flexibility. Participants argue that so much is allowed within the NCS. Most participants spoke about the fact that the NCS allows the educator to adapt to what is being taught and to what suits the learner.

"There is tremendous scope to adapt within the curriculum to suit the learner you work with" (Academic Department Educator).

"I am teaching for a number of years and this is the most freedom I have with regard to curriculum" (Academic Department Educator).

"The NCS allows for so much creativity" (SMT member)

"The NCS does not fence you in" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

"Even the fact that I can take from different learning areas and combine those learning outcomes in one lesson is amazing" (Technical Skills Department Educator*).*

"I can work out one lesson and incorporate more than one learning area. This makes absolute sense to me because the learners realize that everything is connected" (Academic Department Educator).

"For the first time I am even allowed to take learners from different grades and group them together. The NCS calls it straddling across grades" (Academic Department Educator).

Participants in both focus group interviews and individual interviews argue that the NCS is applicable to even the Technical Skills Department and Life Orientation and Residential Care Department. Participants in the focus groups argue that technical skills cannot be taught in isolation and that the learning areas of the NCS are needed to form the basis.

"Even the life skills we teach as Life Orientation teachers can be found in the learning outcomes of the Life Orientation Learning Area. We should be able to make use of LO and Arts and Culture to form the basis of our lessons in the hostels" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Educator).

"How do you teach a learner to measure wood if he cannot do math. At least he must know the basics. What if, you must do bricklaying; you cannot do angles or count the bricks" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

"I have looked at the learning areas like Technology, Mathematics, Languages and Economic and Management and I think all those learning areas can be used in our technical skills transference" (SMT member).

"Teach skills without teaching learning areas like languages and math will be unthinkable. I use languages when I teach, and the learners in my workshop must draw up business plans or quotes that you find in Economic and Management Sciences" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

The NCS as inappropriate and irrelevant

There were participants in both the focus groups and individual interviews that argued that the NCS is not appropriate and relevant for their learners. These participants indicate that the age of the learners, time out of school and transience of learners, educational programmes that differ from school to school in the child and youth care arena, learners' characteristics and contextual factors, are the reasons why they believe the NCS is not appropriate and relevant for the learners at the centres.

The learners' ages range from 13 years to 18 years and the grades they are placed in range from grade 1 to grade 10 (Admission Records). I found that the majority of the learners are placed at least three to four grades lower than that of their peers in mainstream schools (Admission Records).

"All our learners are basically older than peers in the grades they are placed into. A learner is expected in the NCS to move with their peers. But their peers are already so many years ahead of them. How is it then possible to ensure that a learner who has this big backlog in terms of school attendance to catch up with his peers? Some of our learners are 15 years or older and they have never passed grade one or two. Do you then start them at a grade one or two level" (Support Services Department Educator).

"It is better if they are exposed to skills programmes only. Our learners will in any case not go back to the mainstream school and we have to prepare them for the labour market or to work for themselves. It is better if they are only taught Technical Skills and Life Skills" (SMT member).

Some participants in the focus groups argue that the learning outcomes of the learning areas are not age appropriate. This is because of the fact that the learners are older than their peers in the mainstream grade that they are placed in.

"The outcomes that one needs to teach as specified in the NCS are not age appropriate and relevant" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

Some participants argue that a skills programme is more appropriate and relevant for the learners at the SYCEC because of the time **the learners have been out of school and the transience of the learners.** They substantiate this position by indicating that their learners attended more than one institution before they are admitted into the SYCEC. These participants further indicate that some of the learners have been out of school for a number of years and have not been exposed to the NCS. This situation is

aggravated by the fact that learners are admitted and discharged throughout the year. Some learners are also still attending court hearings which take them out of the school for days.

"*Our learners* c*ome through a range of institutions before they land up at our school. A lot of them have been out of school for a number of years and have not received formal education since*" therefore a "*skills programme is more appropriate and relevant*" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

Some children never complete their grade because they change institutions so often, then they are in prison, then they are in a place of safety and then they come to us. Sometimes this takes up to a year ... in and out of institutions ..." (Life Orientation and Residential Care Educator).

"*Learners can be admitted into our centres any time in the year and can leave the centre any time. This makes it difficult to plan in relation to a curriculum such as the NCS. You know, at a mainstream school the academic year start in January and ends in December, the same is not true in our schools because of these admissions that occur throughout the year*" (SMT member).

"*The continuous intake of learners throughout the year ... we can still recall that it poses a problem at the end of the year when we have to do our promotion and progression*" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

Another factor that was used to explain why some educators are not regarding the NCS as appropriate and relevant, deals with **the different educational programmes that are offered in child and youth care institutions.** These centres follow different curricula.

"*The places of safety as well as the prisons do not offer the curriculum we offer and their education is basically interrupted and cut off the moment they come into the system*" (SMT member).

Some participants argue that certain **characteristics of the learners** make it difficult to implement the NCS. Some participants in both the focus groups as well as the individual interviews indicate that their learners experience learning barriers. They argue that the learners are scholastically slow, cannot read or write and might even be culturally and cognitively handicapped. These participants even indicate that the same learners have fetal alcohol syndrome; and therefore argue that the NCS is not appropriate and relevant for them. They argue that their learners should be taught reading and writing skills and some mathematics and not the full NCS.

"Our learners have learning barriers. You know, those children cannot read or write or sometimes they read and write poorly" (Support Services Department Educator).

"Our learners are scholastically slower than their counterpart in the mainstream education. They are slow in Mathematics and Reading"

"Our learners have been culturally deprived and are cognitively handicapped. Most of the learners here are intellectually impaired" (SMT member).

"Some of our learners have organic problems like Fetal Alcohol Syndrome" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

Minutes of curriculum committee, SMT and SGB meetings also reflect some concerns regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for the sites. The SYCEC's resources are not sufficient and conducive to doing homework and or projects, as is expected in the NCS.

"There is a general concern for the lack of resources to assist learners to do homework in the hostels." She says that upgrading of resources should be *"... added into the budget ... some resources to upgrade the library"* (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

"*There is no child and youth care workers employed in the centre and that poses a problem for the NCS implementation"* (SGB minutes).

As indicated in the first chapter the centres have educators but no child and youth care workers on the staff establishment. This means that the learners are in the care of security guards from 21H00 at night to 06H00 in the morning. In child and youth care centres falling under the jurisdiction of the Department of Social Development child and youth care workers are employed to care for the learners. These workers are able to assist with homework in the hostels and do care work in the hostels, services that are not available to learners at SYCECs.

"W*ho should be responsible to oversee homework and projects in the hostel? Level three supervisors, residential care workers?"* (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

The learners are removed from their homes and parental involvement was raised as an obstacle in the implementation of the NCS at the centres.

"*The new curriculum expects the parents of the learners to be actively involved. Our learners are from all over the show. Parents are not seen quite often"* (SMT member).

Lastly participants identified that the learners have different abilities and are on different levels. They are in one classroom or grade and some of the participants indicate that that is a challenge they experience and therefore the implementation of the NCS is seen as problematic.

"*Colleagues we must understand that the implementation of the NCS is very problematic, especially the scatter of abilities of the learners in the different class groups…"* (Academic Department Educator).

5.4 CURRICULUM OF THE SITES

The curriculum offerings of the two Sites in the study differ. One of the sites offers the full NCS curriculum to some learners and the other site an abridged version of the NCS to all grades 1-9 learners. Both sites offer technical skills curricula.

5.4.1 Curriculum offerings at Site A

Site A offers all the learning areas for grades three to nine as specified in the NCS GET band to those learners that choose to follow the academic stream. They also offer an FET band for grades 10-12. The curriculum committee minutes reflect that their FET band offers

"… Afrikaans, English and IsiXhosa as Home Languages, Afrikaans and English as First Additional Languages, Biology, Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy, History, Geography and Life Orientation. All learners in the Academic stream are allowed to choose their Home Language as well as their First Additional Language. Learners choose between Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy. The three pre-selected electives of the FET phase: Geography, History and Biology. All of them do Life Orientation."

The site also offers a parallel stream to learners who choose a technical skills stream. They offer six technical skills, from which the learners choose one.

"In the Technical Skills Department we transfer technical skills. We have six workshops for the learners in the department. The workshops we have are Arts and Crafts, Entrepreneurial Skills, Motor Mechanics, Building and Plastering, Welding and Sheet Metalwork and Woodwork" (SMT member).

The Site also has a life skills programme which is offered to all the learners.

"Our department teaches life skills to all the children. These life skills include themes such as self-esteem, self-confidence, employment and career choices and also drug abuse and related themes" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Educator).

5.4.2 Curriculum offerings at Site B

Site B offers four learning areas of the NCS for all grades one to nine learners in the centre. The Learning Areas taught are Languages, Mathematics, Life Orientation and Technology. As an enrichment programme all learners are also taught computer literacy.

"Here at our school all our learners follow the same curriculum and all of them are exposed to Numeracy and Literacy programmes (SMT member).

"The subjects taught are Languages, Mathematics and Life Orientation and Technology in the GET band" (Curriculum Meeting Minutes).

"We have a Khanya trained IT person that teaches basic computer skills to all learners" (Academic Department Educator).

The timetable is divided equally between the Academic department and the Technical Skills department. This means that 50% of the time is used to teach the four Learning Areas and Computer Literacy and the other 50% is used to teach the three technical skills.

"These learning areas, as taught by the Academic Department and the Life Orientation Department educators use 50% of the time spent in the formal school day. The other 50% consists of Technical Skills, which is taught by the Technical Skills Department" (SGB Minutes).

Site B only has grades one to nine as indicated earlier. Those learners who are admitted with a grade placement of grades ten to twelve are enrolled in neighbouring schools. No curriculum intervention is provided to learners beyond grade nine.

"See, we even enroll our FET learners at neighbourhood schools" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

The centre offers three workshops each for males and females. Learners in the grades one to nine band are all enrolled for the three workshops applicable to their gender. Technology and entrepreneurial skills form part of each of the technical skills offered.

"As an SMT we fully support the technical skills department in offering three workshop skills to the boys and three workshop skills to the girls" (Curriculum Committee minutes).

"Workshops for the Girls: Hairdressing, Home Economics and Needlework. Workshops for the Boys: Building and Plastering, Welding and Sheet Metalwork and Woodwork" (Curriculum Committee minutes).

"Entrepreneurial Skills and Technology are incorporated in all the Technical Skills workshops" (SMT member).

The figures below illustrate the learning area offerings at the two sites in the case study.

