

**Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion.**

**The case of Youth Care School.**

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the Master's Degree in Education

(Full thesis)

The logo of the University of the Western Cape, featuring a classical building facade with a pediment and columns.

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Access to education



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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

ABET	Adult Basic Education and Training
AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
CREATE	Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Training and Equity
DHE	Department of Higher Education
DoE	Department of Education
EMIS	Educational Management Information Systems
FET	Further Education and Training
GETC	General Education and Training Certificate
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HOD	Head of Education
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality
SASA	South African Schools Act
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
YCS	Youth Care School

## ABSTRACT

The study was prompted by the need to look at alternative options to mainstream education for learners who are too old for their grade, who have opted out of the education system but find themselves wanting to re-access the education system. Mainstream schooling seems a difficult option for many learners who would like to complete their basic education but find that they have problems fitting in the multi-age classroom. If they are too old for their grade, they are at risk of dropping out.

Following a review of the literature around access, re-access, over-age, dropout, exclusion, inclusion, capability and a methodological approach to the study, the analysis will focus on the Youth Care School, a school for age-inappropriate learners as a form of intervention. This is a day school operating independently from the Western Cape Education Department, taking on learners who are too old for their grade, who would otherwise be on the streets. The theoretical perspective of the study will focus on the capability theory and alternative schools as forms of capability development.



## DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my mother, Edith Solomon, and my late sister, Sheila Solomon. My mother has always encouraged me to further my studies and has been patiently waiting on the completion of my Masters' thesis.



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My deepest gratitude goes to my wife, Glynis and son Raiël, for their love, emotional support and patience.

Thank you, God, for making this possible.



## DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis, Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion: The case of Youth Care School, 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 used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by complete references.

Signed: .....

MARK DEON SOLOMON

November 2014



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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1 Introduction

The study focuses on school dropout as a form of exclusion, how capability development addresses the social exclusion of learners who dropped out, and an initiative to include learners and attract them back into schooling.

### 1.2 Background and context

In this study I investigate the effect of an intervention in order to discover the causes of the social exclusion of learners in order to influence policy in respect of school dropout and social inclusion. The site of the intervention was the Youth Care School (YCS). YCS was started in 1999 when many children's homes found it difficult to place learners at mainstream schools that were reluctant to take on learners who had been out of school for a while. For admission to YCS, learners are interviewed and must undergo testing in order to place them at the correct ABET Level. The school focuses on Literacy and Numeracy. Learners in Level 4 write the external national GETC (General Education and Training Certificate).

The theoretical perspective of the study focuses on the capability theory as postulated by Sen (1985). Sen (1985) argues that the capability approach is a 'concentration of freedom to achieve in general and the capabilities to function in particular'. In 2001 the Department of Education, through its Education Management and Information Systems (EMIS), reported that there was an indication of a possible high dropout rate of learners between Grades 1 and 11 in South African schools (Department of Education, June 2003, p.16). This observation was supported by Kraak's study, which found that of the estimated 826 000 learners who register in schools each year, about 551 000 of them do not finish their schooling (Kraak, 2003, p.13).

In 1996 South Africa ruled that every South African child should undergo at least nine years of schooling. This is a period for basic education and training, which according to the Dakar Framework on Education (UNESCO, 2005) is a critical period of education for the youth. According to the South African Schools Act of 1996, Chapter two Section 1

...every parent must cause every learner for whom he or she is responsible to attend a school from the first day of the year in which

such learner reaches the age of seven years until the last day school day of the year in which such learner reaches the age of fifteen years or the ninth Grade, whichever occurs first. (South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996: Chapter two, section 1).

The Act further mandates the Head of Department (HOD) to take action should a learner – within a specific age group – fail to attend school. The Act specifically stipulates that the HOD must

...investigate the circumstances of the learner's absence from school; take appropriate measures to remedy the situation; and failing such a remedy, issue a written notice to the parent of the learner requiring compliance with the subsection. (South African Schools Act (SASA), 1996, Chapter two, section 1).

Despite the SASA policy, post-apartheid South Africa has seen an increase in learner dropouts (Department of Education (DoE), 2001). Researchers have argued that the increase in the magnitude of the phenomenon of learner dropouts can be ascribed to a variety of reasons which differ within different contexts. Crouch and Kraak state that dropping out is not only a challenge for the education system in terms of cost and the underdevelopment of a person's capability, but it is a challenge to the youth labour market as well (Crouch, 2005; Kraak, 2003).

In the editorial of the Sunday Times of 18 September 2005, it was stated that:

In a fast developing economy such as South Africa, the need for a functioning and efficacious education system cannot be overstated. It is therefore a concern that according to studies almost half of the country's pupils are either dropping out of school, or not finishing school in the expected 12 years. (Editorial. Sunday Times, 18 September 2005 p. 20.)

School dropout is a visible sign of a society that has failed to prepare its youth for successful transition into adulthood. Large numbers of dropouts weaken the economy because they are

unprepared to work and they place a burden on unemployment and welfare services, as well as the criminal justice system.

It has been estimated that there are over half a million children, approximately 5 percent of school-age children – who are not attending school in South Africa (Porteus, Clacherty, Mdiya, Pelo, Matsai, Qwabe & Donald, 2000, p.8). This is a critical issue given the new constitution and its commitment to equal and appropriate education for all.

In the Western Cape – as in the whole of South Africa – there are an increasing number of learner dropouts. Many learners repeat Grades from Grade 3 to Grade 9 and eventually dropout because of over-age, violence and other factors. Literature and research show there has been an increasing demand for schooling for learners who are age-inappropriate who would like to return to school. Learners who have been out of school due to socio-economic factors, street- children and children at children's homes find it difficult to access mainstream schools because of their age. Many learners want to re-access the education system because they find that they do not have the necessary basic skills to enter the job market or to access skills courses. Schools like YCS provide a second-chance to learners to get a basic education who can then exit with at least a GETC (General Education and Training Certificate) either to access a FET (Further Education and Training) College or go back to a mainstream school to continue Grade 10 and complete Grade 12

### **1.3 Rationale**

As the principal of an independent school I have a concern about the issue of school dropouts and access to schools for over-age learners.

There is a need to look at alternative options to mainstream education for learners who are too old for their grade, who have opted out of the education system but find themselves wanting to re-access the education system. Mainstream schooling seems a difficult option for many learners who would like to complete their basic education but find that they have problems fitting in the multi-age classroom and they struggle academically. They are too old for their grade and are at-risk of dropping out. YCS would be an option for learners who are too old for their grade, who have been turned away by other mainstream schools and would otherwise find themselves on the streets.

With this study I hope to influence policy-makers within the National Education Department and Provincial Education Department to look at intervention programmes like those offered at YCS which offer alternative educational programmes for young learners who opted out to obtain a GETC certificate and would therefore be able to access a FET College.

#### **1.4 Research problem**

Learners who drop out of school are more inclined to become socially excluded than their peers who follow a normal school programme. Initiatives aimed at social inclusion through capability development could address the dropout issue.

#### **1.5 Research aims**

The aims of the study are: (1) to investigate an initiative which addresses the social exclusion of learners who have dropped out of school; and (2) to generate new knowledge about the relationship between capability theory, school dropout, and social inclusion.

#### **1.6 Research questions**

Two questions that need to be investigated in depth are:

1. *How has capability development facilitated the social inclusion of learners who have dropped out of school?*
2. *What are the reasons for dropout?*

#### **1.7 Theoretical framework**

For the purposes of this study I have developed a theoretical framework which incorporates a capability theory, education policy, as well as analysing causes of social exclusion and social inclusion.

The conceptual and theoretical framework will be framed by the social exclusion theory and capability theory of White (1973); Sen (1985); Nussbaum (2000); Robeyns (2003); Saito (2003); Walker (2006); and Unterhalter (2007), to analyse dropout as a form of exclusion and alternative school programmes as forms of capability development and social inclusion.

## **1.8 Limitations of the study**

The study was confined to one school in the Cape Town Metropole area which has the only Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) centre that operates during the day and follows the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) mainstream school calendar. It is also the only independent day school that offers the ABET curriculum to learners between the ages of 14 – 19.

## **1.9 Anticipated findings**

I anticipated that the study would contribute to a general understanding of ways in which capability development can contribute to facilitating the return to school of children who have dropped out and facilitate their inclusion into society.

I would like to argue that lessons can be learnt from the YCS educational programmes as a form of intervention to minimise dropping out. From my findings it is clear that through interventions of the YCS programmes that offer learners opportunities to complete a basic education and enable them to become socially included.

## **1.10 Outline of chapters**

Chapter One presents an introduction and background to the thesis. In this chapter I outline the background and context of my study, the rationale, research problem and the aims of the study. I also state the research question and present the theoretical framework, the limitations of the study and my anticipated findings in this chapter. In Chapter Two I present an analysis of the literature reviewed by looking at the key concepts first and then presenting international perspectives on the dropout phenomenon. Then I look at dropout ratio in the South African context and interventions to minimise dropping out. In Chapter Three I discuss the conceptual and theoretical framework focusing on capability theory, quality of education, social exclusion and social inclusion. I look at Sen's (1985), capability approach in depth and compare the findings of other authors in the field with the reliability of his theory. Chapter Four outlines the research design and methodology. I present the data gathering method and describe the research site. In Chapter Five I analyse the data which I collected from the learners, parents/guardians/care-workers and educators in order to evaluate the findings. In Chapter Six I present a summary of the study, the findings, conclusions and make recommendations for future research.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews the literature on dropout causes and actual occurrence of learners dropping out of school before completing the prescribed learning programme and indicates how various authors define this concept so as to provide sufficient background and context to the study. I look at international perspectives on dropout. I review the literature of dropout during the apartheid (pre-1994) and the post-apartheid (post-1994) periods. The literature review also focuses on post-apartheid policies on educational access, specifically the decrees on schooling set out in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996.

#### 2.2 Key concepts

##### Definitions of dropout

Wittebols (1986, p.105) states that dropout is generally defined as a residual status, indicating "... someone who has not graduated from, or is not currently enrolled, full-time in, a state-approved education programme".

Hammock (1986), and Williams (1987), define Dropout-Rate (DOR) as "students missing from school at least 45 days without a request for a transcript".

Weis et al. (1989, p. 205), in the Bureau of the Census, define a dropout as "... any person who is not enrolled in school or who is not a high school graduate or the equivalent".

Pervin, Reik and Dalrymple (1966), define the concept as referring to any student who left college, regardless of reason who did not obtain his/her degree or certificate at the same time as the class with which he/she originally enrolled. For these authors, a school returner is a child who enrolled at a school, dropped out at some point, but re-entered or returned to school at a later stage. In contrast to other authors, Flores-Gonzalez (2002), describes a school dropout as a learner who enrolled at the school but left school before graduating and had not enrolled at any educational programme elsewhere. George Morrow (1989), (cited in Weis,

Farrar and Petrie (1989)) states that the concept 'dropout' can be applied to a variety of cases. These include push-outs (undesirable students), educational mortalities (those who failed), capable dropouts (those whose background socialisation does not correlate with school demands) and stop-outs (those who dropped out and returned to school within the same year or after some time out of school).

Relevant literature reveals that several scholars and researchers assert that there is a lack of common definition for dropout. However there have been some attempts to identify and define major types of dropouts. South African researchers Brickel, Bond and LaMahieu (1986) (cited in Capuzzi & Gross, 1989, p.347), approach it in a different way and point out that the term "dropout" itself can be potentially misleading because it implies a single decision point to leave school, with the learner as the sole decision maker. They argue that might not always be the case. These authors contend that some learners merely "fade out" after a period of feeling alienated from school and others can be subtly "pushed out" by school personnel who do not want to deal with them any longer. Others on the other hand, are "pulled out" either by more important demands on their time such as parenting or supporting elderly family members, or by negative community influences such as gangs. Some learners also leave school but do return, only to drop out again. It is clear from abovementioned definitions that different learners, even learners from the same school, leave school under different circumstances and for varied reasons.

Looking at the above differences, there appears to be agreement that a school dropout refers to a child who enrolled at a school but left school before graduating, and had not enrolled in any educational programme elsewhere (Flores-Gonzalez, 2002).

In my study a dropout is defined as a person who neither enrolled in school nor graduated from high school. I use the term 'dropout' to refer to those who voluntarily opted out of the schooling system but returned to school.