Figure 14: Site A – GET Curriculum

Afrikaans and Xhosa Home Language

Economic and Management Sciences

English First Additional Language

Social Sciences

Site A GET Curriculum

Mathematics

Technology

Natural Sciences

Arts and Culture

Life Orientation
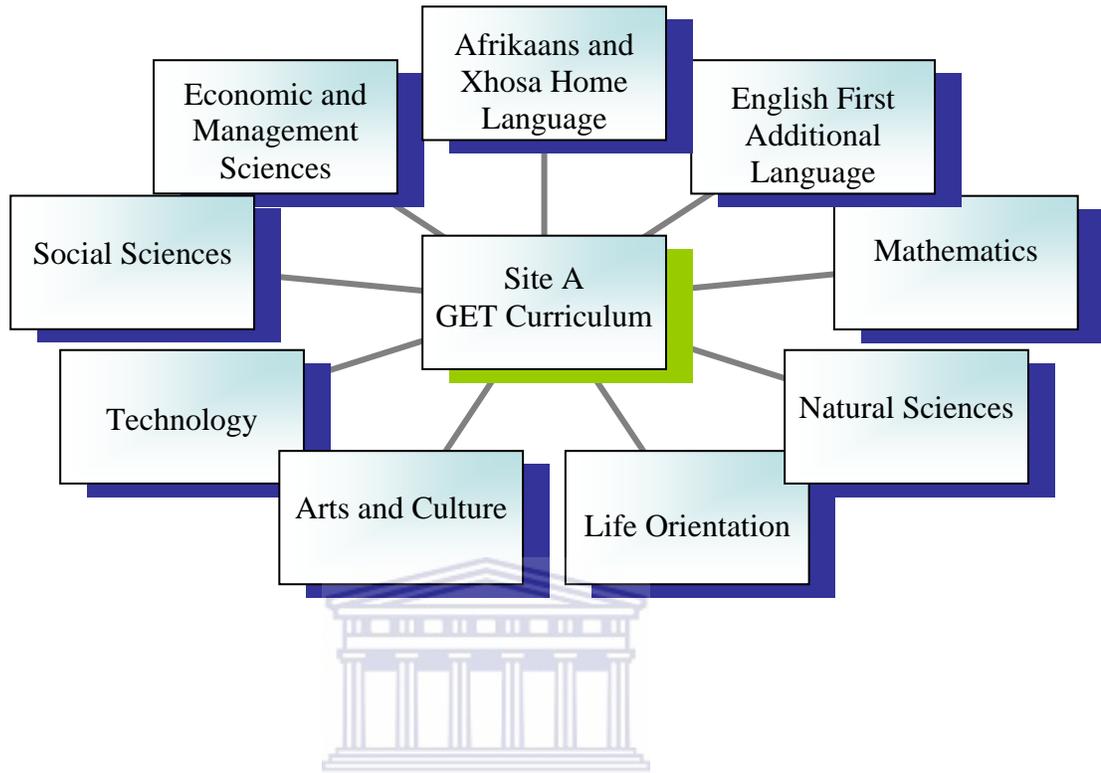
Figure 15: Site B – GET Curriculum

Afrikaans Home Language

Basic Computer Training

English First Additional Language

Site B Abridged NCS Curriculum: GET Band

Technology

Mathematics

Life Orientation
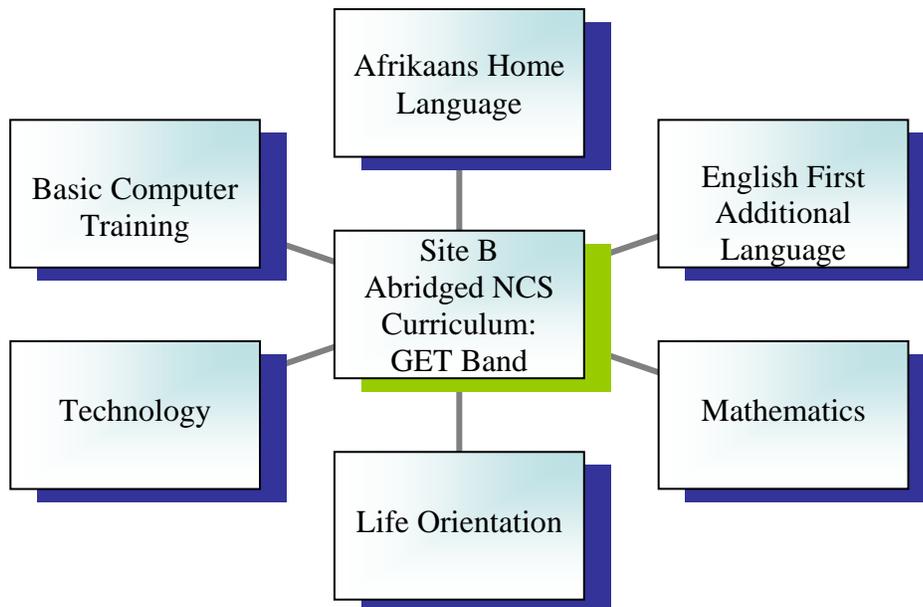
Figure 16 Site A – FET Curriculum
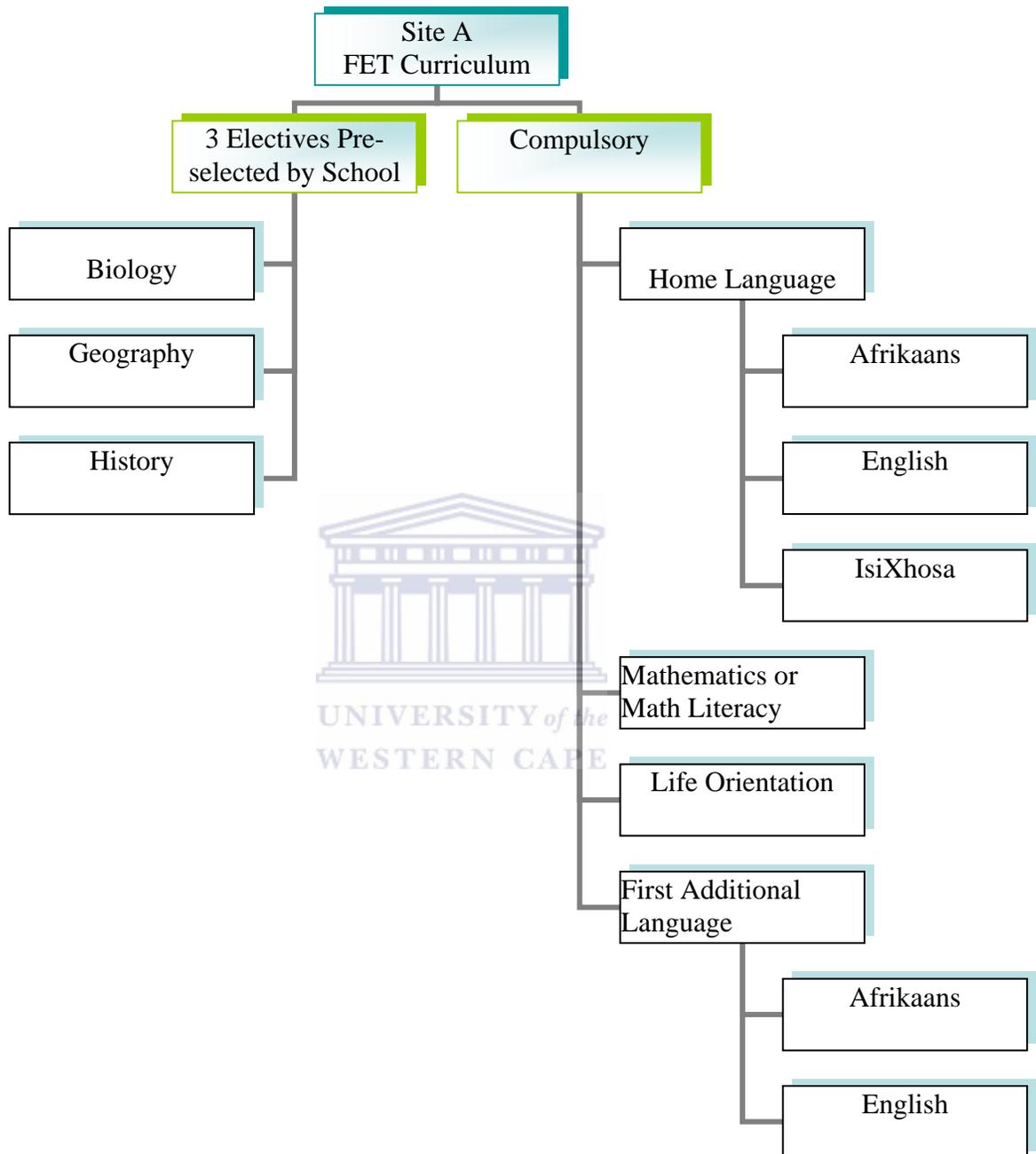
The table shown below is an illustration of the differences and similarities of the technical skills offering at the two sites.

Table 7: Technical Skills Offerings at Site A and Site B

Site A	Site B	Site A and Site B
Arts and Culture	Hairdressing	Building and Plastering
Entrepreneurial Skills	Home Economics	Welding and Sheet Metalwork
Motor Mechanics	Needlework	Woodwork

As mentioned earlier in this section the Technical Skills Departments at both Sites offers skills training. There are similarities between the two Sites with regard to the skills that they offer. There are also differences at the sites with regard to the technical skills offerings. Learners at Site B are taught the basics of all the three workshops. This would mean that they become knowledgeable about all three workshops but on a basic level. Learners at Site A only choose one of the workshops.

Similarities include that both Sites have a Woodwork workshop, Welding and Metalwork workshop as well as Building and Plastering workshop for the boys. Because Site A only caters for boys, they have three additional workshops for the boys. These workshops are Entrepreneurial Skills, Motor Mechanics as well as Arts and Crafts. Site B has three workshops that offer technical skills for the girls. These are Needlework, Hairdressing and Home Economics. The boys are doing all three workshops allocated for boys and the girls all three workshops allocated for girls. At Site B learners cannot choose a particular workshop because it is compulsory that they take all three workshops. At Site A learners choose the workshop they want to take in the orientation process as indicated earlier in this section.

5.4.3   Access to Life Orientation/Life skills programmes

Life Orientation as a formal learning area is also taught in the Academic Department at both sites. At Site A the learning area Life Orientation is taught by educators in the Academic Department. The learners placed in the Technical Skills Department are not

enrolled for the Academic stream and therefore Life Orientation is not taught to them. At Site B educators in the Life Orientation and Residential Care Department is teaching Life Orientation. This is done during the school hour's timetable between 08:00 and 14:00.