According to Hunt (2008, p.1264) there is "a range of interrelated demand and supply factors which interact to influence how and why children dropout of school". Some of these are "... household income and financial circumstances, direct and indirect costs of schooling" (Heyman, 2000, p.833) '... school fees, income shocks, child work, migration, household contexts bereavement and orphan hood, education of household members, household

perceived benefits of schooling, health, pregnancy, disability and special educational needs, gender, rural and urban factors, fragile states (political conflict), age, marriage and notions of adulthood, school supply and quality of provision, supply of schools and processes and practices. (Garnier, 1997, p.395).

Azzam (2007), reports on a study of high school dropouts in the United States which states that approximately one-third of all high school students in the United States fail to graduate. It also states that for Afro-Americans and Hispanics, the rate rises to 50 percent. A report by Civic Enterprises (2006) for the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation examined the views of diverse youth, ages 16-25, who had failed to complete high school. This study lists students' reasons for leaving school and suggests actions that schools, states, and the federal government can take to eliminate or minimise the problem. The dropouts in the study identified five major reasons for leaving school. These included, they were bored with school (47 percent); had missed too many days and could not catch up (43 percent); spent time with people who were not interested in school (42 percent); had too much freedom and not enough rules in their lives (38 percent); and those who were failing (35 percent) (Civic Enterprises (2006).

According to a report of Civic Enterprises (2006) many students gave personal reasons for leaving school, which included the need to get a job, parenthood, or having to care for family members. Nearly half (45 percent) also noted that earlier schooling had poorly prepared them for high school. Close to three-quarters of the students (71 percent) indicated that they started becoming disinterested in high school as early as Grades 9 and 10. Students noted that they would often go to school late, take long lunches, or skip classes or school entirely. According to the report sometimes parents did not oversee the child's school attendance. The indication was that only one-fifth of parents were very involved in their child's schooling. Many of the parents were involved for discipline and not instructional-purposes.

Rumberger (1983. p. 199) looks at the high school dropout in 1979 in the US and the reasons stated by students for leaving school. The data for the research came from a national sample of youth who were 14 to 21 years of age in 1979. The reasons students cited for leaving school differed between those for men and women –

“women more likely to leave because of pregnancy or marriage and men more likely to leave to go and work; family background strongly influences the propensity to drop out of school”.

Fetler (1989, p. 109) again looks at how educational policy-makers have questioned the effects of school reforms on at-risk students in California, asking “Are higher academic standards associated with greater numbers of dropouts?”

This study by Fetler (1989) examines the school average dropout rates for a two consecutive year period in conjunction with the percentage covered by Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), total enrolment, achievement, and academic course enrolments for all California’s regular public high schools. In both AFDC percentage and total enrolment there was an association with higher dropout rates. Higher achievement was again associated with lower dropout rates even after statistically controlling the AFDC percentage and total enrolments. The findings from this study suggest that school effectiveness measures that result in higher achievement may also enhance the effectiveness of dropout treatment programmes.

## **2.3 International perspectives on reasons for dropout**

### **2.3.1 Repetition and over-age**

Ilon and Moock (1991), state that studies in some countries do not clearly reveal whether over-age is due mainly to repetition or late entry to schooling. They find that timeous enrolment in primary schooling is associated with family wealth and parents’ schooling, and negatively associated with school costs. This indicates that it is the poor who are more likely to enrol late, and who repeat grades and drop out of school. Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1996), on the other hand suggest that there is a strong relationship between over-age, repetition and dropout.

Schiefelbein and Wolff (1992), contend that ‘age heterogeneity’ is a cause of repetition. This could be the effect of learning and teaching methods in the classroom where you have children of various ages in the same grade. In these instances it is difficult for the teacher to generate learning experiences of interest for the whole range of ages in such a classroom. In such classrooms difficulties are created for non-repeaters as well, in that the teaching methods need to be adapted to accommodate children of various ages (Schiefelbein and Wolff 1992).

Hunt (2008) argues that the guardians' and educators' support and attitude also affect the response of learners who failed a grade more than once. He says that the reason learners often want to transfer schools or even drop out may be that they are too embarrassed and humiliated to remain in the same school as their peers.

Gewertz (2005), focuses on early intervention. He refers to officials approach to the dropout problem amongst over-age high school students in the United States. The mission of the Option Complex programme in the US is to hang onto children in Grades 6 to 12, who might otherwise leave school because they are already behind by two or more years. The New York City programmes are aimed at teenagers who fall behind in high school, and other programmes are aimed at older students with issues who need to complete their studies in the evening. The officials of the city of Dallas have expanded its 'reconnection centres' for over-age high school students to serve middle-schoolers as well when they noticed that many middle-school students are too old for their Grades.

### **2.3.2 Lack of finances and income**

Heyman (2000), emphasises the importance of parental involvement to ensure the success of their children at school. The discussion about what influences the outcomes of poor children has assumed that low-income parents have the same opportunity to help with their children's education. 'availability and time to be involved with their children's education is determined by job benefits and working conditions. Heyman addresses the question whether low-income working parents face significantly different nonfinancial barriers to parental involvement than those faced by higher-income working parents. Working conditions faced by parents who have at least one child in need of help because of educational or behavioural problems are examined. Stroup and Robins (1972), find that income is another aspect of family background. Children from poor families may feel pressure to contribute to their families' incomes and they may be more likely to drop out of school to seek work.

In his article, 'Financing the at-risk students', Levin (1989), suggests that "...students who are considered to be at-risk of educational failure because of their social and economic origins represent about one-third of all elementary and secondary enrolments".

Levin explores the financial requirements for bringing these students into the educational mainstream so that they are academically able. The author first provides an elaboration on

the rising demography of at-risk students and the deleterious consequences to the economy and society of failing to meet their educational needs. He then summarises the evidence on the payoffs to educational investments in at-risk students and finds that benefits are well in excess of costs. Finally he evaluates criteria for determining the financial requirements for addressing educational needs of at-risk students and suggests that additional spending of about \$21 billion a year (about 109 percent of present elementary and secondary expenditures) might be appropriate. Levin (1989), further reviews the role of federal, state, local governments and the private sector in providing the additional financial and other resources needed to succeed.

### **2.3.3 Parents' educational levels and family background**

The most widely studied factor to drop out is family background, according to Sewell and Hauser (1975), which has proven to exert a strong influence on educational attainment. The educational attainment of both parents' represents two important aspects Hill (1979), and Mare (1980), argue. They contend that parents with better education could influence their children's educational aspirations and parents who spend more time with their children could increase their children's ability and thus increase the likelihood that the children might remain in school. Hill and Stafford (1977), agree that family structure is important.

Similarly, Howell and Frese (1982, p. 51), (cited in Masters, 1969) state "Children from broken families, where one or both parents are absent, may be less likely to find the support and encouragement they need to stay in school."

Other aspects of family background, such as family size, housing conditions and geographic location also affect children's likelihood of dropping out of school (Hill, 1979; Mare, 1980).

A common finding among scholars is that learners struggle academically when the medium of instruction at school is not their home language. Teachers identified that some learners do not have basic academic skills (spelling, ability to summarise or write clearly) and struggle to translate from their mother tongue to English and vice-versa. From assessments of the learners' written responses to questionnaires, it is evident that many have not mastered English (Hunt, 2008).

### 2.3.4 Drug and alcohol abuse

Drug and alcohol abuse has been identified by learners as a major problem within schools. It was identified by learners as one of the contributing factors to learner dropout. Hunt (2008), s also points out that some learners often drink, smoke and use drugs during school hours.

### 2.3.5 Multiply-determined factors

In his study, Garnier (1997, p. 398,) states that the nested latent-variable causal models were contrasted to compare the direct and indirect relationships of distal-family-and child and proximal adolescent factors to dropping out of high school. In the sample there were 194 Euro-American conventional and non-conventional families in a 19-year longitudinal study. The findings show

...that dropping out of high school is a multiply-determined process, with early influences beginning in childhood and involves family as well as child and adolescent factors. Early family non-conventionality with higher commitment to lifestyle values was associated with a lower probability of dropping out; cumulative family stress, lower high school achievement and motivation, lower sixth-grade school performance, and adolescent drug use were associated with a higher probability of dropping out.

Garnier also states that family lifestyles and values are related to children's developmental pathways through childhood exposure to drug use, the children's ability prior to school entry, and their early school performance. He argues that non-conventional lifestyles with a higher commitment to lifestyle values may offer long-term protection for children from school failure. Hunt (2008), finds that difficulties within the learner's home environment are identified by teachers and learners as the main factor negatively influencing their success at school. The issue of school fees being unaffordable and payment being enforced by schools was highlighted by learners as one reason for learner dropout according to Hunt (2008).

Rumberger (1987, p. 103) state the following outcomes on dropout:

“The negative outcomes for students who drop out of school are reflected in the high unemployment rates of such dropouts, as are their low-income and lifetime earnings”.

Similarly Hahn, Danzberger and Lefkowitz (1987, p. 34), state that "... in addition to the personal consequences, the dropout phenomenon has damaging repercussions for society". They say that "the costs in lost tax revenues, welfare and unemployment expenditures, and crime prevention funds expended for dropout youth have been estimated in the billions of dollars".

Rumberger states that the problem of school dropouts has become a major concern for policy-makers and educators.

According to Rumberger (1987), these problems can generate large social costs. A reason for the concern about the dropout problem is that demographic changes could increase the number of dropouts in the absence of effective interventions.

Inclusive education is the human right to education which was pronounced in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1949. Equally important is the right of children not to be discriminated against, stated in article 2 of the Convention on the Right of the Child (UN, 1989). A consequence of this right is that all children have the right to receive the kind of education that does not discriminate on grounds of disability, ethnicity, religion, language, gender, capabilities, and so on. Therefore it can be stated that "There are also very important human, economic, social and political reasons for pursuing a policy and approach of inclusive education. It is a means of bringing about personal development and building relationships amongst individuals, groups and nations."

The Salamanca Statement and Framework for Action (1994 Article 2) asserts that "Regular schools with inclusive orientation are the most effective means of combatting discrimination, creating welcoming communities, building an inclusive society and achieving education for all" (Salamanca Statement, Art. 2).

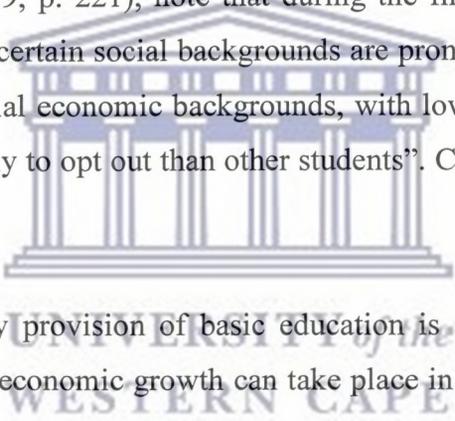
Booth (1996), states that inclusion is seen as a process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities and reducing exclusion within and from education (Booth, 1996). He claims it involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children (UNESCO, 1994).

## 2.4 Apartheid, dropout and educational access in South Africa

In the South African context, children in Grades 1 to 9 are required to attend school. The right to basic education for all South Africans is enshrined in the South African Constitution. Motala (2007, p. 102) also states that "... South Africa has near universal access to formal public schooling up to the end of the compulsory phase, which consists of the Foundation phase (Grades 1 - 3); the Intermediate phase (Grades 4 to 6); and the Junior Secondary phase (Grades 7 to 9) – a total of nine years of schooling".

There are substantial backlogs because of the apartheid policy that deprive learners of equal opportunities to quality education in South Africa.

Weis, Farrar and Petrie (1989, p. 221), note that during the first nine years of compulsory schooling "... students from certain social backgrounds are prone to dropping out. They state that students from lower social economic backgrounds, with lower levels of self-esteem and poorer Grades, are more likely to opt out than other students". Chijioke and Noxolo (2007, p. 428) state that



"...satisfactory provision of basic education is a way through which social inclusion and economic growth can take place in post-apartheid South Africa. Making basic education available to the present school-age children and to adults who were denied the opportunity during the apartheid era has remained unrealised. According to the authors, the gap in basic education has persisted despite notable improvements in the educational sector in South Africa".

Chijioke and Noxolo (2007, P. 231) also investigate

"... the meaning and the practice of basic education in South Africa and they declare that it is inseparable from the historic experiences and the socio-economic dynamics that shape the present society. They state that to realise the goal of improved quality, the role of non-state institutions in basic education provision needs to be redefined".