"*Life Orientation as a learning area is taught by the Academic educators and only to those learners who are placed in the academic stream*" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

"*Teaches Life Orientation to all learners and that occurs between 08H00 – 14H00*" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

The Sites offers programmes to the learners that address their behaviour difficulties. The Character Counts Programme is such a programme where educators facilitate the development of six concepts that make good character. These concepts are care, responsibility, respect, trustworthiness, fairness and goodness. Developmental programmes such as the Character Counts Programme benefit the learners because it will even assist them after they leave the school.

"*Programmes that addressing challenging behaviour is part of the developmental programmes*" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

"*The programme include concepts of self esteem, self worth development, decision making, time management and conflict resolution skills*" (Support Services Department Educator).

"*Benefit from this programme and as it assists positively in their re-integration*" (Support Services Department Educator).

"*These concepts are also practice whilst at centre and hopefully this will assist the learners they have employ these skills beyond the SYCEC's context*" (SMT member).

"Self-esteem, drug abuse and drug dependency, life style choices, decision making skills, self management and time management" (SMT minutes).

5.4.4   Learner choice

As indicated earlier in this section learner choice with regard to what curriculum offerings they take, differ from site to site. Site A allows the learners to choose between the Academic Department and the Technical Skills Department. If the learner chooses the Technical Skills Department he will choose between one of six technical skills workshops.

"Learners interviewed confirmed that they have access to an educational programme. It seems that learners decide which educational programme they want to follow" (Coetzee, December 2007).

The sites have an orientation programme for the learners when admitted. The Support Services Department facilitates this programme. The different departments are familiarizing the learners to what they offer. Learners are taken to the different classrooms and workshops and introduced to the staff. Rules of the school are also worked through with the learners during orientation. Aspects, such as future prospects and the reasons the learners are at the centres are dealt with in this orientation phase. At the end of the orientation the learner is placed in a grade or workshop at Site A or only in a grade at Site B.

"The support services co-ordinate the programme. The different heads of departments introduce their programme to the learners during the orientation. The occupational therapist also does some assessment and after everyone has seen the learner; the learner decides what stream to follow" (SMT member).

"Contextual factors are taken into account before placement in either the Academic Department or the Technical Skills Department" (Support Service Educator).

"Whether the parents will have money to place the learner in a school after s/he leaves the school, the age of the learner and the grade of the learner" (Support Service Educator).

Participants in both the individual interviews as well as the focus groups indicated that the orientation programme and how learners arrive at the choice is not without flaws.

"Sometimes, it depends how full some workshops are, then learners are placed in those workshops that have space" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

"Some of the people have their own preference and then learners are just placed in the technical stream or academic stream" (Academic Department Participant).

"Some learners shop around and see where their friends are and then choose that workshop" (SMT member).

"Educators have no say in the placement of the learners. This is the role of the support services staff and the head of departments" (Academic Department Educator).

"It would be good if we have a Sorting workshop. We had such workshops in the past. It helps a lot in determining what workshop will best suit the learner" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

Lastly, although learners at Site A are allowed to choose between an academic stream and a technical stream they *"cannot choose their life skills programme. That is a general programme for all"* (SMT member).

5.5   JUSTIFICATION FOR CURRICULUM OFFERINGS

There are differences between the curriculum offerings at the two sites in the study. Various justifications were offered for the curriculum the sites offered. These justifications ranges from contextual factors to factors relating to the learners admitted

to the centres. The scholastic backlog of the learners was used as a justification for emphasizing numeracy, literacy and Life Orientation. It was also indicated that the curriculum the sites offer will assist the learner to reintegrate into the community when leaving the school.

"The scholastic backlogs of the learners" (Support Services Department Educator).

" slower, much older learners with specific barriers in reading, writing and social skills … will *not return to mainstream school"* (Support Services Department Educator),

"The learners need basic Numeracy, literacy and life skills as a prerequisite for a functional life after leaving the centre" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

"The curriculum and programmes they deliver will assist the learners when they re-enter their community" and are discharged from the SYCEC (Technical Skills Department Educator).

"All the subjects will assist with re-integration" (Life Orientation and Residential Care Department Educator).

"The learning areas we teach are the same as that which is taught in mainstream schools … when the learners leave … they will be able to continue with the mainstream school's programme without problems" (Academic Department Educator).

Some of the participants also referred to the rights of the learners. They said that *"by offering the NCS the rights of the learners are enhanced"* (Academic Department Educator).
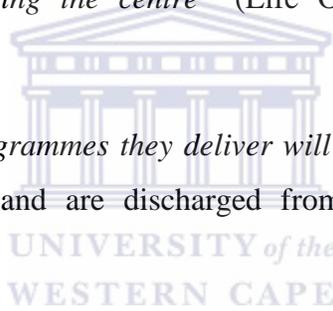
"As the learners will be able to continue with their schooling career after they leave the SYCEC … the rights of learners are honoured" (SMT member).

Technical Skills training is preferred because educators feel that this will benefit the learners most in obtaining employment after the completion of their programme. They are of the opinion that the fact that the learner will be able to make things with his or her hands will enable them to make ends meet when at home. They argue that

"By offering those Technical Skills in a climate of entrepreneurial advocacy learners will be able to sustain themselves economically and become financially independent and self reliant" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

"Although we do not offer the NCS, our courses are accredited by the Sectoral Education and Training Authority. So the learner can make something of himself. He can even enroll after leaving our school at a FET college" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

Educators indicate that they have not received NCS training and cannot teach a learning area in which they are not trained. Some of the educators in the Technical Skills Department have been trained only in a technical skill and found teaching the Learning Areas of the NCS a challenge.

"Educators of the Technical Skills and Life Orientation and Residential Care Departments have not received any NCS training" (SMT member).

"You must remember we are not necessarily trained teachers. Some of us are tradesmen and have never taught in our lives. We know how to transfer our trade, yes, but teaching!

As there is not enough staff to offer the full NCS complement, it is indicated as a justification why an abridged NCS is offered to grades one to three and why the FET learners have to attend a mainstream school at Site B.

"We would like to offer all the learning areas of the NCS but we do not have the staff" (Academic Department Educator).

"Although we want to make changes to the curriculum we have to be cognizant of the staff establishment" (Technical Skills Department Educator).

"It appears that this arrangement (curriculum offerings) is made in order to suit staff rather than learners" (Coetzee et al, 2007).

The participants felt that the Life Skills programme they offer assists their learners in making better choices. It will help learners to reintegrate into their communities when they leave the centres.

"These life skills would assist their learners when they are reintegrated into their communities" (Life Skills Department Educator).

"Our learners experience behavioural problems they often lack life skills and struggle to deal with problems and challenges. The life skills we provide and teach our learners will help them to re-integrate into their families, homes and communities" (Support Services Department Educator).

Another reason why participants justified the curriculum they offer, centred on their learners' movement. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, learners are admitted throughout the year and might leave the school any time. Some attend court hearings and miss out on school attendance. Therefore, participants indicated that the teaching of a skills curriculum is more appropriate and relevant.

"Due to our learners moving in and out of the school and being admitted any time in the year, conducting an exam at the end of the year is a problem and headache. But if you offer only your skills such as life skills and technical skills, they can do quarterly courses" (Life Skills and Residential Care Department Educator).

5.6   CONCLUSION

In this chapter I report on the findings that emerged during the data collection. Various objectives were identified, either in the documents analyzed, the focus group or individual interviews. These objectives are the provision of a comprehensive and professional service, providing a safe haven to the learners, building confidence in the learners, returning learners to mainstream education and becoming fully productive, law-biding and confident citizens who make a contribution to their communities. The findings also indicate that the SYCEC should provide basic safety to learners which would include at least a bed, food and shelter.

As regards to educators' understandings of the terms appropriateness and relevance, I found that they have a variety of understandings of those terms. They defined appropriateness and relevance in terms of the learning material and the context in which the learning material is delivered. The participants indicated that the curriculum is appropriate and relevant insofar as the learning material and the context in which the learning material is appropriate and relevant to the learners.

There is a general belief amongst the educators that the NCS is an appropriate and relevant curriculum for their learners. The participants indicate that because the NCS is delivered in mainstream schools and is flexible, this makes it appropriate and relevant for their learners as well. There is however, a substantial group of participants who believe that the NCS is not an appropriate and relevant curriculum for their learners. Factors these educators used in their arguments were the age of the learners, time out of school and the transience of the learners, inconsistency of educational programmes in the child and youth care arena, learners' characteristics and contextual factors of the centres.

Educators also have shown that they can make the NCS appropriate and relevant for their learners by employing various tools and methods. This includes taking them out

on educational excursions, simulated learning experiences and making the learning material and content as relevant to their background and experiences.

It became apparent that the sites in the study are not offering the same curriculum. Site A offers two distinctive streams that learners can choose from. Learners can choose between an academic NCS stream and technical skills streams. The learners who choose the academic stream in grades one to nine do all 8 learning areas of the NCS. Learners in the FET phase do the four core subjects but their three electives are pre-selected. They can however choose which Home Language and First Additional Language they want to enroll in. They also have an option between Mathematics and Mathematical Literacy. Learners at Site A are also given the opportunity to decide which workshop they want to attend if they choose the technical skills department. There are six workshops at Site A and the learners who choose the Technical Skills stream have the option to choose one of the six workshops.

All learners at Site B follow the same curriculum. There is an abridged NCS curriculum with four learning areas for grades one to nine. They also offer computer literacy to all learners. They have no curriculum offerings for FET learners, so those learners are enrolled at neighbouring mainstream schools. There are three workshops for females and three workshops for males. The learners spent equal time in both departments.

Participants justified the curriculum offerings at the various sites. Justifications for offering the NCS, focused on the fact that the learners have the right to be enrolled for the same curriculum the learners in mainstream schools are enrolled for. It was also argued that learners who would like to continue with their school career after leaving the SYCEC would be able to do so if the centres offer the NCS. However, if the centres are offering a curriculum not found in mainstream schools, learners will find it difficult to continue with a mainstream school curriculum. It became apparent that factors that deal with training of educator staff, examinations, the resources of the

schools such as libraries, space to do homework and projects, as well as personnel to teach the various learning areas are used to justify the curriculum of the centres.

In next and final chapter I will discuss the findings presented in this chapter. This discussion will be conducted within the theoretical framework of the ecosystemic framework of Bronfenbrenner. I will also make recommendations with regard to the themes and sub-themes that emerge in this study. I will identify the limitations encountered in the study and will suggest further research. Lastly, I will conclude the study on "Educators' perceptions on the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for learners at SYCEC in the Western Cape".

CHAPTER 6 –DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

6.1   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter I discuss the research findings in relation to the theoretical framework and the literature review presented in chapters two and three. I make recommendations which have emerged from the findings of the study. I also identify the limitations in the study and suggest future research that would prove to be of value for education in general, and more specifically for education for learners who come into conflict with the law.