## 2.5 Reasons for dropout in South Africa

Various researchers focused on patterns of access and exclusion. Fleisch et al. (2007), draw on the detailed analysis of the 2007 Community Survey which was conducted at the School of Education of the University of the Witwatersrand and explore patterns of access and exclusion. According to this study (2007, Community Survey), it states that the age-specific school enrolment rates for 6 - 15 year-olds in South Africa stand at over 95 percent.

Motala et al., (2007), reported on their investigation conducted in the Consortium for Research on Educational Access, Transitions and Equity (CREATE) (2008), which was aimed at addressing the need of increasing meaningful access to basic education for children from the ages of 5 to 15. According to the research, most learners in South Africa remain in school from Grades 1 to 9, but the numbers drop dramatically thereafter (Motala et al., 2007). They examine educational access in terms of a model that was developed which describes seven zones of exclusion. It is as follows: Zone 0 is Grade R, (yet not compulsory) the entry point for learners aged 5 years or turning 5 (before the end of June) into the schooling system. Then there is Zone 1 which includes children who have never gone to school. Zone 2 includes those learners who dropout before the end of their primary education (Grade 7), and Zone 3 are those learners who are at-risk of dropping out in this same period. Zone 4 is the transition between Grades 7 and 8, or the period between primary and secondary schooling. Zone 5 are those learners who drop out of Grades 8 or 9 and Zone 6 are the young people of any age who are at-risk in these two years of lower secondary school.

Consequently, the research is more concerned with Zones 3, 5 and 6, the high risk zones of dropout or silent exclusion during basic education. The research states that even though most learners in South Africa are enrolled in school and attend Grades 1 to 9, it does not mean that problems of access to basic education have been solved. Their study shows that almost all school-age children do enrol in schools, with below 2 percent of learners that never enter a school. It indicates that Zone 1 is less of a concern than the other zones of exclusion. The study states that most learners stay in school through to the end of primary school, with 88 percent of learners completing Grade 7 in 2003. The statistical figure does not take into

account repetition and dropout in Zone 2 (Motala et al., 2007). The data indicates that there has been significant improvement in the completion rate of basic education between 1997 and 2003 and there was an increase from 78 percent in 1997 to 92 percent in 2003 in Zone 5.

According to Motala et al., (2007, p. 167): "... South Africa's enrolment rate is high even in circumstances where households have experienced economic or social stress but social dropout continues".

They state that child labour does not disrupt enrolment in schools, even though child labour is widespread in the country. Another reason they identify is HIV/AIDS, which according to them, "... seems to have a greater impact on the school attendance of older teenagers rather than younger children. They say that there appears to be a routine of school-going in South Africa which may even provide a measure of stability for households in times of crisis".

### **2.5.1 Lack of finance and income**

Motala et al., (2007) identify another cause of dropout which is "... parents having difficulties in paying school fees".

One way to counteract dropout according to Motala et al., (2007, p.192) is to make sure

...the fee-free school policy is implemented in the poorest schools. On the other hand, the costs of transport, school uniforms, books and stationery add extra burdens to the already-stretched household budgets. Amongst the costs of schooling, transport expenses are the single greatest impediment to educational access for those who do not walk to school. A number of studies have gauged that cash transfers to poor families, such as the Child Support Grant, have a positive effect on enrolment, especially in ensuring learners begin Grade 1 at the appropriate age", which ensures that learners remain in school.

### **2.5.2 Race, gender and cultural reasons for dropout**

Race, gender and cultural reasons are also cited as reasons for dropout in CREATE (2008).

The following is stated in the paper.

That racism, sexism, bullying and xenophobia, also contributed to the unwelcoming conditions in schools. It states that given apartheid's legacy, the problem of racial integration in schools has received a great deal of attention – although proportionately, multi-racial schools are in a minority. They say that while schools are no longer allowed to discriminate on the basis of race, a number of exclusionary devices have limited access to comparatively better resourced ex-whites-only schools. That is their geographic location, far from where most black learners live; their high fees; and their often unwelcoming cultural ethos which exists. The gender of learners is also stated as a factor as it has a direct impact on educational access and performance. Patriarchal male attitudes and behaviour toward schoolgirls is a matter of serious concern, with girls frequently encountering rape, abuse, harassment and assault by male classmates and educators as reported. Also pregnancy was noted as an important factor in schoolgirls dropping out. The study found that there are more girls than boys in the system from Grades 6 to 12, and girls are less likely than boys to regard education as irrelevant (CREATE, 2008).

### **2.5.3 Learning barriers and dropout**

Another reason to drop out is learners who cannot perform academically. They struggle to cope in the classroom. Motala et al. (2007) state that:

...poor performance or silent exclusion may be a result of learning disabilities, – though this is likely to affect a small minority of children. While educational policy emphasises mainstreaming children with learning barriers into ordinary schools, no additional financing has been allocated to support this, so children with learning barriers do not receive the necessary support.

#### **2.5.4 Parents' educational level and family background**

Motala et al., (2007) cite another reason for parents and caregivers' inability to provide for their children. They state

...that parents and guardians are not always able to provide the necessary background and knowledge of schooling to support their children – and this may provide at least one clue to why many learners fail and repeat Grades. Correlations between mothers' and children's educational levels are really only significant if mothers have been substantially schooled. Not unexpectedly, educated parents are more likely to provide support for learning and to send their children to better schools.

#### **2.6 Post-apartheid policy on educational access**

With the drawing up of the Interim Constitution (1993) and the adoption thereof, equal education became for the first time a fundamental human right for all South Africans. The Bill of Rights of the final Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996b) provides that:

“29. [1] Everyone has the right –

- (a) to a basic education, including adult basic education; and
- (b) to further education, which the state, through reasonable measures, must make progressively available and accessible.

[2] Everyone has the right to receive education in the official language or languages of their choice in public educational institutions where that education is reasonably practicable. In order to ensure the effective access to, and implementation of, this right, the state must consider all reasonable educational alternatives, including single-medium institutions taking into account –

(a) equity;

(b) practicability; and

(c) the need to redress the results of past racially discriminatory laws and practices”.

Following this line, Veriava (2005, p.3), maintains that the right to education is not like other socio-economic rights, like access to housing and health care. She states that the right to basic education is unqualified and may be interpreted as enjoying ‘a higher normative status as an immediately enforceable right’ (Veriava, 2005, p. 3). She argues that “... the State has a positive duty to provide basic education”, but she says that in order to assess whether the State has met its obligation it is necessary to “define the content of the right to basic education and to measure the actual level of achievement against the standard set by the right” (2005, p. 3). This entails taking into account international law as well as the South African social and historical contexts. Veriava asserts that a primary requirement is that “... education is both physically and economically accessible to those who were previously denied access”. In addition, “the quality of education should ensure that learners are able to develop to their full potential and to compete on equal terms with each other for jobs and for access to institutions of higher learning” (Veriava, 2005, p. 3).

Similarly, Fleisch and Shindler (2007) highlight that:

Everyone has the right to a basic education and progressive availability of further education as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996). According to the Constitution, *The act [s 3(1)]* also made it compulsory for all children to attend school from the first school day of the year in which they reach the age of seven years until the last school day of the year in which they reach the age of fifteen or the end of Grade 9. This framework legislation embodies the South African government’s commitment to principles in the ‘Education for All’ Dakar 2000 Declaration and the Millennium Development Goals.

Fleisch and Schindler (2007) suggest that to bring the 408,000 out of school 7-15 year-olds into schools will require intervention from a variety of agencies.

According to the National Youth Policy Document (March 2009) there is no reliable data in South Africa on school-aged-out-of school youth due to the fluid nature of the lives of these youth and their reluctance to engage with authorities. These young men and women can be described as those who have dropped out of school prematurely and are unskilled. These youth lack basic Literacy and Numeracy; they remain marginalised from the economy since they lack the capabilities to access economic opportunities. At present there are limited programmes aimed at addressing the needs of these youth.

It is a well-substantiated fact that far too many learners drop out of school (Downing & Vette, 1994, p. 1). Recent studies have addressed the urgency of correcting this situation (Downing & Vette, 1994, p. 1) if the commitment to equal and appropriate education for all (South African Constitutional Assembly, 1996) is to be achieved.

Current strategies and programmes have largely been insufficient or inappropriate with regard to the needs of children and youth who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion. Programmes that target various marginalised and excluded groups are functioning outside the mainstream – special programmes, specialised institutions, and specialist educators. The urgency to address the needs of learners who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion through responsive educational opportunities was pointed out in the Dakar World Education Forum in April 2000.

The challenge is to ensure that the vision of Education for All as an inclusive concept is reflected in national government and funding agency policies. It means that Education for All must take account of the need of the poor and the most disadvantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads, and ethnic, and linguistic minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health; and those with special learning needs. (Expanded commentary on the Dakar Framework for Action, para 19)

Martin (n.d.) states that social inclusion is the process through which we value all individuals and recognise their diverse contributions to communities. He states that all children have the right and entitlement to be socially included in their school and educational setting. Therefore he says that social inclusion is important because all children have a right to a good education, to feel valued, to have the opportunity to fulfil their potential and take part in educational opportunities with their peers.

Martin (n.d.) further states that social inclusion helps build a climate in which good learning can take place, encouraging respect and tolerance for others, educating for citizenship and laying the foundations for lifelong learning.

He argues that it is about enabling individuals to participate effectively in economic, social, political and cultural life. He also says that social inclusion is about reducing inequalities so that the least advantaged have opportunities equalling those of the rest of society. Therefore he says that social inclusion is about enabling children and young people to achieve more than they thought possible, irrespective of socio-economic background, gender, race or levels of ability and disability. He states that in effect, social inclusion is the process through which we value all individuals and recognise their diverse contributions to communities.

South Africa with a “newly formed state-initiated policy” wants to create an enabling policy environment to effect inclusion of all learners. There are two threads to this enabling policy environment. The first is the passing of a series of laws that would define the direction, intention and desired goals of a non-racial inclusive society and education system. The second is to create and establish a number of structural mechanisms which would project, promote and monitor the enabling policy environment. In short, the post-apartheid South African environment is one that attempts to redefine the exclusionary constructions of apartheid and to reconfigure these in ways that are more inclusive of all the people of South Africa. The Preamble of the Constitution of the ‘new’ South Africa (1996, p.1) states “We, therefore, through our freely elected representatives, adopt this Constitution as the supreme law of the Republic”. Four of the most meaningful declarations of the Constitution are reiterated in this important document. In the new South Africa the citizens will strive to

Heal the divisions of the past and establish a society based on democratic values, social justice and fundamental human rights;

Lay the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people and every citizen is equally protected by the law;

Improve the quality of life of all citizens and free the potential of each person; and

Build a united and democratic South Africa able to take its rightful place as a sovereign state in the family of nations. (Preamble of the Constitution of South Africa, 1996: p.1).

Inclusion and exclusion in the post-apartheid situation constitute a phenomenon that speaks directly to the apartheid past.

The schooling system needs to address exclusion from education by ensuring that all learners eligible for education, including those from deprived backgrounds, are made part of education programmes and they need to be aware of the inclusion incentives. These inclusion incentives could be through an inclusive system that secures funding, resources and mechanisms of distribution that will ensure the provision of compulsory education to all students; also by economic access through strategies which reduce the cost of education, such as scholarships and conditional and unconditional cash grants; by ensuring that schools in wealthy areas that are usually inaccessible to students from poorer areas address the politics and culture of difference through the curriculum, to help ensure that they do not remain islands of exclusion.

## **2.7 International interventions to address dropout**

Interventions to reduce dropping out are: school-related factors, financial support, quality interventions and other educational interventions (Hunt, 2008).

Most of the programmes are preventative programmes for students prone to drop out who are still in school. Wolman, Bruininks and Thurlow, (1989, pp. 6-20) suggest the following preventative programmes:

...re-entry programmes for out of school youth or students who have already dropped out of school.

An individualised approach to teaching and learning, flexibility in the curriculum and in school hours, basic skills instruction, small-size classes, low student-teacher ratios, development of alternative educational programs and settings, greater training of staff and enforcement of attendance policies.

Vocational education, employment preparation and job training

Counselling, personal development and improvement of self-esteem

Health care and family planning education, childcare programmes, prenatal guidance and parenting support services, involvement of parents, family intervention and parental training.

In a study by Azzam (2007 p. 91), students responded by suggesting five actions that schools could take to improve students' chances of completing school:

Students said that schools should be more engaging through real-world, experiential learning. They want to see the connection between school and work.

They want to see improvement in instruction and support for struggling learners. They suggest better teachers, smaller classes, more individualised instruction, more tutoring, and extra time with teachers.