It was found that there is no prescribed curriculum for SYCECs, and in the absence thereof, enforcing the NCS offerings at these centres is a challenge to curriculum implementation in these schools. A discrepancy is found in what is offered at the various SYCECs and no clear directive is forthcoming from the policy makers. Different sites therefore decide what they offer to the learners.

There is also a difference in the level of training received by the educators of the centres. Some educators such as the Life Orientation and Residential Care educators as well as the Technical Skills educators are not necessarily trained educators. This has a direct influence on the delivery of the NCS as a curriculum.

This chapter will revisit the notion of the fundamental right to basic education that the Constitution of South Africa guarantees to every child. This is an undeniable right and should be protected irrespective of where the learner is found. Therefore, the interrogation of the curriculum of the sites should be understood in terms of this basic right. The chapter reconnects with the reality that the existence of a SYCEC should be understood in terms of the Children's Act.

The greatest limitation as indicated in chapter one is the fact that the thesis focused broadly on the curriculum offerings of the centres as understood by the participants. It should also be noted that the contextual issues identified by the participants as

justifications for the curriculum offerings might be regarded as irrelevant, although from an eco-systemic approach becomes crucial in understanding the position taken by the participants. Furthermore, it should also be highlighted that the objectives identified by the participants may tend to relate more to social work than education, however, one needs to emphasize that the learners are referred to the centres and part of the objective when sentencing occur is that a therapeutic programme should be part of the programme, making it a context where more than just a curriculum is delivered.

6.2 REVISITING THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The findings of this research are to be understood within the theoretical context of Bronfenbrenner's eco-systemic theory of child development. The aim is to arrive at a better understanding of the findings. The findings are not regarded as isolated phenomena but are seen in relation to each other and to a variety of factors, events and forces (Moloi, 2002). The ecosystemic approach allows me to understand the history and context that had an influence on the perceptions of the educators with regard to the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS. Because Bronfenbrenner's approach enables us to understand that the five systems, in which any individual operates, influences one another; it presents us with an understanding that change and transformation is possible within any of these systems. The discussion is conducted within the four broad sections which provide the framework for reporting the findings which are:

1. What are the objectives of the SYCEC?
2. Educators' perceptions of the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for learners at SYCEC,
3. Curriculum of the Sites, and
4. Justification for the curriculum offerings

6.3 WHAT ARE THE OBJECTIVES OF THE SYCEC?

The participants identified five objectives they want to achieve for their learners. They want to provide a comprehensive and professional service, establish a safe haven, build confidence, return learners to mainstream schools and develop learners to become productive citizens. As identified in the previous chapter, two of the objectives are applicable to the centre while the remaining three apply to the learners.

The provision of a comprehensive and holistic service to the learners is achieved by the sites. A multi-disciplinary team delivers a quality service to the learners. The multi-disciplinary team works in a developmental paradigm and a variety of support personnel delivers their services in a holistic manner.

The participants demonstrated that they have the ability to provide, even if on a basic level, a safe haven, as is echoed in the objectives of the Rowan College in Northern Ireland (Youth Justice Agency, 2008). There are indications from participants in the study that the centres provide food to eat, clothes to wear, a roof over the children's heads and a bed to sleep in.

There is however, a challenge to secure the safety of learners after Life Orientation and Residential Care educators leave at night and over weekends. The study revealed that this can be attributed to the fact that the personnel rendering services over these periods are security staff. The security staff is not employed by the school, hence the remark, that the school should investigate the request to level three supervisors to render assistance. The centre should consider employing its own staff to render the service in those critical times. By employing their own staff, which has education training, would ensure that the learners are safer. Educators would be able to assist learners with homework and provide guidance when there are problems. The SYCEC would be in a more advantageous position to enforce the ethos of a safe haven if the staff in the hostels can be held accountable. When employed by a service provider, the

security personnel cannot be held accountable by the centre. If the learners feel safe it will minimize placing them more at a risk.

The centres demonstrated that they want their learners to build confidence. They identified various skills that will assist in this objective. The participants argued that the learners might be able to handle situations that they had experienced in the past in a better manner in the future. Various methods and learning experiences are used to build the confidence of the learners. The sites identified that one can use more than one strategy to develop confidence in the learners. These include taking them on educational excursions and to let them experience success by structuring their curriculum to allow the learners to experience success. Other strategies included structuring activities at the centre in such a manner that the learners experience success, giving learners the time and space to develop, letting them do positive things their peers are doing in the communities and by learning experiences that are simulated in the educational setting that can be found in the communities.

Many participants regard the learners' return to mainstream schools as a key objective. Brenan (1985) and Blomberg (2004) too are favoring the return of learners to mainstream education and argue that a special school should prioritize returning learners to mainstream education. Blomberg (2004) further argues that returning to school will assist the learner in not being re-arrested and that is an indicator of becoming a productive community member.

Developing their learners into responsible and productive citizens is a strong feature in the findings and is in congruence with objectives of the Chilwa Approved School and the Mpemba Boys' Home in Malawi (Degabriele, 2001).

6.4 EDUCATORS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE APPROPRIATENESS AND RELEVANCE OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM STATEMENT

This section is divided in two parts. The one part deals with the perceptions of the participants about what makes a curriculum appropriate and relevant. The second part

138

deals with the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS as perceived by the participants.

6.4.1   What is an appropriate and relevant curriculum?

The key theme that emerged in the study of what the educators believe makes an appropriate and relevant curriculum is **the learning material and the context in which the learning material is delivered.**

The learning material is regarded as crucial in determining whether a curriculum is appropriate or relevant. The background of the learners needs to be taken into account and learners should be able to connect between the learning material and reality. This is in congruence with Nelson (1999) who argues that a curriculum should be cognizant of the learner's pre-knowledge and should build on their unique circumstances.

The level of the learning material should be considered when selecting the learning material and it should be connected to the world of the learner. Participants explained how they make use of various methods and tools to make those connections to the world of the learners.

Staff members are making efforts to make the curriculum relevant and applicable to the learners. These practices are picked up throughout the findings chapter where educators make efforts to make the curriculum that they offer appropriate and relevant to their learners. This proves to be of benefit to the learners at the centres. Staff referred to the reading programme and identifying books for specific learners, teaching concepts that are familiar to the learners, educational excursions and simulated learning experiences. The educators' efforts are congruent with Van Schalkwyk's (1988) opinion that relevant education is differentiated education which is suited to the potential and interests of the individual as well as the situation of the community.

6.4.2 How appropriate and relevant is the NCS?

Some participants were passionate about the NCS as appropriate and relevant to their learners as to other learners in mainstream schools. They identified various factors that make the NCS appropriate and relevant. These included factors such as the flexibility of the NCS, the freedom the NCS offers them and that content can be made applicable to suit the learners they are teaching. Therefore, they identified that the technical skills department's leaning programmes can be linked to learning areas such as Technology and Economic and Management Sciences.

Participants enjoyed the NCS and the freedom that it gives them. It was also found that participants could explore and make the content appropriate and relevant to the context of the learner.

Various strategies such as straddling across grades, the use of different learning outcomes, of different learning areas in the same lesson, are regarded by the participants as positive characteristics of the NCS.

Although some participants regard the NCS as appropriate and relevant for their learners, at least a third of the participants felt the opposite. A number of factors found in the child and youth care system contribute to educators' perceptions of the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS. These factors include the inconsistency of curriculum delivery, learners that spend some time in places of safety and correctional facilities before being sentenced to the youth care centre. Factors relating to the learners and their families, such as parents who are not actively involved in the learners' lives after admission to the centres also impact.

DoE (2005) identifies various components that make the NCS appropriate and relevant. They regard the NCS as learner-centered and flexible. The learning outcomes and assessment standards can also be broken down into smaller parts, allowing for any learner, irrespective of the barrier, to successfully access the NCS. Furthermore, the NCS does not prescribe content or method and the content and learning programme

can be made relevant in relation to the education needs of such a learner. Some educators seem to have been able to successfully operationalise some of these crucial aspects of the curriculum policy, thereby making it appropriate and relevant for their learners. It is apparent, however, that not all of them were able to do so.

6.5 WHAT CURRICULUM IS OFFERED AT THE SPECIAL YOUTH CARE AND EDUCATION CENTRE

The sites in the study possess elements of what is found in the curricula offerings in centres for learners in conflict with the law in other countries. The findings illustrate that the NCS curriculum or portions thereof are offered at both centres. Although the one site is offering an abridged NCS curriculum, participants have indicated that they include, in their technical skills training, learning areas such as Economic Management Sciences, Mathematics and Languages. It was found that enrichment programmes such as computer literacy; self esteem programmes and drug addiction programmes are also offered at these centres. The findings indicated that the skills development offerings could be broadened to be more relevant for all learners as was indicated by participants who felt that learners from rural areas might benefit from technical skills that are not offered at the schools. These findings correlates with what the Child Justice Project (DoE, 2007) found as reported in chapter 3.

There is no prescribed curriculum for SYCECs, and in the absence thereof, to enforce the offering of the NCS to all learners, makes curriculum a challenge at these sites. This is a challenge in the macrosystem of the learner. There is a discrepancy in the curriculum offerings at the schools, and no clear directive is coming from the policy makers in this regard. Sites decide what curriculum they want to offer and who should offer what.

This non-compliance with NCS policy in general will limit the choices the learners from SYCEC have when they leave the centre. The possibility of re-entering mainstream education, which is already slim, is due to factors such as age, socio-

economic factors and stigmatization, and could prove to be impossible, as the learner will be further disadvantaged by lacking exposure to what is taught in a mainstream school. Thus, the fact that these centres offer such diverse curricula offerings, some not congruent with NCS policy, is of concern.

6.6   JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CURRICULUM OFFERINGS

Various factors were found in justifying the curriculum offerings of the centres. These factors are:

Family involvement,

Interruptions in the schooling of the learners

Teacher development and who should teach the NCS,

Intensity of the educational support to the learners,

Importance attached to the Technical Skills development,

Resources,

Internal and external examinations, and

The Rights of Learners.

6.6.1   Family Involvement

The learners at the SYCEC are removed from their families and immediate communities. The NCS has as a principle that parents are active participants in the education of their children. Due to the removal of the learners from their families, this principle of the NCS proves to be problematic for the educators that have to deliver the curriculum. Some of the educators argue that this is what makes the NCS difficult to implement.

This non-involvement of families in the life of the learner whilst at the SYCEC has an effect on the learner. Studies have indicated that involvement of parents in the education of their children is one criterion for success, in particular Davidson and Kramer (1997) in their research with African-American students. Making contact with parents and involving them in the education of their children, will strengthen the transference of the curriculum and make it more meaningful.