They want to see an improve school climate. A majority of students believed that schools need greater supervision and classroom discipline. More than half said schools should do more to protect students from violence.

They want to ensure that students have a relationship with at least one adult in the school. Only 56 percent of students said that they could go to a staff person for help with school problems; only 41 percent said that they could talk to an adult in school about personal problems.

Also an improvement in the communication between parents and schools. Fewer than half of students said that their schools contacted them or their parents when they were absent or had dropped out.

Azzam (2007, p. 91) suggests a multipronged approach to dealing with the dropout epidemic. According to Azzam, schools and communities should promote experiential learning, smaller learning communities, and alternative schools. They should strengthen communication with parents to ensure that students come to school. He suggests that schools need to develop

“...district wide early-warning systems - tracking absenteeism, for example – to identify students at-risk of dropping out and provide more support”.

He also suggests that the state should raise the legal dropout age to 18 and develop data systems that accurately reflect graduation and dropout rates. In addition he recommends that the government should provide incentives under the No Child Left Behind agreement (NCLB), for schools to raise test scores and graduation rates. Finally he suggests that the government needs to evaluate dropout prevention programmes and help disseminate best practices.

Inclusive education as an approach seeks to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalisation and exclusion. The principle of inclusive education was adopted at the Salamanca World conference on Special Needs Education (UNESCO, 1994) and was restated at the Dakar Education Forum (2000).

In those terms inclusive education means that

...schools should accommodate all children regardless of their physical, intellectual, social, emotional, linguistic or other conditions. This should include disabled and gifted children, street and working children, children from remote or nomadic populations, children from linguistic, ethnic or cultural minorities and children from other disadvantaged or marginalised areas or groups.

## **2.8 Interventions to address dropout in South Africa**

Some scholars recommend policy interventions identified by the National Youth Policy Document (2009-2014) to provide out of school youth with second chances to complete their

education that would enable them to compete in the open labour market. It is therefore recommended by the National Youth Policy (March 2009, pp. 23- 39) that the DoE should:

Review ABET to ensure that it better responds to the skills demand that appeals to and attract young people;

and that the government and the private sector should introduce flexible, out of school pathways through which young people who left school prematurely can complete their secondary education and obtain their National Senior Certificate; and that the Departments of Social Development, Education, Arts and Culture in partnership with civil society organisations should design early intervention programmes targeting children and youth as a means to foster internalisation of rights, responsibility, and respect for self.

The Departments of Education and Social Development should ensure that schools and community centres are accessible and are safe places for young people throughout the day to reduce the risk of young people being victimised.

In 2001 the DoE in their National Plan for Higher Education recognised the need for second-chance education. Their report states:

“There may be greater demand for second-chance education by learners returning to education after an absence from the system, or for more flexible learning opportunities for those who are ill, caregivers, or wage earners.” (DoE, 2001)

This notion of establishing a second-chance education system was supported in a speech by the Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor, in 2008, at the Pan African TVET and FET Conference, when she suggested that:

Education cannot be separated from training. Basic and secondary education is the foundation on which an

effective vocational and training system should be built. Good quality basic education and initial training, availability of adult and second-chance education, together with a learning culture, ensure high levels of participation in continuous education and training.

Second –chance education in South Africa should be viewed as a corrective measure and a necessity for those who dropped out, and should provide components addressing the youth-at-risk cohort, according to National Youth Policy (March 2009).

The Education Department has introduced a number of initiatives and incentives for children to come to school (DoE, 2008). These initiatives to reduce repetition and dropout and facilitating parents to send their children to schools. One of the life-saving programmes is the National School Nutrition Programme. This programme is aimed at improving access to quality education. Although the programme initially catered only for primary school learners, since 2008, the budget of the programme has been progressively extended to include poor learners in secondary schools as well. In 2009, it provided meals to more than 7 million learners in over 20 000 schools. 6 million primary school learners benefitted from this programme in 2009/10, while close to 1 million secondary school learners did so. The Department intends to increase the number of secondary school learners who benefit from this programme in 2011/12. Further innovative programmes include no-fee schools, the workbook project, expansion of grade R, reduction of teacher administrative workload, adequate provision of textbooks, education for All Campaign and full service schools that ensure education for learners with disabilities. Details about all these programmes are briefly summarised below.

No-fee schools: The no-fee school policy is an initiative aimed at improving education access for poor learners. It stipulates that schools that have a no-fee status are not permitted to charge fees to parents (although it does not exclude voluntary contributions and the hosting of fund-raising events). In 2010, about 70% of learners (over 8 million learners) in 81% of public schools (close to 20 000) benefitted from the no-fee policy.

The Workbook Project: The Department has been distributing millions of workbooks to public schools since January this year. These workbooks are intended for learners in Grades 1 to 6, in language and mathematics subjects and are available in all 11 languages. Workbooks are designed to assist teachers who have large classes and who may not necessarily have access to stimulating reading material for learners. The workbooks will relieve teachers of having to write up lessons and exercises on the chalk-board, or struggling to produce their own worksheets when the school does not have photocopy facilities. In turn, learners may find lessons more interesting and the work they do more stimulating. This could therefore encourage learners to attend school.

Expansion of Grade R: The Department has expanded the provision of Grade R in schools dramatically over the past decade. The number of learners enrolled in Grade R in schools increased from about 300 000 in 1999, to over 600 000 in 2009. The Department intends to expand Grade R provisioning even further by improving the quality of Grade R provided by schools. Studies indicate that a child who attends pre-primary programmes is likely to remain longer in the education system.

Reduction of teacher administrative workload: The Minister of Basic Education undertook several initiatives in 2010 to reduce the administrative workload of teachers. These include the discontinuance of learner portfolios and the number of projects that learners are expected to undertake. These initiatives intend to facilitate more teaching time and greater attention to learners, thereby increasing opportunity to learn. Studies have indicated that improved opportunities to learn will reduce repetition, which in turn, is likely to reduce dropout since repetition is a strong predictor of dropout.

Textbooks: The Department has encouraged provincial education departments to set aside budgets to ensure that learners are provided a textbook for every subject. Parents whose children are in public schools are therefore not expected to purchase textbooks for their children, and reduces the cost of schooling for parents. It is expected therefore that parents will have little reason for not sending their children to school.

Education for All Campaign: One of the legacies of the Soccer World Cup hosted by SA in 2010, was the Education for All Campaign, which highlights the importance of education for

children. A number of NGO's and CBO's, including Radio FM, have organised media campaigns that spell out the advantages of education. Such campaigns encourage parents to enrol their children in schools and other education programmes. Furthermore, the Department has established a special ministerial project which identified 585 schools with high levels of crime and violence and undertook special interventions to reduce school violence and drug taking, infrastructure, (fences, lighting, metal detectors etc.), sponsorships of sports and cultural programmes and development of partnerships with relevant government departments and Business Against Crime.

Full Service Schools were established, that would ensure that learners with disabilities have access to education. (DoE, 2008).

## **2.9 Social cohesion and civic participation as an intervention**

Social cohesion is referred to as the process through which individuals or groups are included to participate fully in the society in which they live (National Youth Policy, March 2009). In youth development, social cohesion allows young people to participate and engage in activities that build their social capital, networks and strengthen the relations that bind people together. These interactions with others strengthen young people's identity, build their self-esteem, develop a sense of belonging, close intergenerational gaps, and also contribute to a better life for all. This connectedness fosters a sense of belonging that will propel young people to reach their personal goals and develop their full capacity. Social cohesion helps young people to become aware of themselves, their rights and responsibilities. Social cohesion also has to do with nurturing a shared value system based on the tenets of the South African Constitution that speaks to respect and dignity for self and others.

The following policy gap which has been identified from my data collection indicates the nature of the challenges that National Youth Policy (2009-2014), needs to address to foster social cohesion.

## **2.10 Social and economic inclusion**

As mentioned above when young people enter a cycle of poverty it furthers their alienation, marginalisation and exclusion. This in turn may lead to premature school exit,

unemployment, possible incorporation into alternative or antisocial behaviours and criminal activity. This vicious cycle of impoverishment is reinforced and reproduced by the lack of adequate training and development opportunities, the lack of gainful employment opportunities and the lack of access to a basic subsistence which reinforces the vicious cycle that youth find themselves in.

Literature reveals the nature and extent of the learner dropout phenomenon in South Africa (ESAR 2000; Hanushek, 2003; HRW (Human Rights Watch), 2006; Motala et al., 2007; Mgwangqa & Lawrence, 2008) in many publications, but much less has been written about the dropouts who actually return to school. There is evidence that some dropouts do return to school to complete their schooling (McLaughlin, 1990). The Illinois Task Force (2008), submits that in different countries around the world many of the youth who dropped out of school are in fact learners who would like to return to earn their school-leaving certificates.

There are both 'push' and 'pull' factors in learners' motivation to drop out and return to school. The literature describes labour market experiences that push learners back into school to complete their education – wider employment prospects, higher earnings, higher skills demands, disappointing labour market experiences, recognition of the economic benefits obtained from completing school. Principals, teachers, sport coaches, and counsellors help to pull dropouts back to primary and secondary school by offering to re-enrol them and by providing counselling and academic assistance on their return. This is particularly the case in developed countries (Berliner et al., 2008; Rumberger & Lamb, 1998; Bushnik, Barr-Telford & Bussiere, 2004; Raymond, 2008).

## **2.11 Conclusion**

It is therefore clear that current educational policies are signalling the need for interventions to address dropout and create 'drop in' opportunities.

## CHAPTER 3

# CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK: CAPABILITY THEORY, EDUCATION, SOCIAL EXCLUSION, SOCIAL INCLUSION AND SECOND- CHANCE EDUCATION

### 3.1 Introduction

For the purposes of this study I have developed a theoretical framework which incorporates a capability theory, education policy and practice, social exclusion and social inclusion effects on children's quality of life. The chapter starts with a brief discussion of the research question and the main aim of the study. It is then followed by a discussion of key concepts specifically focusing on the different concepts of what social exclusion entails. The next section looks at social exclusion and educational inequality as well as at the impact of social exclusion on children. This section also takes into account the link between social exclusion and dropout. The fourth section looks at the capability theory and social inclusion. It also deals with Sen's critique of mainstream welfare economics and utilitarianism. The conceptual and theoretical framework is framed by the social exclusion theory and Sen's (1985), capabilities theory to analyse 'dropout' as a form of exclusion and alternative schools as forms of capability development and social inclusion. Sen's capability approach and education is outlined in detail in the fifth section. In the sixth section of this chapter a capability-based theory of social justice for education policy making is examined, also looking at capabilities for educational assessment and capabilities from education policy. The chapter concludes with the section on second-chance education. The following short section provides another look at the research questions and the main aim of the study.

### 3.2 Research questions

As I mentioned in Chapter One the two research questions that need to be answered in this study are: *How has capability development facilitated the social inclusion of learners who have dropped out of school? And what are the reasons for dropout?*

The key focus of the research is to investigate an initiative which addresses the social exclusion of children who have dropped out of school, the problem of over-age learners and exclusion and inclusion amongst learners. The aim of the study therefore is to generate new

knowledge about the relationship between capability theory, school dropout, social exclusion and social inclusion.

### 3.3 Social exclusion, concepts and perspectives

‘Social exclusion’ is one of the key concepts in the study. Various scholars have defined and described this term in different ways. The term ‘social exclusion’ has its origins in reference by Rene Lenoir who referred to it as a “... state or situation by which people are excluded, as consisting not only of the poor but of a wide variety of people, namely the social misfits”. (1974, 1989, p. 113)

It was originally used to refer to various types of social disadvantage, related to the new social problems that arose: unemployment, ghettoisation and fundamental changes in family life (Cannan, 1997). Redmond defines social exclusion as

In Room (1995),

...the processes in society that lead some people to being excluded from a range of institutions, activities, or environments: the ‘denial’ or non-realisation of civil, political, and social rights of citizenship. Social exclusion may be carried out on the basis of, for example, race, ethnicity, socio-economic difference and class (Redmond, D. cited in Room 1995. p. 115)

Two further researchers, Dieltiens and Meny-Gibert (2008, p.11), view social exclusion in a different light. According to them

...social exclusion is concerned with the experiences of poverty and its inequitable outcomes and processes that lead to exclusion”. Social exclusion can be either by the institution excluding the learner for non-payment, or for not having a uniform etc., or about the community and institution acting in concert to exclude via the SGB (School Governing Body), or about the child’s peers making him/her feel like an outsider or inadequate – or about the child feeling conscious of his/her difference.

Based on the perception of the above scholars the concept social exclusion has defining characteristics. It is a multi-dimensional concept based on which people may be socially

excluded for different reasons, for example, from livelihoods, employment, earnings, property, housing, minimum consumption, education, the welfare state and citizenship (Silver, 1994). Sen (1985), supports this multi-dimensional view. Social exclusion is a multi-dimensional concept which covers economic, social and political aspects: it deals with the failure to attain adequate levels of various functioning areas.

Sullivan (2000), states that the concept of social exclusion provides a framework for understanding the interconnectedness of life circumstances, social categorisations and social problems, such as poor health, crime and unemployment. She continues that social exclusion may be experienced by individuals and by groups or communities and that it has become a driver for policy development and service delivery at both levels. She says that interventions are as varied as the social problems they are designed to deal with, but they implicitly rely on the participation and involvement of individuals, groups and communities toward achieving social inclusion for themselves.

Sullivan (2000, p. 48), sees social exclusion in a different light. According to her, this concept may be understood in terms of identity. Sullivan argues that "... individuals may experience social exclusion in terms of its consequences for their personal identity, while groups and communities may experience exclusion in terms of its consequences for the collective identity".

Sullivan (2000, p.48), explains that if interventions are designed to help excluded communities, based on an implicit assumption that the individuals in the community share an idea of what the community is - i.e. share a collective identity; where no such shared identity exists, there is likely to be a poor outcome. Similarly, when interventions are designed to increase social capital in a target community, an assumption of community identity may or may not be justified. Some methods of intervention may need to begin with the aim of increasing the collective identity of a community before other strategies can be fully successful. Sullivan (2000), mentions some examples of how identity theories may be applied to aid understanding of socially excluded individuals and communities.

The social identity paradigm presented by Hogg and Abrams (1988), offers a number of insights to social exclusion and social capital. According to Kramer et al., (2001, p. 175), willingness to be involved in – and trust behaviour in situations that require collective action is tied to the 'salience and strength of their identification with a group and its members'. In

addition, Branscombe et al., (1999), find that high identifiers respond to threat to their collective or group by, amongst other things, increasing their identification with it, while low identifiers further 'dis-identify' themselves from the group when it is threatened.

Branscombe et al., (1999), state that these high identifiers might be crucial points in social exclusion terms. They contend that where members of a group have begun to dis-identify with social exclusion in order to cope with loss of the positive collective identity, disengagement and loss of trust may lead to a downward spiral of further threat to the collective identity, which in turn invokes further dis-identification from it, in a vicious circle.

They also state that if people do not classify themselves as 'excluded' they are unlikely to identify with the programmes designed by social agencies to include them socially. The socially constructed nature of 'exclusion' means that those deemed 'excluded' by the establishment may enjoy inclusion and identification with alternative social groups and not wish to participate in programmes designed by those who create them.

Socially excluded people may have very few alternative groups or categorisations from which to gain a positive identity, so dis-identification may become a chronic problem to the point that they are unable and unwilling to identify with the social category 'socially excluded', or any category designed to alleviate social exclusion. This is the reason, according to Branscombe et al., (1999, p. 43), "... why it can be difficult to involve particularly excluded individuals and groups in strategies to solve their problems".

'Possible selves' (Markus and Nurius, 1986), is a theory at the individual level developed to explain the connection between present self, motivation, behaviour and possible or future self. It can also be applied to collective identity (Sullivan, 2000). Sullivan (2000, p. 53), states that "... it offers an explanation of the connection between an imagined future self, the motivational force needed to achieve or avoid the future self, and behaviours that will realise or prevent it at both individual and collective identity levels".

The 'Possible selves' theory might also inform interventions to alleviate social exclusion of groups or communities, provided the individuals that comprise them share a strong sense of collective identity.

Kahne and Bailey (1999), describe a very successful intervention, the 'I have a Dream' programme, in which social capital building in the form of trust was initiated, together with

individually tailored empowerment information and services, which encouraged significantly larger numbers of at-risk high school students to graduate from high school and enter college than in previous years. “The result was that incipient social exclusion, in the form of dropping out of school, for a number of children was ameliorated by the release of social capital and a programme which drew implicitly on ‘possible selves’ theory” (Kahne and Bailey, 1999, p. 333).

School dropout as an option means thousands of individual young people risking a tragic situation when thinking about their own future. Various studies have been undertaken into the causes of school-leaving; all show that the reasons for leaving education are specific to the individual. I see dropout as a form of social exclusion and will use the term to explain why learners are excluded and could thus drop out of school.

Brian Barry (2002), and Julian Le Grand (2003), question the fact whether social exclusion is or should be based on the concerns for welfare or for fairness. This follows on whether voluntary social or social isolation, as Barry (2002), calls it, should be the concern of a social exclusion policy. They ask if a person has chosen not to be part of society whether policy should attempt to override that person’s choices in order to promote his/her welfare. Therefore social exclusion in practice faces the problem of paternalism and raises the question of what justifies social exclusion as a normative concern.

Barry (2002), and Le Grand (2003), are also concerned with choice, welfare and fairness. Barry distinguishes between the fact of exclusion and the cause of concern with social exclusion. This is due to the fact that there are forms of social exclusion which are voluntary and therefore those individuals who voluntarily exclude themselves should not be forced to include themselves. “Social exclusion, even if voluntary, should be reduced in the sense that there should be opportunities for inclusion, even when that option will not be chosen” (Barry, 2002, p. 18).

Barry justifies his view that social exclusion is normatively bad based on the fact that social exclusion can be a symptom or cause of social injustice. He contends that social exclusion can lead to exclusion from “unequal educational and educational opportunities”. (Barry, 2002, p.20). He also states that social exclusion can lead to lack of access to political participation. Therefore he argues that social exclusion can be seen as a cause for concern because it violates the demand for social justice. Social exclusion is normatively bad,

according to Barry, since it reduces social solidarity. Barry argues that it can be intrinsically bad because it lacks social solidarity, and he claims that the individuals in a group who are voluntarily or involuntarily excluded, are not good in either group.

Le Grand (2003), argues, “If an individual voluntarily excludes or isolates him/herself, then it is a matter of choice. It is their choice, it must therefore be good for that individual and must promote their welfare. This is also known in normative economics”.

According to Le Grand (2003), there are a number of problems connected with the idea of a revealed preference for welfarism. First, while the choice is their own, the effects of their actions may not be chosen by others. The second is that the incidence of welfare and choice is imperfect. There are various forms of so-called individual failure, which result in social exclusion; this is where an individual chooses to be excluded from society, but this choice is bad for that individual, who did not know any better. On welfarist grounds, it may be decided that it is best for that individual to be included in certain activities even if he does not want to be included. The categories of individual failure are: failures to calculate probabilities correctly, emotional decision making, lack of self-control, and the lack of relevant experience or knowledge in making choices.

Social exclusion can therefore be seen as normatively bad because it can decrease welfare and can be seen as violation of an understanding of equality.

### **3.3.1 Social exclusion and educational inequality**

Levitas (2005), identifies three discourses of social exclusion “... lack of resources, exclusion from education, and moral deficiencies”.

In contrast to Alexiadou (2002, p. 36), who argues “... there is no consensus or consistence of the social exclusion discourses in relation to education policy”, other scholars like Rawls (1971), argue that social exclusion is fair when all social primary goods are to be distributed equally unless an unequal distribution of these goods is to the advantage of the least favoured.

Sen’s capability approach (Sen, 1979; 1990; 2000), highlights ‘the central and basic things that people can do and be’ and this approach is seen as an alternative to tackling social exclusion. Evans, Paugham, and Prellis (1995), Atkinson (1998a), and Klasen (1998), state

that social exclusion is concerned with the inability of individuals to participate effectively in economic, social, and cultural life and, in some aspects they are alienated and distanced from mainstream society. These scholars profess that social exclusion is primarily concerned with the relationship between the individual and society, and the dynamics of the relationship. Klasen (1998), asserts that social exclusion can be seen as socially generated barriers that reduce the ability of the excluded individuals to interact with society.

### **3.4 Social exclusion and children**

On the Convention of the Rights of the Child and national legislation governing the rights of children UNICEF (1989), (BMFSFJ, 1998) declared: “Children are citizens entitled to rights and capabilities and social exclusion is an issue violating their rights and capabilities directly”

The UNICEF (1989) Convention on the Rights of the Child was signed and ratified by the majority of countries in the world. The rights that may be relevant to social inclusion and exclusion are the following:

1. Of relevance is Article 28, which states:

Parties recognise the right of the child to education (...) and on the basis of equal opportunity shall, in particular make primary education compulsory and available free to all; encourage the development of different forms of secondary education (..), make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need; (...) take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of dropout rates; (...).

2. Article 29 states:

Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential (...); the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship amongst all peoples, ethnic, national, and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.

Therefore one can say that since children are growing to be adults, their decisions, choices, and opportunities in childhood will affect their position as adults and the impact of their economic, social, educational, and psychological development on their status as adults will have to be examined.

One answer to the question, how does a child suffer from social exclusion? Is provided by Sen (1985), when he refers to the capabilities approach.

...one can define social exclusion as the inability to participate in, and be recognised by society. This includes participation in society and recognition of people by society in terms of equality or equal opportunity. To refine the capability failure would be to define more specific rights and capabilities that are necessary for the child to be able to interact equally in, and be recognised as an equal by the rest of society.

Berghman (1995), distinguishes between four types of integration and participation: civic integration relating to the democratic and legal system, economic integration mainly related to employment, social integration related to the inclusion in the public safety net, and family and community integration relating to networks. When failing to meet any of these rights for whatever reasons, it could be seen as social exclusion.

Education can be considered as one of the most important factors affecting the development of children. Education has great intrinsic significance as access to education is an important right (see Article 28 of the Convention), and being educated is an important and valuable capability. Also, gaining an education is an important participatory process for children and equal access for all to this process allows participation in society and respect by society. In the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries education was viewed as an inclusionary part of the education process, and the fostering of citizenship through education was seen as more important than the skills one may acquire through education (Rothschild, 1998).

However, education can be looked at in a different way. Education can also be seen as a source of exclusion for children and carry with it the intrinsic problems this exclusion involves. It can be exclusionary if the process of education fails to promote equal participation and access.

Educational policies can promote social exclusion as adults. This happens through educational policies that promote social exclusion amongst children which then translate into social exclusion as adults, or policies that fail to prepare some disadvantaged children adequately to be well integrated in the economic and social life of adult society.

#### **3.4.1 Social exclusion and dropout**

The lack of adequate literacy does not only lead to the uncertain chances of finding employment opportunities, but also to the issues of unemployment and crime. Literacy and the school are seen as a means to access certain essential services in society. The social capital of the students' families is an important component of the regular schooling paths, which can form and influence the individuals' personal background. Difficult literacy conditions in the early stages of life can bring about a greater chance of abandonment during the later stages and could lead to antisocial behaviour.

There is an agreement amongst scholars about the negative effects of high rates of school dropouts and some countries introduced special policies to reintegrate them into school life (Kanamugire and Rutakamize, 2008). The effects on the dropout induce long-term negative consequences for people involved and are likely to remain excluded from society. In cases like these government intervention plays an essential role in reducing systemic damages. This can be done if huge investments in educational policy and literacy support happen, aimed at poor and vulnerable population groups (Cameron 2009).

#### **3.5 The capability theory and social inclusion**

Mitchell and Shillington (1958, p.38), state that social inclusion is a complex and challenging concept that cannot be reduced to only one dimension or meaning. They have identified five critical dimensions, or cornerstones of social inclusion:

Valued recognition – Conferring recognition and respect on individuals and groups. This includes recognising the differences in children's development and, therefore, not equating disability with pathology; supporting community schools that are sensitive to cultural and gender differences; and extending the

notion to recognising common worth through universal programmes such as health care.

Human development – Nurturing the talents, skills, capacities and choices of children and adults to live a life they value and to make a contribution both they and others find worthwhile. Examples include learning and developmental opportunities for all children and adults; community child care and recreation programs for children that are growth-promoting and challenging rather than merely custodial.

Involvement and engagement – Having the right and the necessary support to make/be involved in decisions affecting oneself, family and community, and to be engaged in community life. Examples include: youth engagement and control of services for youth; parental input into school curriculum or placement decisions affecting their child; citizen engagement and municipal policy decisions; and political participation.