6.6.2   Interruptions in the schooling of the learners

It was found that learners were often at numerous institutions before being admitted to the SYCEC. Learners have been out of school for a number of years. The places of safety as well as the correctional facilities do not offer the same curriculum that the schools offer. This is due to the fact that different departments are responsible for the three institutions: Places of Safety are the responsibility of Department of Social Development, Correctional Facilities are that of Department of Justice and Constitutional Development and the SYCEC is found in the Department of Education. All three departments mentioned have different views and mandates regarding what an educational programme should look like and who is responsible. As mentioned in chapter 2 the different Acts that place the learners in an SYCEC are not descriptive or prescriptive in terms of what the educational programme should be comprise of. Thus, centres decide what they want to offer the learners.

Learners' education is interrupted and often severed the moment they come into conflict with the law. While they are still awaiting trial detainees, in either a Correctional Facility and or Place of Safety, are attending court hearings on a regular basis. This could be the case even after admission into a SYCEC. Unlike the study that was conducted by Cutting et al (2008) in America where the residential schools for youth, who come into conflict with the law, mirrors mainstream schools in length of school day and year, the learners are admitted throughout the year into a SYCEC and can be released during the year. This admission policy has an impact on the perceptions of the educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS.

The promotion and progression of the learners becomes problematic and complex too. Whereas, in mainstream schools an academic year will start in January and will end in November/December, the same is not true in a SYCEC. In mainstream schools learners will move with their portfolios from one school to another. This will assist the educator when determining prior knowledge. The learners at SYCEC have often been out of mainstream schools for a number of years. There is sometimes no benchmark that indicates what the learner has mastered or finds challenging in the various learning areas.

6.6.3   Teacher Development

In-service training is needed to enable educators to implement the NCS at the SYCEC. Some educators received NCS training. However, not all educators at the sites received NCS training and they find that in order to implement the NCS, training is of utmost importance.

There seems to be no formal records of on-going educator training in the minutes of the SMT, SGB or curriculum committees at either of the two sites. This proves to be impacting negatively on the execution of the NCS and how educators view the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for their learners. In-service training is offered in the various departments. The departmental training is linked to what the departments offer. This entrenches the notion that the NCS is based in the Academic Departments of the centres.

6.6.4 Intensity of the educational support of their   learners

The learners at a SYCEC are regarded as learners that are slower and older than their peers in mainstream school. These learners literacy and numeracy level is also on a lower level than those in the mainstream schools. The educators regard their learners as "high-risk" learners that require intensive interventions. Education for these learners requires more nuanced approaches and careful consideration. Govender and Petersen (2008) argue that the multiple contexts that influence the learners'

144

vulnerability would be beneficial in supporting a learner regarded as having high risk needs. Brendtro et al (2005) also indicate that these barriers to learning that educators highlighted in the learners are not a symptom of pathology in the child but rather a malfunction in his or her ecosystem. As the school is regarded as one of the microsytems in the ecosystem of the learners, the interaction between what is offered at the school, how it is offered and packaged, can be seen as having an influence on the learner, according to Cooper et al (1994).

6.6.5 Importance attached to technical skills development

Different levels of importance are attached to technical skills training at the two sites. At Site A, learners either choose an academic stream and or a technical stream, without any academic and or formal curriculum learning areas as one finds in the NCS. Site B has a practice of allocating 50% to the learning areas taught in the Academic department and 50% to the three technical skills workshops. It seems that more emphasis is placed on technical skills transference, as the site is offering five learning areas (Home Language, First Additional Language, Mathematics, Life Orientation, Technology and Basic Computer Skill). This notion of the differentiated curriculum finds favour with Ashdown et al (1991), when they argue that the goals for education is the same for all and that these goals should reflect the needs of each individual learner. Differentiation according to Ashdown et al (1991) will facilitate access to the curriculum for the learners. Thus, one can argue that the centres could differentiate the NCS to incorporate the technical skills training within the scope thereof, thus allowing for the accessing of the mainstream curriculum. Thus, even if the participants indicated that they regard Numeracy and Literacy skills as very important a discrepancy is found when looking at the time allocation for the Technical Skills Departments' Learning Programme and the time spent on Numeracy and Literacy at Site B. The time allocated to the Technical Skills Department's learning programme takes half of the time on the timetable at Site B. Numeracy and Literacy share the remainder with two other learning programmes.

6.6.6 Resources

Participants indicated that there is no library at the one site in the study. There is also no time allocated after school for homework. Another shortage that was also highlighted by the participants was that there is no space conducive for doing homework and working on projects in the learners' hostels. It was further found that although a library is available at the one site; it is only open during school hours thus, making research and project work a challenge after school hours.

6.6.7 Internal and external examinations

As indicated earlier in this chapter, promotion and progression is complex at these sites. They find that these processes, like the grade 9 external examinations, provide a sense of legitimacy to the education they provide. One needs to be mindful of the fact, as mentioned earlier, that the NCS allows for work schedule to start anytime in a year and a grade, as the works schedules are not limited to a year or a grade. The same applies in relation to the time allocation for lesson plans, assessment, completion and execution of tasks. This means that the education district and the district officials need to be sensitized to this flexibility of the NCS. By allowing the centres to make use of these advantages that the NCS offers their learners, would be able to be promoted and progressed, even in the middle of the year.

However, one needs to be mindful of the fact that these schools operate in a broader educational system, which works from January to December in a year. What could prove to be challenging for promotion and progression could be the fact that learners are admitted throughout the year, no previous records are available due to learners being out of school for substantial periods to determine the benchmark from which the educator can start the learner, especially when the age of the learner is not on par with that specified in the grade. Thus, educators teaching at these centres will find themselves in a very challenging position. As indicated in the previous chapter, learners might be scholastically on a very low level, but according to their age should

be exposed on a level more appropriate and relevant to their age as what is expected in the outcomes of the NCS.

This admission policy I refer to in the previous section is also the reason that some educators, involved in the technical skills training, are opting for Sectoral Education and Training Authority accredited courses. By accrediting the technical skills courses, credibility is ensured. Credibility and legitimacy can bring social mobility to the learners they teach, thereby making such a curriculum relevant for learners at the SYCEC. This could have a detrimental effect on the vision that the centres have regarding the education of the learners sentenced to the schools and that the curriculum delivered to these learners are not the same one find at mainstream schools.

6.6.8   Who should teach the NCS?

It was found that the educators employed in the Academic Department are responsible for teaching the NCS. Another contributing factor as was mentioned in the previous chapter is the fact that educators employed in both the Technical Skills and Life Orientation and Residential Care Departments are not obliged to be trained as educators. The Technical Skills Department educators' minimum qualifications are a diploma in the trade they teach. The Life Orientation and Residential Care Department educators can be trained either in education, social work or theology.   Some of the educators are therefore, not familiar with the NCS, its learning outcomes, assessment standards and Skills, Knowledge, Attitudes and Values, thus making it something to fear as was expressed amongst some of the participants. The same can be said about the learner support staff. They form part of orientation of the learners, and are also not necessarily educators. Two of the learner support staff members are non-teaching educators. They are the registered nurse and the social worker. Their post does not prescribe that they should be a trained educator over and above their training in the profession that they are employed in.

These eco-systemic factors, as discussed in this section, have an influence on the perceptions of educators in the study on the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for the learners at their schools. I am of the opinion that it has a major influence on the curriculum offerings, what is perceived as appropriate and relevant for the learners at the SYCEC. I did not verify how many of the Life Orientation and Residential Care Department and Technical Skills Department educators are not trained educators, but the Academic Department educators are in the minority. Without proper knowledge and training in the NCS, the NCS might not be perceived as the best vehicle to assist and support the learner

6.6.9   Labeling and the Self-fulfilling Prophecy

Staff's expectations of their learners are a very important aspect in the debate regarding labeling and the self-fulfilling prophecy. What significant others expect of a person can sometimes shape what he or she later expects of him or herself. This phenomenon is called the self-fulfilling prophecy. Coleman (1980:480) indicates that:

> To label a child … is an act likely to have profound effects on both the child's self concept and the reaction of others and thus on his or her entire future life. Most immediately, it may lead to institutionalization. And over the long term, it may be a self-fulfilling prophecy, fuelled by the tendency to behave in ways consistent with one's self concept as with other's expectations.

Coleman warns about the tendency to expect failure. This tendency is evident in the self-fulfilling prophecy. He (1980) noted that due to a higher failure rate the child will begin tasks with a greater expectancy of failure, and will try to avoid the tasks as far as possible. Some participants argued that the learners who are in lower grades prefer to attend the Technical Skills Department. This raises a concern, as it could be evident of a self-fulfilling prophecy being present. Thus, instead of experiencing failure, the learner would rather avoid the situation, where expectancy of failure and labeling occurred in the past, and so they find alternatives to refrain from hurt and further

failure. The opposite is often true for a learner from whom high standards are expected and who are labeled positively. High success expectancy of learners will lead to experiences of success and the learner will experience a positive self-fulfilling prophecy. Hence, the reason why staff could relate that some of the learners attended a FET college, some are enrolled in community schools and others have enrolled themselves in community schools after they left. This was possible because the learner continued with his studies, and the curriculum offered was the same that the mainstream school offers.

This notion of high and low expectancy has been highlighted in chapter three. Developing countries' curriculum for learners, who comes into conflict with the law in residential placement, includes skills training and a lesser focus on academic subjects, which are taught in mainstream schools. The opposite is true for the developed countries. They offer the full national curriculum of the countries. A conclusion that can be drawn is the fact that the learner who comes into conflict with the law in a developed country has a higher expectancy rate of success than the learner from a developing country.

Labeling of learners and the self-fulfilling prophecy can be linked to the macro level of the learner. One can argue that learners from a black and working class family would be labelled as a slower learner and not fit to take the NCS but should rather do the Technical Skills curriculum. The opposite can be true for the white and middle class learner.

6.7   RECOMMENDATIONS

I have discussed the findings of the study and noted with concern that various eco-systemic factors have an impact on the perceptions of educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for the learners at SYCEC. Educators regard barriers to learning as problems within the learners and experience the NCS as central to either addressing or creating barriers to learning. The recommendations

following take these eco-systemic factors into account. The recommendations focused on ensuring that the teaching and learning environment meets the needs of the individual learner, rather than leaving the learner marginalized, disadvantaged, separated, excluded or expected to fit in.

I would like to make the following recommendations that emerged from the findings of the study conducted during 2008 at the two SYCECs in the Western Cape, regarding educators' perceptions about the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for learners at these centres.