Proximity – Sharing physical and social spaces to provide opportunities for interactions, if desired, and to reduce social distances between people. This includes shared public spaces such as parks and libraries; mixed income neighbourhoods and housing; and integrated schools and classrooms.

Material well-being – Having the material resources to allow children and their parents to participate fully in community life. This includes being safely and securely housed with an adequate income.

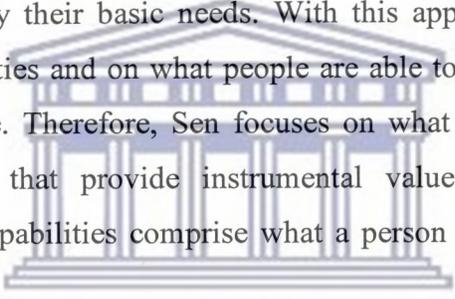
### **3.5.1 Sen's critique of mainstream welfare economics and utilitarianism**

Sen (1979), and his associates started in the 1970's to build a critique of mainstream welfare economics and utilitarianism, and extended and amended a framework used in microeconomics, describing how individuals obtain income and well-being. Sen (1980), introduces the concept of capability in his paper 'Equality of What?' He criticises the

argument that the evaluation of equality should only be based on information about people's sense of happiness or desire fulfilment, or on their command of primary goods (Gore, 1997).

Sen (1999), points out that even with resources and equality among citizens, there is no guarantee that near universal access will be achieved. Sen's capability theory is motivated by dissatisfaction with utilitarianism, libertarianism and Rawlsianism which lies 'in the failure of standard theories to take adequate account of forms of deprivation and inequality' (Vizard and Burchardt, 2007, p. 15). Sen (1999), disputes Rawls' resources-based concept of justice and argues that the focus of social justice should be put on distribution of capabilities.

Sen adopts the 'basic needs' perspective in his earliest challenges to utilitarian economics. In this approach he emphasises the notion that people have to meet fundamental needs to achieve well-being. Sen points out that per capita income is not an adequate measure of a person's well-being. In this approach scholars claim that everyone should have access to goods and services to satisfy their basic needs. With this approach Sen focuses more on people and less on commodities and on what people are able to do, rather than what people could buy with their income. Therefore, Sen focuses on what is of intrinsic value in life, rather than on the goods that provide instrumental value or utility (Pressman and Summerfield, 2000, p.9). Capabilities comprise what a person is able to do or be: "... the ability ...



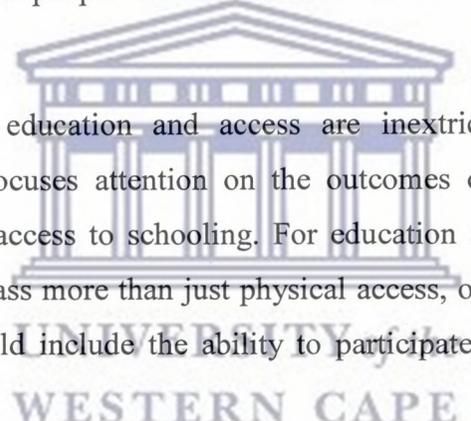
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"... the ability to be well nourished, to avoid escapable morbidity or mortality, to read, write and communicate, to take part in the life of the community, to appear in public without shame" (Sen, 1990, p. 126).

Sen (1995), states that the capability approach is a 'concentration on freedom to achieve in general and the capabilities to function in particular'. Furthermore he argues that functioning is an achievement, whereas a capability is the ability to achieve. He states that functioning properly is more directly related to living conditions. Capabilities, on the other hand are notions of freedom, in the positive sense: what real opportunities you have regarding the life you might lead (Sen, 1987, p. 36). Sen claims that a person's well-being must be evaluated in the light of a form of assessment of the successful functioning achieved by that person (Sen, 1992, p.39). According to him this capability to achieve success reflects the person's real opportunities or freedom of choice between possible lifestyles (Sen, 1993).

Capability 'represents a person's freedom to achieve well-being' (Sen, 1992, p. 48), so that 'acting freely and being able to choose are... directly conducive to well-being' (Sen, 1992, p. 51). He further stresses the importance of choosing a life one has reason to value, that is a life reflectively chosen. Capability is freedom and rationality combined. In education we need to keep in mind that if we aim to develop adult capabilities, this will mean not only capability but also functioning in children in order to produce mature adult capability. Sen's (1999), argument emphasises not only the freedom children may have in the present, but also the freedom they will have in the future. He says that if a child refuses, or is denied or restricted in his or her access to the goods of education (exclusion), this will in turn reduce opportunities in adult life and restrict future individual freedom and agency – therefore, that lifelong education begins with the very young child, and children are key to a better future.

Sen's capability theory (1999, p.10), extends the idea of poverty beyond subsistence measures to include whether people are free to live the life they wanted. Sen's theory highlights the fact that;



...quality of education and access are inextricably linked. The idea of functioning focuses attention on the outcomes of capabilities, such as the outcomes of access to schooling. For education access to mean anything, it must encompass more than just physical access, or getting through the school gates. It should include the ability to participate and engage in meaningful education.

Sen emphasises that education needs to help us in living a meaningful life – or increasing our chances of turning our innate abilities and contexts into capabilities. The capability theory reveals that learners have to perceive that education has meaning. Like the social exclusion theory, the capability theory puts experience right in the centre. One can assess whether a learner has capability (educational utility) by understanding the internalisation of the learner's experience. Sen points out that freedom is not only the primary end of development, it is amongst its principal means (Sen, 1999, p. 10). The example he gives of the interdependence of freedom and individual responsibility is that "A child who is denied the opportunity of elementary schooling is not only deprived as a youngster, but also handicapped all through life" (Sen, 1999, p. 284).

Learners who come to realise their limited capability may conclude that education has little value. A strong relationship that exists between the capability theory and education, but it is contested that Sen never wrote from an educational perspective. It is assumed that since the theory has an economic and philosophical orientation it is difficult to align it with education (Robeyns, 2006 and 2008; Nussbaum, 2000; Walker, (2006), and Unterhalter, 2007).

Several academics and researchers have used Sen's capability approach as a perspective to analyse education. According to Walker (2006), a capability is a potential functioning. She says it might include doings and beings. Walker (2006, p. 163), states:

“The difference between a capability and functioning is like one between an opportunity to achieve and the actual achievement” when she refers to Dreze and Zen's view on the notion of capability- “The notion of capability “is essentially one of freedom – the range of options a person has in deciding what kind of life to lead” (Dreze and Sen, 1995, p. 11).

Walker (2006), further contends that education, according to Sen is an enabling factor in the expansion of freedom for a number of reasons. She points out that, like human capital approaches, education has an instrumental role for each person in helping him or her to do or achieve many things such as getting a job and being able to take up economic opportunities to be inclusive. Dreze and Sen (1995), argue that the “bettering of a human life does not have to be justified by showing that a person with a better life is also a better producer” (Dreze and Sen, 1995, p. 184). They claim that education is also of intrinsic importance in that being educated is a valuable achievement in itself. According to them, education is in itself a basic capability which affects the development and expansion of other capabilities. They maintain that having the opportunity for education and the development of an education capability expands human freedoms. On the other hand, they state that not having education harms human development and having a full life. Dreze and Sen (1995), point out that the opportunity fulfils an instrumental social role in that greater literacy and basic education foster public debate and dialogue about social and political arrangements. Finally they stress that having capabilities can have an empowering and distributive role in facilitating the ability of the disadvantaged, marginalised and excluded individuals to organise politically. They also point out that education has a redistributive effect between social groups, households and within families where better education is shown to reduce gender inequality. They maintain that education contributes to interpersonal effects where people are able to use

the benefits of education to help others and hence contribute to the social good and democratic freedoms. According to them education in the capability theory is an unqualified benefit for human development freedom.

In the South African context, many of our learners are clearly not able to translate educational inputs into 'functionings'. International and national benchmark tests, such as TIMSS and SACMEQ, demonstrate that learners are failing to achieve literacy and numeracy outcomes. The DoE's systemic evaluations at Grade 3 (DoE, 2003), and Grade 6 (DoE, 2005b), levels showed dismal results. In the Grade 6 tests (DoE, 2005b) learners obtained a national mean score of 38% in Language of Learning and Teaching (LOLT), 27% in Mathematics, and 41% in Natural Sciences. According to the results the worst-performing learners came from township, rural and farm schools which are the poorest schools, but other factors may have contributed to their poor results as well. The Grade 6 Systemic Evaluation Report (DoE, 2005b), revealed that learners whose home language is the same as the Language of Learning and Teaching score significantly higher marks than those who learn in a language other than their mother tongue.

"Education has increased its usability of the capability theory as a framework for theorising, implementing and evaluating social policy as a matter of social justice" (Walker, 2006).

The capability theory focuses on what people are able to do and to be, rather than on their material possessions. Despite the increase in interest in the capability theory from an educational perspective, there are debates about its actual impact as a framework on education as a discipline. Education is seen to be unspecified and under-theorised within the space of the capabilities theory (Walker, 2006). (Nussbaum (2000), recognises these shortcomings because capability theory does not spell out a clear list of capability sets that particularly focus on education. How education should be evaluated in terms of what should be measured and the definition of educational equality and inequality is still being contested amongst scholars and policy makers, (Unterhalter, Vaughan and Walker, 2007).

Although Sen portrays the relationship between resources and performance, he does not take into account the difficult settings in which schooling takes place (Saito, 2003). It is suggested that this makes some of the principles of the theory, such as freedom (which is the range of

options people have in deciding what kind of life to lead), inapplicable to minors within the space of education (Unterhalter, 2003; Saito, 2003). This view is based on the premise that if a child is allowed to choose what to do and not to do at an early stage, it could result in irrational decisions that might impact negatively on the child's future. It seems that the application of the capabilities theory to children appears complex and challenging, especially within the space of education.

Sen (1995), acknowledges the gaps and maintains parental intervention is needed with regard to the capabilities of children who may be too young to take rational decisions on their own. Therefore, using the capabilities theory that confirms the need to investigate the inability of some learners to progress or succeed despite existing resources forms the core of the empirical study. If learners are realising that education has not improved their capabilities, it may explain their reluctance to continue schooling beyond Grade 9, when enrolment figures drop. In the senior secondary years, pressure on schools to perform in the matric exams may result in them pushing out learners who are particularly weak and unlikely to succeed. Learners may themselves recognise that they are not coping with the classroom content and may decide that there is little value in pushing through.

### **3.6 Sen's capability approach and education**

Saito (2003), states there seems to be a strong and mutually enhancing relationship between Sen's capability approach and education. Saito (2003), maintains that although Sen is not an educationalist but an economist and philosopher, he has not directly explored the notion of education in his theories. He also adds that Sen's capability approach is appropriate for exploration from an educational point of view.

Saito (2003), agrees that Sen's capability approach seems to be related to education in many ways. He looks at the contribution the capability approach has made to education through the Human Development Index (HDI). The index is a composite of adult literacy and school enrolment, life expectancy at birth, and real domestic product per capita (GDP/N).

The contribution that Sen's capability approach has made is to highlight the concept that education involves both intrinsic and instrumental values. Sen discusses the relationship between capital and human capability as an expression of freedom. Both place humanity at the centre of attention, and to be closely related to each other. Human capital tends to

concentrate on the agency of human beings in augmenting production possibilities (Sen, 1993, p. 293). Human capability also focuses on the ability – the substantive freedom – of people to lead the lives they have reason to value and to enhance the real choices they have.

While human capital is considered to fit into the third, the concept of human capability incorporates all categories. The human capital received from education can be conceived in terms of commodity production. Saito (2003), agrees with Sen who argues that education plays a role not only in accumulating human capital but also in broadening human capability. It could be through a person benefitting from education “... in reading, communicating, arguing, in being able to choose in a more informed way, in being taken more seriously by others and so on” (Sen, 1995, p. 294).

On the other hand education is an important factor in broadening human capabilities, which include human capacities. Human capabilities play a role in influencing both intrinsic and instrumental values. Thus, it seems appropriate to accept that education plays a role in influencing both intrinsic and instrumental values.

Saito asks whether we can discuss the well-being of children as well as adults in terms of capabilities. Few researchers would deny that children need support from parents, teachers or societies in choosing what is best for their lives. When it comes to education the same argument can be made. This is despite the fact that neither parents nor the State have a right to complete authority over the education of children; it seems appropriate to argue that a child remains in the care of others in the choice of what to learn, so that the child’s interest can be facilitated.