6.7.1   Rights of the learners and the NCS

EWP6 (D0E, 2001:11) reminds us that our Constitution require that we give effect to the fundamental right to basic education for all South Africans. This right to basic education is further developed in the Constitution, which commits the state to the achievement of equality and non-discrimination. This is particularly important for protecting all learners.

When one interrogates the delivery of the curriculum at the sites, one needs to contrast it against the backdrop of the right to basic education. The constitution is not clear as to what it regards as basic education, and in that, is found the dichotomy. Both sites offer a curriculum, but do they satisfy the imperative of basic education as is morally expected from them, in terms of the constitution? When one interrogates the issue of how the learner is to choose between curriculum offerings, one is challenged with the contentious issue regarding the right to a curriculum that mirrors what is found in mainstream schools. Educators decide about a curriculum, based on the available staff on their staff establishment as indicated in the previous chapter. Parents are not involved in the curriculum choice of their children as would be the case in mainstream schools. These eco-systemic factors have a direct influence on the curriculum offerings at the school.

All learners are compelled by law to receive education. The South African Schools'
Act defends the rights of all learners to having the right to basic education. The South
African Schools' Act further requires that the NCS is the only curriculum taught at
public schools in South Africa. The South African Schools Act further states that a
learner up to the age fifteen or in grade nine, whichever comes first must be enrolled
for the NCS. The Constitution however is vague, requiring that all children should
have access to basic education without being prescriptive as what that basic education
should comprise of. Therefore, I recommend:

- The NCS be recognized as the only curriculum for learners up to the age
  fifteen or in grade nine.

6.7.2   What Curriculums should be offered to the Learners at the SYCEC?

What curriculum is offered to the learners should ultimately benefit them and not the
system or the educators. Therefore, I recommend:

- An academic and a technical skills curriculum which has the NCS as its basis
  is offered in the juvenile justice arena without curtailing the rights of the
  learners. Learners would choose between the two curriculums and enroll for
  one.

1. The full NCS with no technical skills training as one of the curriculum
   offerings at the schools, to those learners up to the age of fifteen years or grade
   nine and or to those that would like to further their education irrespective of
   their age.
2. A Technical Skills training curriculum is taught with the some NCS learning
   areas incorporated into the curriculum for learners older than 15 years. Those
   learning areas I propose which would form part of the Technical Skills training
   curriculum are Languages, Mathematics, Economic and Management Sciences
   and Technology.

6.7.3 Placement of Learners

How learners are placed in the two curriculum offerings becomes very important. I recommend:

- That a learner, experiencing barriers to learning being allowed to choose any one of the two curriculums offered at the school, with the right to appropriate learning support.
- That a thorough assessment and placement process is evident and supported by educators, learners and parents.
- That learners are placed in a "sorting" workshop for a period of a month if they had indicated that they would like to choose the technical skills transference curriculum. This will enable the assessors to make a comprehensive decision with the learner before placement in a technical skill workshop occurs.
- All relevant role-players including the learner and parents are part of the placement procedure from the beginning of the learner's admission into the SYCEC.

6.7.4 Labeling of learners and the entrenchment of the self-fulfilling prophecy

In the light of the possible detrimental effect of labeling I propose that:

- High expectations of success are also set for learners who experience a barrier to learning.

6.7.5 Teacher Development

Educators have a crucial role to play in facilitating the development and learning of learners in their care. Their perceptions about phenomena have an enormous impact on service delivery to those learners in their care. Therefore I would like to recommend:

152

- That training is provided for staff members that are not trained educators in order to foster a support for the NCS curriculum offering at the school.
- That this training be done on a yearly basis and that it forms part of the Staff Development Programme and the School Improvement Plan.
- That responsible staff for the two curriculum offerings be trained educators.
- That those staff already in the system be provided with opportunities to upgrade themselves as educators.
- That in-service training is provided on a compulsory basis for those who express the need.

6.7.6 Organizational issues of the centres

Various eco-systemic factors impact on the perceptions of educators regarding the NCS as appropriate and relevant for their learners. Therefore I recommend:

- That a concerted effort is made to foster a team spirit where common goals are shared.

- That resources are improved at the SYCEC to create an enabling environment for the delivering of the curriculums of the SYCEC.
- That the families of the learners become more involved in the life of the learners whilst being at the SYCEC.
- That the curricula take into account the admission policy of the child and youth care system.
- That a systematic effort is made to ensure that the Places of Safety and Correctional Facilities' curriculum mirrors that of the SYCEC.

6.8   LIMITATIONS

As indicated in chapter one, the greatest limitation that I experienced in the research, was the fact that I focused broadly on the curriculum offerings at the centres in the study. I did not investigate how the different assessment outcomes and learning

outcomes are realized and neither did I investigate classroom management or teaching strategies employed in the classrooms. All of which are contributing factors to the issues explored under the framework in which this study is grounded.

Another limitation was the fact that this study did not ascertain the view of learners with regard to the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS. Their voices would certainly add another dimension to this debate. Parents' perceptions were also not investigated. Thus, two of the critical stakeholders', as identified by SASA was not investigated in this thesis. Learners at SYCECs are removed by law from their homes, and placed in these institutions, which are generally removed from the communities where learners come from, and this result in parent involvement being minimal.

Lastly, I focused on curriculum delivery at two of the three Special Youth Care and Education Centres in the Western Cape. I have approached all three Special Youth Care and Education Centres in the Western Cape to participate in the study. The third Special Youth Care and Education Centre had previous commitments and could not participate in the study. Although the third site was not included in the study the research findings will be shared with all three sites.

6.9   SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

I would suggest that further studies, that explore more deeply a curriculum appropriate and relevant for the learners in the child and youth care arena, would be beneficial for all those learners who are termed either in need of care or who come into conflict with the law. This would include education provision to learners in Places of Safety and Correctional Facilities. By exploring the curriculum which should benefit the learners in the child and youth care system, learners in the system would benefit. Currently, as mentioned in this chapter, learners' schooling is interrupted when they enter the system and exploring the curriculum issue in the broader child and youth care system would prove to be of benefit to them

Presently, no system is in place that tracks the learners after they have left the centres. It would be helpful to be able to explore those learners who were exposed to the NCS and whether they continued with their school career. Another valid study would investigate the extent to which learners who had been exposed to the technical skills curriculum, find employment in a sector where the technical skill is a pre-requisite.

I would also propose further research into what facilitates or hinders SYCECs meeting the objectives that they set for their learners. Due to parents' absence in the child and youth care arena and, as schools are sometimes located far from where learners originate, I think a study investigating parents as well as learners' perceptions about the appropriateness and relevance of the curriculum that is offered whilst in a SYCEC, might prove to be beneficial for the learners in the child and youth care arena.

6.10   CONCLUSION

This research will expand the knowledge pool because there is a lack of research conducted in the juvenile justice arena. The research was also conducted during a time in South African education history where remarkable changes are taking place with regard to the focus of education and the placement of SYCEC's. Education White Paper 6, the Children's Act of 2008 as amended, and the ratification of international treaties, such as the Salamanca Statement and the Education for All declaration by South Africa, are some of these changes that affected education for learners in the SYCEC. This research broadly adds value to the debates policy development and practices within the education sector.

The thesis identified that the SYCEC and its core purpose should be understood in terms of the Children's Act as amended in 2008. The Children's Act as amended identifies a SYCEC as a centre where one finds more than six children in residential care outside of the family environment. The core purpose of these centres is to provide education and training and to offer a therapeutic programme to the learners sentenced to these centres.

The research endeavored to explore educators' perceptions of the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for learners at SYCEC in the Western Cape. It aims were:

- To determine what SYCECs set out as their objectives for the education and development of learners placed with them.
- To understand the perceptions of the educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum for learners at these Centres.
- To determine what curriculum is being implemented at two SYCECs and the reasons why this is prioritized.

The following questions provided the framework for the study:

- What are the objectives of the SYCECs for the education and development of the learners placed in these institutions?
- What are the perceptions of the educators regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum for learners at these centres?
- What curriculum is being implemented at the SYCECs in the study?
- How is this focus justified?

A case study conducted at two SYCECs in the Western Cape employing qualitative research methodologies was utilized in order to meet the aims of the study. The research questions were answered by generating data, using document analysis, 6 focus groups and 14 individual interviews. They all served to triangulate the data.

The NCS is generally regarded by participants as an appropriate and relevant curriculum for the learners in the SYCEC and would prove beneficial to all the learners in the child and youth care arena. The study notes that the educators' perceptions of the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS varies and is influenced by a number of factors. Some eco-systemic factors impact on how educators perceive the NCS and whether it is appropriate and relevant for the learners at the SYCEC. These include the age of the learners, time out of school, family involvement, labeling

156

and expectations of the learners, organizational issues and factors relating to the broader educational context.

Different curricula are offered at the different centres within the juvenile justice arena and this study shows that the SYCEC's have not come on board in acknowledging that there is one curriculum in South Africa. This was a concern I raised earlier in this thesis as a strong objective for engaging in the research. The study has proved that curriculum offerings at the SYCEC's remain a contentious issue.

The nature of the NCS, the fact that one is able to include some learning areas in the Technical Skills Training, and that the Life Skills programme can be incorporated into the Life Orientation learning programme proves to be advantageous to the learners in SYCEC. Thus, if SYCECs understand and support that the NCS is the only curriculum that is taught at the SYCECs, they will be able to offer the two curriculums as I have recommended in this chapter:

1. A full NCS curriculum up to fifteen years old or grade nine also to every learner that chooses to enroll for the NCS.

2. A Technical Skills curriculum with some NCS learning areas.

This would make the notion of inclusive education applicable in the lives of learners that are generally loosing out when they enter the child and youth care institutions.

Chapter six concludes a journey that began in 2006. I set off with the words of Pamela Kniss (2000:283)

> "We cannot expect ourselves to have an in-depth knowledge of all curricula offered at any or all levels, but we must have an in-depth knowledge of the learning characteristics of our students. Only when …we know that information can we facilitate their inclusion in the mainstream of society as productive and self-actualized individuals. "

I then knew that I needed to undertake a study that would explore the perceptions of my colleagues in regard to the appropriateness and relevance of the NCS for the learners in these SYCECs. I believe that the centres can facilitate their participating in the mainstream society as productive and self-actualized individuals. Furthermore I believe that the NCS can be the vehicle with which one can achieve that objective.

References

African National Congress. (1994). *A Policy Framework for Education and Training*. Braamfontein: ANC.

Ashdown, R, Carpenter, B & Boviar, K (ed.) (1991). *The Curriculum Challenge*. London: The Palmer Press.