Saito (2003, p. 21), agrees that functionings, “... the set of things that a person can do in life in Sen’s sense, are of course important for children; when it comes to capabilities in children, the matter appears complicated and problematic”.

When Saito (2003, p. 28) poses the question: How can we apply the capability approach to children, since children are not mature enough to make decisions by themselves? Sen shows this applicability of the approach in two ways in his response: “First he emphasised the importance not of the freedom a child has now, but of the freedom the child will have in the future” (Sen, 1995).

White (1973), resonates with Sen in relation to education. He claims that adopting an extremely libertarian position vis-à-vis the child is irrational. In other words, making no effort to teach a child anything, since we do not know what is good or bad for the child, does not lead the child to improve his/her well-being. Letting children learn what they wanted in this way might well restrict the range of possible things which they might choose for their own sake, they might fail to learn about other things which might also have been included” (White, 1973, p. 22).

Giving temporary freedom to a child does not always mean that the child will have freedom in future, and similarly, restricting the temporary freedom of a child may also expand the freedom that the child will have in future. Therefore they argue that one has to consider the freedom for a child in a lifelong perspective. For educational guidelines, White (1973), proposes that the least harmful course we can follow is to let a child determine what the good shall be for him or her as far as possible. He claims that as long as we ensure

(a) that he knows about as many activities or ways of life as possible which he may want to choose for their own sake, and (b) that he is able to reflect on priorities amongst them from the point of view not only of the present moment but as far as possible of his life as a whole, it is right to restrict a child’s liberty now so as to give him as much autonomy as possible in future (White, 1973, p. 76).

Some scholars may argue that freedom is less important for a child than an adult since the contemporary well-being of the child is better judged by parents or other adult persons. Sen (1995), points out that the capability approach is still applicable to children. The capability approach of Sen (1995, p. 263) makes two assertions:

That the right perspective from which to judge a person’s well-being is functionings, and not necessarily mental attitudes such as utilities;

that, in judging from the perspective of functionings, we should not merely look at whether a person is enjoying the preferred alternative but whether a person actually has the choice of an alternative freedom to choose.

Sen (1995) defends his view as follows:

It is the second aspect (2) that is weak for the child but the first (1) is not. The functioning space (1) is still appropriate to consider, even the well-being of the child. The freedom aspect (2) is affected but even the freedom aspect may be important for a child because: (i) a child makes some decisions, such as whether he or she is unhappy, wants milk, and so on; and (ii) a child's future involves the time when the child will actually exercise some freedom.

It can be argued that when dealing with children it is the freedom they will have in the future rather than the present that should be considered. Therefore, as long as we consider a person's capabilities in terms of their life-span, the capability approach seems to be applicable to children. The fact that children need to have support from parents, society or others in terms of choosing which capabilities to exercise, will lead us to consider the role education can play in the capability approach.

### **3.7 A capability-based theory of social justice for education policy making**

Walker (2006), argues for Sen's (1992, 1999, Dreze and Sen, 1995) capability approach as the basis for theorising social justice, applied to the specificity of education. According to Walker (2006), Sen (1992, p. 44) identifies education as one of "... a relatively small number of centrally important beings and doings that are crucial to well-being".

Walker reiterates that what we understand by education is also underspecified and under-theorised in the capability approach, either being stated as a clear capability good or being broadly equated with literacy, knowledge or information.

What then is the capability approach? Against economic wealth and income as an indicator of a country's quality of life, and against human capital arguments for judging education only by its success in preparing participants for employment, Sen (1992, 1999), insists on the importance of capabilities to function in making normative evaluations about equality and well-being.

Central to the capability approach, and key in addressing education is Sen's concept of 'agency freedom' by which he means "... someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements are to be judged in terms of her own values and objectives" (Sen, 1999, p. 19).

Sen states that agency is one's ability to pursue goals that one values and that are important for the life an individual wishes to lead; agency and well-being are deeply connected. Because agency is also central to Sen's ideas of the freedom to make choices, a lack of agency or a constrained agency equates to disadvantage, if an individual (or group - see Robeyns, 2003), faces barriers to genuine choice and a life of reflective choices. It then follows that education ought to contribute to agency freedom, and hence to ask how education and education policy seek to contribute to human capabilities. Moreover, education is understood here to be a capability in itself, and education is also understood to be made up of a number of separate but intersecting and overlapping constitutive capabilities.

A further element of Sen's (1992), capability approach is concerned with the capabilities of every individual.

According to Walker (2006), Sen's conceptualisation should not be confused with the neoliberal advocates of individualism and individual choice who dominate current education policy making. The crucial difference is that the capability approach is ethically individualistic; neoliberalism by contrast is ontologically individualist (Robeyns, 2003b). Moreover Sen (1990), integrates securing and expanding intrapersonal and interpersonal freedoms (individual agency and social arrangements). Sen and Dreze (1995), argue that one should not view individuals and their opportunities in isolated terms. Crucially, functionings depend on individual circumstances, the relations a person has with others, and social conditions and contexts within which potential options (freedom) can be achieved. Individual freedoms, as Sen (1995) points out, depend also on social and economic arrangements (for example education and health care), and on political and civil rights. Individual functionings will be inflected by a person's relative advantages in society and enhanced by enabling public and policy environments.

The matter of resources is also important in that access to resources enables our functionings in and through education. One might ask if our intention were to promote capabilities in education, how we would deploy our available financial resources. These resources might include school buildings, books, computers, the teacher-pupil ratio, class size, and so on. Robeyns (2004), claims that one might think of these as capability inputs.

Sen (1992), incorporates a notion of the basic heterogeneity of human beings, that human diversity is central to and explicit in his approach to equality. He argues, "Human diversity is

no secondary complication to be ignored, or to be introduced later on; it is a fundamental aspect of our interest in equality” (Sen, 1992, p. xi).

He maintains that people will differ along (a) personal axis (gender, age, etc.); (b) along an intersecting external or environmental axis (wealth, climate, etc.); and (c) along an inter-individual or social axis which will generate differences in people’s ability to convert resources into valued outcomes. Thus we cannot take boys’ lives, or the lives of able-bodied people, or the lives of White people as the norm for our evaluations. Inequalities of gender, race and disability are included in and fundamental to the space of functionings and capabilities. He points out that such differences affect our ability to convert the resources we have into capabilities to function. The examples he mentions are a disabled child with the same resources and opportunities as an able-bodied child will nonetheless find it more difficult to convert these resources and opportunities into capabilities (the capability for walking for someone who cannot walk, the capability for enjoying literature for someone who is visually-challenged, and so on).

In defence of the capability-based theory Sen (1990) argues that education can be seen as an enabling factor in the expansion of freedom for a number of overlapping reasons. He says that with human capital approaches, education has an instrumental role for each person in helping him or her to do or achieve many things such as getting a job and being able to take up economic opportunities. Therefore education is then for some something else, for some other, good. But in contrast to human capital approaches to education in which the benefit of education is directly judged for its effect on employability, Dreze and Sen (1995), argue that the bettering of a human life does not have to be justified by showing that a person with a better life is also a better producer (Dreze and Sen 1995, p. 184).

Dreze and Sen (1995, p. 16), state that education is of such intrinsic importance and means that being educated is a valuable achievement in itself. They contend that education in itself is a basic capability which affects the development and expansion of other capabilities. They also state that having the opportunity for education and the development of an education capability expands human freedoms. According to Dreze and Sen, not having education harms human development and having a full life. They maintain education fulfils an instrumental social role in that greater literacy and basic education fosters public debate and dialogue about social and political arrangements. Education has an instrumental process role

by expanding the people one comes into contact with, broadening their horizons. Finally they add that it has an empowering, distributive role in facilitating the ability of the disadvantaged, marginalised and excluded to organise politically. Also, education has redistributive effects between social groups, households and within families where better education is shown to reduce gender inequality. According to the authors, education contributes to interpersonal effects where people are able to use the benefits of education to help others and hence contribute to the social good and democratic freedoms. Dreze and Sen (1995, p. 26), state that education in the capability approach serves as an unqualified benefit for human development freedom. These authors formulate their theory as follows: In the capability approach, education is a matter of substantive freedom. But we should not equate education with schooling, although schooling may and indeed should expand the agency and freedom of young people.

Unterhalter (2003), states that “Schools might be places of freedom and unfreedom”.

It can be argued that capabilities can be diminished as well as enhanced, and researchers need therefore to keep checking how well they are doing in schools and education policy implementation. A lack of schooling, or a lack of good quality schooling is a disadvantage, and one which might persist throughout a lifetime.

### **3.7.1 Capabilities for educational assessment**

The capability approach attaches great importance to agency, and to genuine reflective choice. Therefore the argument may be that education in any context should promote agency, and as a key element of this agency that education should facilitate the development of autonomy and empowerment, or what Nussbaum (2000), describes as ‘practical reason’. Sen (1993), ascribes an instrumental role to education for realising economic opportunities which researchers might provisionally describe as a capability for paid work (in formal and informal economic spheres). Sen attaches importance to the relations a person has with others, to the social role of education and generally the capability to be a full participant in society, so a capability for social relations is arguably important, embedded in social networks of care and support according to Gasper and Van Staveren, (2003), and Nussbaum, (2003a). In the context of schooling such social relations might take the form of an institutional culture, supportive teachers, care of and by peers in a learning arrangement. We can thus assume that

there are three provisional educational capabilities: personal autonomy, paid work and social relations.

### 3.7.2 Capabilities from education policy

The post-apartheid 1996 Constitution guarantees the right to a basic education to everyone, and schooling is now compulsory for all children for nine years. Education policy envisages an education system which contributes to ‘the full personal development of each student’, and to citizenship for the building of a democratic nation. It includes ‘the promotion of gender equality’ and ‘encouraging independent and critical thought’ (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, p. 4). It further identifies a purpose of education as ‘the advancement of knowledge’, and encourages ‘capacities necessary for reconstruction and development and knowledge and values for citizenship’.

The following important capabilities emerged from the education policy in South Africa as constitutive conditions of the fundamental capability to be educated:

Independent and critical thought, critical thinking, reasoning, reflection,  
learner agency  
and responsibility for their own learning.

Knowledge for values, citizenship, contribution to economic development.

Bodily integrity and health, safety at school, no corporal punishment, freedom from sexual harassment and violence, choice in sexual relationships, protection against HIV.

Respect for self, for others, for other cultures, being treated with dignity (a form of social relations). (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996).

These capabilities are very similar to what Sen (1995, p. 294), has identified.

Comim’s (2003), argument about the importance of time and hence of becoming, as well as being and doing in the capability approach, together with Biggeri’s (2004), similar point that different ages may give different importance to valued capabilities. Thus when we talk about

education we think of some kind of learning that takes place. Walker (2006), states that learning is seldom linear and immediate; it is more often recursive, new learning on existing knowledge, past experience and pupil identities. She therefore states that learning is a process of 'becoming' as well as 'being' over a life course, and through cycles of schooling. She also says that some capabilities are more or less important depending on the age of the learners. Capabilities are then valued 'beings', 'doings', and as Comim (2003), argues, also 'becomings'.

Walker (2006) focuses on Nussbaum (2000), Narayan and Petesch (2002), Robeyns (2003), and Alkire (2002). According to Walker (2006), Nussbaum (2000), has produced a list of ten core capabilities (see pp. 78-80). Nussbaum (2000), contends that a threshold level of capabilities taken together is essential to a life worthy of the dignity of the human being. Nussbaum's list claims to be universal and cross-cultural. She contends failure of capability in any one aspect would be failure to live a full human life.

Nussbaum's (2000, pp. 72-75), list of capabilities, which overlaps with that of Walker' (2006), includes capabilities of:

practical reason (being able to plan ones' life), affiliation (being able to live with and towards others, to recognise and show concern for other human beings, to engage in various forms of social interactions; to be able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation; to have the capability for both justice and friendship...having the social bases for self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others'); senses, imagination and thought, emotions and bodily health and bodily integrity.

The multi-dimensionality of the capability approach comprises the following qualities that all contribute towards making a person's life meaningful: Autonomy, being able to have choices; Knowledge, of school subjects which are intrinsically interesting or instrumentally useful for post-school choices of study; Respect and recognition, self- confidence and self- esteem, respect for and from others, being treated with dignity;

Aspiration, motivation to learn and succeed, to have a better life, to hope;

Voice, for participation in learning, for speaking out, not being silenced through pedagogy or power relations or harassment, or excluded from curriculum, being active in the acquisition of knowledge;

Bodily integrity and bodily health, not to be subjected to any form of harassment at school by peers or teachers, generally feeling safe at school;

Emotional integrity and emotions, not being subject to fear which diminishes learning, either from physical punishment or verbal attacks, developing emotions and imagination for understanding, empathy, awareness and discernment”.