Badroodien, A (2001). A History of the Ottery School of Industries in Cape Town: Issues of Race, Welfare and Social Order in the Period 1937 to 1968. Unpublished Doctoral Thesis. Bellville: University of Western Cape.

Badroodien, A (2002). Race, Welfare and "Correctional" Education: The Experience of Indigent "Coloured" Boys under Apartheid. In Kallaway, P (ed.), *The History of Education of Apartheid. 1948-1994*. South Africa: Maskew Millar Longman (Pty) Ltd:

Behr, A (1988). *Education in South Africa. Origins, Issues and Trends: 1652 – 1988*. Pretoria: Academia.

Bester, P (2009). Eeufeesviering 1909-2009. Bester, P (eds.), Hoerskool George Hofmeyr. Standerton: Hoerskool George Hofmeyr: 1

Bezuidenhout, C & Joubert, S (2003). Introduction and Terminology Dilemma. In Bezuidenhout, C & Joubert, S (eds.), *Child and Youth Misbehaviour in South Africa: A Holistic View*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers: 1-11.

Bless, C & Higson-Smith, C (1995). *Fundamentals and Social Research Methods: An African Perspective and Edition*. Kenwyn: Juta and Co. (Ltd).

Blomberg, T (2004). *Juvenile Justice Incarceration, Equal Opportunity and Subsequent Community Transition*. Tallahassee: JJEEP.

Booysens, K (2003). The Nature and Extent of Child and Youth Misbehaviour in South Africa. In Bezuidenhout, C & Joubert, S (eds.), *Child and Youth Misbehaviour in South Africa: A Holistic View.* Pretoria. Van Schaik Publishers: 23-49.

Brendtro, L, Brokenleg, M & Van Bockern, S (2005). The Circle of Courage and Positive Psychology. *Reclaiming Children and Youth,* 14 (3): 130 – 136.

Brennan, W (1985). *Curriculum for Special Needs*. Stratford: Open University Press.

Bronfenbrenner, U & Morris, P (1998). The Ecology of Developmental Processes. In Lerner, R (ed.), *Handbook of Child Psychology. Volume 1: Theoretical Models of Human Development.* New York: Wiley and Sons.

Christie, P (1992). *Curriculum: Report of the National Education Policy Investigation.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Coetzee, C (2005). The Circle of Courage: Restorative Approaches in South African Schools. *Reclaiming Children and Youth,* 14 (3): 184-187.

Coetzee, C, Phillips, B, Rossouw, L, Olivier, T, Pearce, A & Cowley, A (2007). *DQA Report. Site A*. WCED, December 2007.

Cohen, L, Manion, L & Morrison, K (2007). *Research Methods in Education*. London: Routledge.

Coleman, (1980). *Abnormal Psychology and Modern Life*. London: Scott, Foresman and Company.

Cooper, P, Smith, C & Upton, G (1994). *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties: Theory to Practice.* London: Routledge.

Creswell, J (1998). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design*. London: Sage Publications.

Creswell, J (2005). *Educational Research*. New Jersey: Pearson Education Inc.

Cutting, C, Bartolotta, R, Mason, L, Wilson, M & Leone, P (2004). *Analysis of Education policies in Juvenile Corrections.* [Online]. Available http://www.edjj.org/Publications/pre/html [2008, September 26].

Davidson, L & Kramer, L (1997). Integrating with integrity: Curriculum, Instruction, and culture in the mathematics classroom. In Trentacosta. J & Kenney, M (eds.), *Multicultural and gender equity in the mathematics classroom: The gift of diversity*. Reston: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics: 131-141.

De Witt, M (2009). *The Young Child in Context: A Thematic Approach Perspectives from Educational Psychology and Sociopedagogics*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Degabriele, D (2001). *Review of the Functions and Purposes of Reformatory Schools in Malawi*. Unicef.

Denzin, N & Lincoln, Y (2003). *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*. London: Sage Publications.

Department of Education (1996). *South African Schools' Act, Act 84 of 1996*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (1997). *Quality Education for All: Overcoming Barriers to Learning and Development. Report of the National Commission on Special Needs Education and Training, and the National Committee for Education Support Services*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (2001). *Education White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System.* Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (2002). *Revised National Curriculum Statement: Grades R to 9*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (2005). *Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education Building an Inclusive Education and Training System. Conceptual and Operational Guidelines for District-Based Support Teams*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (2005). *Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education Building an Inclusive Education and Training System. Guidelines for Inclusive Learning Programmes*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education (2006). *New and Developing Legislation Relating to Children: Impact on Future Policy and Practices of the Department of Education*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Basic Education (2009). Curriculum News. Planning for 2010 and Beyond. Pretoria: Government Press.

Department of Justice (1996). *The Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996.* Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Justice (2002). *A Situational Analysis of Reform Schools and Schools of Industries in South Africa*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Social Development (1983). *South African Child Care Act, Act 94 of 1983.* Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Social Development (2005). *Children's Act, Act 38 of 2005*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Social Development (2008). *The South African Children's Act, Act 41 of 2008.* Pretoria: Government Printers.

Donald, D, Lazarus, S & Lolwana, P (2002). *Educational Psychology in Social Context.* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Dyson, A & Forlin, C (2002). An International Perspective on Inclusion. In Engelbrecht, P, Green, L, Naicker, S & Engelbrecht, L *Inclusive Education in Action in South Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers: 24-42.

Epstein, I (1984). Juvenile Delinquency and Reformatory Education in Chinese Society. Unpublished PhD. Los Angeles: University of California.

Freebody, P (2003). *Qualitative Research in Education.* London: Sage Publications

Geyser, H (2000). OBE: a Critical Perspective. In Mda, T & Mothata, S (ed.), *Critical Issues in South African Education after 1994.* South Africa: Juta and Company: 21-42.

Govender, K & Petersen, I (2008). Risk Behaviour. In Swartz, L, de la Rey, C Duncan, N & Townsend, L *Psychology: An Introduction.* South Africa: Oxford University Press:

Hook, D, Mkhize, N, Kiguwa, M, Collins, A, Burman, E & Parker, I (2004). *Critical Psychology.* Lansdowne: UCT Press.

Howell, C (2000). Learners with 'Special Needs'. In Mda, T & Mothata, S (ed.), *Critical Issues in South African Education after 1994.* South Africa: Juta and Company: 107-130.

Jansen, J (1999). Why Outcomes-Based Education Will Fail: An Elaboration. In Jansen, J & Christie, P (eds.), *Changing Curriculum: Studies on Outcomes-Based Education in South Africa*. South Africa: Juta and Company:

Johnson, B (2005). *Mental Health Promotion in Western Cape Schools: An Exploration of Factors Relating to Risk, Resilience and Health Promotion.* Unpublished Master's thesis. Bellville: University of the Western Cape.

Kilpatrick, R & Harbinson, D (2003). *The Education Experience of Young People in Juvenile Justice Centres.* Bangor: Government Printers.

Kniss, P (2000). Views of a Special Education Teacher. In Sands, D.J. Kozleski, E.B. & French, N.K. *Inclusive Education for the 21st Century*. Belmont: Wadsworth: 282-326

Krueger, R & Casey, M (2000). *Focus Groups.* London: Sage Publications.

Lazarus, S, Daniels, B, & Engelbrecht, L (2002). The Inclusive School. In Engelbrecht, P, Green, L, Naicker, S & Engelbrecht, L *Inclusive Education in Action in South Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik: 45-68.

Lichtman, M (2006). *Qualitative Research in Education: A User's Guide.* London: Sage Publications.

McGhan, B (1994). The Possible Outcomes of Outcomes-based Education. *Educational Leadership,* 51: 70-72.

Mercer, C & Mercer, A (2005). *Teaching Students with Learning Problems.* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Merriam, S (1998). *Qualitative Research and Case Study Applications in Education.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publications.

Mertler, C & Charles, C (2005). *Introduction to Educational Research.* USA: Pearson Education Inc.

Mokwena, S (1992). Living on the Wrong Side of the Law. In Everatt, D & Sisulu, E (eds.), *Black Youth in Crisis.* Pretoria: Sigma Press:

Moloi, K (2002). *The School as a Leaning Organization: Reconceptualizing School Practices in South Africa*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers.

Moon, B & Murphy, P (eds.). (1999). *Curriculum in Context.* London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.

Naicker, S (1999). *Curriculum 2005: A Space for All. An Introduction to Inclusive Education*. Cape Town: Rennaissance.

Naicker, S (2006). From Policy to Practice. A South-African Perspective on Implementing Inclusive Education Policy. *International Journal of Whole Schooling,* 3 (1): 1-6.

Nelson, L (1999). *Kurrikulum 2005: Skoolvernuwing deur Kurrikulum 2005*. Kaapstad: Rennaissance.

Nkabinde, Z (1997). *An Analysis of Educational Challenges in the New South Africa.* Maryland: University Press of America.

Opie, C (ed.). (2004). *Doing Educational Research.* London: Sage Publications.

Palmer, M (2004). *The Capacity Building Programme for Youth at Risk in the Western Cape: A Community-based Alternative for Rehabilitation and Reintegration.* Unpublished Master's thesis. Bellville: University of the Western Cape.

Perez-Berchoff, E (1996). *An Educational Support System: learning at distance for children suffering from serious diseases or accidents*. [Online] Available http://www.iccpo.org/articles/general/educational_support_program.htlm [2009, May 1].

Posner, G (2004). *Analysing the Curriculum*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Prinsloo, E (2005). Addressing Challenging Behaviour in the Classroom. In Landsberg, E (ed.), *Addressing Barriers to Learning: A South African Perspective*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers: 449-464.

Saffy, J (2003). A Historical Perspective of the Youthful Offender. In Bezuidenhout, C & Joubert, S (eds.), *Child and Youth Misbehaviour in South Africa: A Holistic View*. Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers: 12-22.

Schulman, M (2008). *Building Character.* [Online]. Available http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/focusareas/education/osborne.html [2008, September 26].

Stake, R (1994). Case Studies. In Denzin, N & Lincoln, Y *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* London: Sage.

Stevens, R & Cloete, M (1996). *Introduction to Criminology*. Johannesburg: International Thomson Publishing.

Steyn, F (2005). *Review of South African Innovations in Diversion and Reintegration of Youth at Risk.* Newlands: Open Foundation Society of South Africa.

Swann, J & Pratt, J (eds.). (2003). *Educational Research in Practice.* London: Continuum.

Swart, E & Pettipher, R (2005). A Framework for Understanding Inclusion. In Landsberg, E (ed.), *Addressing Barriers to Learning: A South African Perspective.* Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers: 3-20.

Townsend, L & de la Ray, C (2008). Developmental Psychology. In Swartz, L, de la Rey, C, Duncan, N & Townsend, L *Psychology: An Introduction*. South Africa: Oxford University Press:

Van der Horst, H & McDonald, R (2008). *Outcomes-based Education: Theory and Practice.* South Africa. Kagiso Publishers.

Van Schalkwyk, O (1988). *The Education System: Theory and Practice*. UNISA: Alkanto Publishers.

Wellington, J (2000). *Educational Research: Contemporary Issues and Practical Approaches.* Great Britain: Biddles Ltd, Gilford and King's Lynn.

Western Cape Education Department (2004). *Minimum Standards for Special Education Services or Learners Manifesting, or at Risk of Experiencing Emotional and/or Behavioural Difficulties.* Cape Town: WCED.

Woods, P (2006). *Qualitative Research.* [Online]. Available http://www. Qualitative Research .html (2006, September 12).

World Bank (2008). *Education for All.* [Online] Available http://www. web.worldbank.org.html [2008, May 4].

Yin, R (1984). *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Youth Justice Agency (2008). *Servicing Children in Care and Victims*. [Online]. Available http://www.File://E:\Youth Justice Agency of Northern Ireland.html [2008, July   31].

APPENDICES

Appendix A

Permission Letter to Conduct Research

Apendix B

Information Sheet

Student: Ms. Carola Petersen   Supervisor: Ms. N. Moolla

Private Bag X2   Private Bag X17

Kraaifontein, 7569   Bellville, 7735

Tel: 021988044 (ext 204) O/H   Tel: 0219592246 (O/H)

Email: bergsigsjos@lantic.net

Date:

Dear Colleague
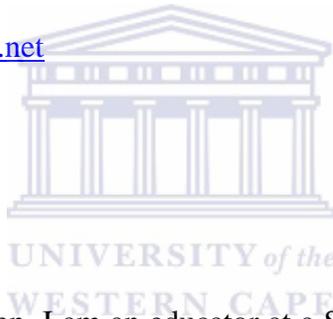
My name is Carola Petersen. I am an educator at a Special Youth Care and Education Centre (SYCEC). I am a Masters Degree student in the Faculty of Education at the University of the Western Cape. I am engaged in a research project and would like you to participate.

The research will be conducted at two Special Youth Care and Education Centres and I will involve both post level one educators and School Management Team members.

The research attempts to explore educators' perceptions of the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum Statement for learners at Special Youth Care and Education Centres in the Western Cape. This research question is one that is pertinent to debates and discussions within this sector at present.

The research aims to:

- Determine what SYCECs set out as their goals for the learners placed with them;

- Understand the perceptions of the educators at the SYCEC regarding the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum for the learners at the SYCEC;

- To determine which curriculum is currently taught at the SYCEC and the reasons for the emphasis.

You have been selected to participate in this research because you are a post level one educator or a member of the School Management Team. You are also able to share valuable insights regarding your perceptions of the National Curriculum Statement and its appropriateness and relevance for the learners you teach.

I would like you to participate in a focus group interview and thereafter, if necessary avail yourself for an individual interview. Both processes will be confidential and under no circumstances will your identity be revealed. The recordings will be done in such a manner that you cannot be identified and after I have analyzed the data and completed the study, those recordings will be destroyed. During the course of the study, I will take utmost care that no information will be available to anyone except me and a colleague for authenticity checking. Please note that you can withdraw at ay stage without having to explain. I will respect your privacy and anonymity.

Should you wish to participate, kindly complete the consent form attached to this letter and hand it back to me.

Thanking you in quality education for all.

_____

Carola Petersen

Appendix C – Letter of Consent

I, the undersigned, an educator at a Special Youth Care and Education Centre give written consent to participate in the research study undertaken by Ms. Carola Petersen, a Masters' Degree student at the University of the Western Cape.

I understand everything that is outlined in the covering letter and Ms. Petersen has clarified all uncertainties. I have in no way been coerced to participate in the research.

_____

Signature of Participant

Signed   on   this   day   _____   of _____   200__   .

Appendix D

Document Analysis Checklist

1. Site Information

Location of the Centre

Age of the Centre

Grades Taught

Workshops offered

2. Learner Information

How many male learners at the centre?

How many female learners at the centre?

What is the primary barrier to learning of the learners at the centre?

Other barriers to learning?

**3. Number and Description of Physical Facilities**

How many hostels are there?

Describe the hostels.

Describe the conditions of the hostels.

How many classrooms are there?

Describe the classrooms?
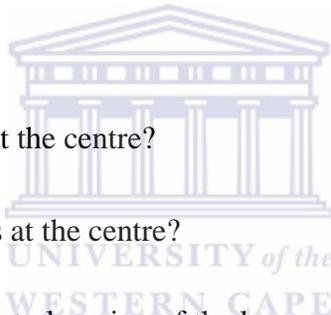
Describe the conditions of the classrooms?

How many workshops are there?

Describe the workshops.

Describe the conditions of the workshops.

What recreational facilities are available at the centre?

Describe the condition of the recreational facilities.

4. Educator Information

Is there a principal employed at the centre?

On what post level?

What is he/she teaching?

Did the principal receive any NCS training?

Is there a deputy principal employed at the centre?

On what post level?

What is he/she teaching?

Did the deputy principal receive any NCS training?

Are there heads of departments employed at the centre?

On what post level?

What are they teaching?

Did the heads of departments receive any NCS training?

Are there educators employed at the centre?

On what post level?

What are they teaching?

Did the educators receive any NCS training?

What support services personnel are employed at the school?

On what post level?

What services do they offer in relation to the curricula offered at the centre?

5. What objectives are the centres setting for their learners?

6. What are the challenges the centres experiencing with regard

to the NCS?
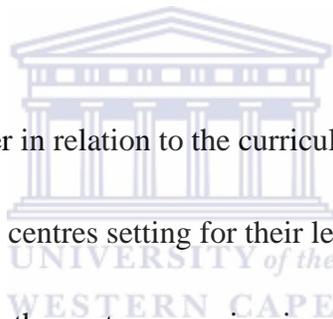
Appendix E

Guideline Interview Questions for Focus Group Interviews

Main Question	Follow-up Questions
1. What is the vision for the learners' development at your centre?	1.a. Describe the learners that are sent to your centre?
	1.b. How do you think the curriculum delivered at your centre is enabling the vision of the school for your learners?
	1.c. What would you like your learners to achieve at the end of their stay at your centre?
	1.d. How do you think the curriculum you teach would be able to assist with the re-integration into society after the learners leave your centre?
	1.e. What would you think is the rights of the learners at your centre?
	1.f. How do you think the curriculum delivered at your centre can enhance the fulfilment of those rights?
2. What is your perception of the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum Statement for the learners at your centre?	2.a. What do you understand with the terms "appropriateness" and "relevance?"
	2.b. The learners found at your centre were out of school for a considerable time. How would you make the NCS relevant and appropriate for

	such a learner?
	2.c. What are the processes in place at your centre for the learners to choose streams, subjects or workshops?
	2.d. What assistance is rendered to learners when placement in a specific stream or workshop takes place?
3. What curriculum do you offer to the learners at your centre?	3.a. What are you teaching at your centre?
	3.b. Of the curricula that you offer, which one would be the most appropriate and relevant for the learners at your centre?
	3.c. Why would you think those curricula are appropriate and relevant for the learners at your centre?
	3.d. Why do you think the curricula taught at your centre are regarded as priority?
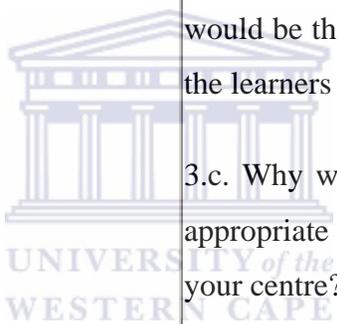
Appendix F

Guideline Interview Questions for Individual Interviews

Main Question	Follow-up Questions
1. What is the vision for the learners' development at your centre?	1.a. The centres have identified five objectives for their learners. Those are to provide a professional and comprehensive service, a safe haven for the learners, build confidence in the learners, and return learners to mainstream schools and to guide and equip the learners to become law abiding citizens, what is your position on these objectives?
2. What is your perception of the appropriateness and relevance of the National Curriculum Statement for the learners at your centre?	2.a. Could we discuss your idea about relevance and appropriateness and the relevance and appropriateness of the National Curriculum Statement for the learners at your school.
3. What curriculum do you offer to the learners at your centre?	3.a. What is your role in the delivery of the curricula at your centre? 3.b. If you could change the curricula offered at your centre what would you do differently? Remove, add, modify, etc.? 3.c. Why are you offering the current curricula?

Navrae Enquiries IMibuzo	**Dr RS Cornelissen**
Telefoon Telephone IFoni	**(021) 467-2286**
Faks Fax IFeksi	**(021) 425-7445**
Verwysing Reference ISalathiso	**20070713-0049**

Wes-Kaap Onderwysdepartement

Western Cape Education Department

ISebe leMfundo leNtshona Koloni

Ms Carola Petersen
Private Bag X2
KRAAIFONTEIN
7569

Dear Ms C. Petersen

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: EDUCATOR'S PERCEPTION OF THE APPROPRIATENESS AND RELEVANCE OF THE NATIONAL CURRICULUM IN TWO SPECIAL YOUTH CARE AND EDUCATION CENTRES.

Your application to conduct the above-mentioned research in schools in the Western Cape has been approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **16th July 2007 to 21st September 2007**.
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December 2007).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr R. Cornelissen at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number.
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the Principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the following schools: **Kraaifontein Youth Centre, Faure Youth Centre and Eureka Youth Centre**.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Education Research.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:
    The Director: Education Research
    Western Cape Education Department
    Private Bag X9114
    CAPE TOWN
    8000

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Ronald S. Cornelissen
for: **HEAD: EDUCATION**
DATE: 16th July 2007

MELD ASSEBLIEF VERWYSINGSNOMMERS IN ALLE KORRESPONDENSIE / PLEASE QUOTE REFERENCE NUMBERS IN ALL CORRESPONDENCE / NCEDA UBHALE IINOMBOLO ZESALATHISO KUYO YONKE IMBALELWANO

GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LAER-PARLEMENTSTRAAT, PRIVAATSAK X9114, KAAPSTAD 8000
GRAND CENTRAL TOWERS, LOWER PARLIAMENT STREET, PRIVATE BAG X9114, CAPE TOWN 8000

WEB: http://wced.wcape.gov.za

INBELSENTRUM /CALL CENTRE

INDIENSNEMING- EN SALARISNAVRAE/EMPLOYMENT AND SALARY QUERIES ☎0861 92 33 22
VEILIGE SKOLE/SAFE SCHOOLS ☎ 0800 45 46 47