Walker (2006), concludes that schools contribute for many people quite substantially to the formation of their capabilities to function. Ideally schools ought to equip people with the capabilities to pursue opportunities they value.

### **3.8 Second-chance education**

The idea of a second-chance is fundamental to societies which stress the value of equal opportunity and freedom of choice, according to Inbar and Sever (1986b, p. 121). They derive this from the basic belief that everyone has the right to attempt success and mobility and “... the right to try again, to choose a different way, and that failures should not be regarded as final”.

From this viewpoint, the possibility of correcting errors made either by the individual or by the educational system is considered probable. ‘Second-chance’ may be defined as “... the opportunity to return to or move onto a track out of which one dropped or missed altogether”, according to Inbar and Sever (1986b). These authors further contend that such a second-chance structure is “... a set of organised social activities which enables an individual to actualise this opportunity” (Inbar and Sever 1986b, p. 126).

A large body of research has focussed on the central issues of equity, equality and opportunities in education, many of them touching on the second-chance idea. In spite of the importance of the idea there is not yet a comprehensive conceptual frame through which such mechanisms could be studied. Inbar (1990) stresses the legitimation of a second-chance as a process of recognising one’s right to try again, or to choose another option in spite of some institutionalised procedures, or previous organisational decisions. It is not only a problem of supplying possibilities for second chances; it is also a question of taking advantage of such

possibilities. According to Inbar (1990) the second- chance process is based on two interrelated aspects: the present-future and the past- future connections. He claims the first is concerned with the process of creating and pursuing a second-chance, another opportunity for choice, acting now to open more and different options in the future, and the second is concerned with the process of dissociating the connection between past failures and predictions about future success.

The legitimisation of a second-chance is a complex process. The right to a second-chance implies that the first failure should not be considered ultimate proof of one's potential. It indirectly questions the validity of the first round of failures and, moreover, even questions the validity of the evaluation processes of the first -chance. Legitimising second chances may be perceived as de-legitimising first chances, which is by itself facing a major legitimacy deficit (Weiler, 1983). This is one explanation why many established first-chance institutions are reluctant to support second-chance mechanisms.

According to Inbar (1990), everyone experiences some failures in life which may or may not have a bearing on future options. The failures might not be a significant indicator of one's potential ability. On the other hand there are crucial junctures where failures may be more critical because they directly affect the availability of future options. The important point is that these critical junctures are often artificial, based on organisations' decisions that are derived from convenience or based on assumptions about normal distributions and arbitrary time schedules. The educational system opens options and closes them simultaneously with its selection process based on test accumulation, where behaviours will be subject to statistical determination (Greene, 1980). It tends to institutionalise the boundaries of one's choices and opportunities, thus serving as a basic social selection and placement mechanism. In most societies education holds a critical position in the social fabric as the key mechanism for both; that is the allocation of social statuses and the inculcation of cultural values (Weiler, 1983).

Schooling, a reflection of the modern social structure, strives toward a hierarchy based on achievements, competition, and comparison. Failure in school is determined by the discrepancy between measured achievements and formal expectation. Failure is often considered an indicator of one's low ability, thus narrowing the scope of future options. The more final a failure is considered to be, the lower the probability of finding options open in

the future. Consequently it means that real equal opportunity must be based on different assumptions about status of failure. Lack of success should not be translated into absolute failure. Failure in a certain task does not necessary represent the whole individual. Therefore, failure should not be considered final, should not be seen as an ultimate indicator of one's potential ability, determining to a great degree one's future, but should be looked upon as a temporary setback which may be overcome. This notion lies in the very core of the second-chance idea.

Walberg and Herbig (1990), distinguish between two types of groups labelled as failures: those who failed because of a decision error, and those who failed because of their own deficiencies. For the first group, 'the second-chance system becomes more necessary with the decrease of the reliability of the decision procedures' (Walberg and Herbig, 1990). The second group needs 'an effective second-chance system, [that] therefore, has to be flexible and cannot be installed in the same way as the first-chance system' (Walberg and Herbig, 1990).

It is a two-way orientation; it requires a change in society's interpretation of an individual's failures, as they are reflected in its organisational settings, and a change in the individual as well. A change is required in the way one perceives one's own achievements as reflected in one's orientation toward the future. By changing the emphasis of failure as a reflection of one's ability, and as a determinant of one's future options, to a phase in one's life experience, the notion of blame and of 'succumbing to a sense of futility' (Greene, 1980), will be reduced.

There are three basic qualities required of a genuine second-chance system (Inbar and Sever, 1989):

Accessibility – second-chance systems should be non-selective.

Effectiveness – second-chance systems should improve educational attainment.

Equivalence – second-chance programmes should lead to similar if not the same rewards for success as the first chance provides. (Ross, 2004, p. 45)

Therefore one can conclude that second-chance is both a right and an obligation. It is the right of every individual who needs a second -chance and it is the right to expect second-

chance options to be available, and it is the obligation of society to offer them to those who want it. Also it is everyone's obligation to pursue that second -chance. One is doomed to choose second-chance options, but it is not a self-perpetuating process. The paradox is that too often those who are in most need of a second -chance, those who are on the weak side of society, are not strong enough to pursue them.

In the next chapter I will discuss the research design and methods to be utilised for gathering data which show that the YCS is providing a second -chance for the development of those capabilities as described in the Constitution and by Sen (1995).



## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

#### RESEARCH APPROACH, METHOD AND FRAMEWORK

##### 4.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the research design and give a brief description of the methodology used in the research project. This is followed by a discussion of the rationale for the research approach, the interviews used in the study, as well as the site of the study, the Youth Care School. Data gathering methods including discussing the interview guides used in the study, data capturing, coding and data analysis follow as well as a brief discussion of the ethical considerations involved in the research. The procedure for the selection of participants including, learners, parents/guardians workers, and educators is described. The chapter is concluded with a brief description of the limitations of the study.

As mentioned above the main aim of the study is to investigate an initiative which addresses the social exclusion of children who have dropped out of school, the problem of over-age learners and exclusion and inclusion amongst learners in order to answer the two research questions that need to be answered in this study: *How has capability development facilitated the social inclusion of learners who have dropped out of school? And what are the reasons for dropout?*

The aim of the study therefore is to generate new knowledge about the relationship between capability theory, school dropout, social exclusion and social inclusion.

##### 4.2 Research design

In this study the research design provided a framework for the way in which data were collected, interpreted and finally analysed. Of a number of possible research designs to arrive at a reasonable route in which to answer the research questions the qualitative research approach was chosen. The two methods of data gathering in this research approach are interviews and observation.

Denzin and Lincoln (1994, p. 1) describe qualitative research as multi-method in focus, which involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of phenomena in terms of the meaning people bring to them.

Understanding in qualitative research is acquired by analysing the many contexts of the participants and by narrating participants' meanings for these situations and events. Participants' meanings include their feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts and actions (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001, p. 396).

#### **4.2.1 Rationale for the research approach**

The approach to the study was qualitative, which provided rich data that contributed to a deep understanding of the school dropout and social exclusion phenomena at the school under investigation (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001). This helped with understanding why learners opted out and wanted to re-access the education system. The study focused on a particular school, the YCS, as an intervention to address school dropout. The findings of the data that were collected could illuminate the researcher's understanding of why learners are excluded and how the school addresses this problem.

#### **4.2.2 Data gathering method**

Data were gathered by means of an interview guide. The interview guide is more structured than the formal conversational interview (Gall, Gall and Borg, 2003). The interview guide was used to assist learners and parents whose literacy level might be very low, to be able to answer questions verbally. This is much easier to deal with than a written questionnaire that might be too complicated to understand and some participants might find writing their thoughts down too overwhelming. The interview guide can extract the necessary information and data which is needed for this kind of study.

An interview guide as a research instrument for my study was used to gather data through structured interviews to investigate the situation at YCS. The interview guide was used in order to keep interviews on track and help bring interviewees back when they went off the topic (Christensen and Johnson, 2008).

The data that were collected by means of the structured interview guide from the learners (Appendix D) at the school was to find out where they came from, why they were age-inappropriate for mainstream schools, why they opted out and why they returned to the YCS. A similar interview guide was used to interview parents/guardians/care-workers (Appendix I) and educators (Appendix A).

#### **4.2.3 Research site**

The YOUTH CARE SCHOOL can be seen as an intervention by a non-governmental organisation addressing the issues around dropout and access for over-age learners who would like to re- enter the education system. The school in the case study is the only day school in the Western Cape using the ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training) curriculum, for young learners who are too old for their grade. I am currently the principal of the school involved in the study.

The YCS was started in 1999 when many children's homes experienced difficulty in placing learners at schools. Mainstream schools were reluctant to take on learners who had been out of school for a while and therefore the YCS was started. The school is independent, but is registered with the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) and follows the ABET curriculum. Learners are interviewed and must do a placement test in order to place them at the correct ABET Level. The school focuses on Literacy and Numeracy. Learners in Level 4 write the external national GETC (General Education and Training Certificate) and after being successful, they can go on to a FET (Further Education and Training) College or can complete Grades 10, 11 and 12 at a mainstream school or an ABET Centre. The YCS is a day school and follows the WCED school calendar. The Management Committee composed of Directors, funds the school. The Management Committee also applies for additional funding from the WCED, the National Lottery Distribution Trust Fund and other private funding organisations.

Currently one hundred and two (102) learners are enrolled with nine (9) educators. Fifty percent of the learners are from children's homes and the other fifty percent come from the communities in and around Cape Town, from as far afield as Macassar, Eerste River, Fish Hoek, Khayelitsha, Kraaifontein and the Cape Flats. Learners are South African citizens as well as foreign nationals from Congo, Zambia, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia and Somalia.

### 4.3 Sampling design

According to Walker (1985, p. 31), sample design in qualitative research is usually purposive. That is, rather than taking a random cross-section of the population to be studied, small numbers of people with specific characteristics, behaviour or experience are selected. Miles and Huberman (1994, p. 27), agree that qualitative researchers usually work with small samples of people, nested in their context and studied in-depth. Brink (1991, p.15), explains that the qualitative researcher identifies potential types of persons, events or processes to be sampled, depending on the needs of the study and according to the specific qualities. The researcher used purposive sampling in this study. McMillan and Schumacher (2001, p. 433), concur with these explanations and state that purposeful sampling is a strategy to choose small groups or individuals likely to be knowledgeable and informative about the phenomenon of interest. The researcher deliberately chooses respondents or settings in order to ensure that the sample covers the full range of possible characters (Katzenellenbogen et al., 1999, p. 179). The procedure for the selection of participants in the research project follows in the next section.

#### 4.3.1 Selection of participants

The total population of learners and educators of the school consisted of 102 learners and nine educators. The learner population was made up of South Africans, mainly black African and Coloured learners and foreign nationals from other African countries i.e. Somalia, Congo, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Namibia and Zambia. Twenty (20) learners were interviewed (20 % of the sampling population) representing the composition of the learners at the school. Learners came from the surrounding communities on the Cape Flats and the Cape Town Metropole and also from children's homes, and this enabled me as the researcher to gather rich data. Learners in the sample were completing ABET Levels 1, 2, 3 and 4. ABET Level 4 is equivalent to Grade 9, the GETC qualification. Learners who attended the school were aged between 14–19 years, with 80 % of the learners being in the 16–17-year cohort. More boys than girls attended the school (85 % being boys and 15 % being girls).

The population of educators consisted of nine (9) educators, including the principal who was interviewed to obtain more information about the school, the learners and the curriculum in the study.

The population of parents/guardians/care-workers constituted the 102 learners' parents/guardians/care-workers, ten (10) of the parents/guardians/care-workers of the learners of the school in the study were interviewed. A definition of parents and guardians in this particular study can mean foster-parents, child care-workers, social workers, the principals of children's homes or biological parents. Ten (10) parents/guardians/care-workers were interviewed to gather information about the learners' background. A care-worker can be the guardian of ten (10) learners at one particular children's Home.

The thirty nine participants interviewed comprised twenty learners and nine educators (including the principal) of the YCS as well as ten parents/guardians/social workers/care-workers of the learners who participated in the study.

#### **4.3.2 Learner selection**

The twenty learner participants were representative of the school population composition as fifteen males and five females were interviewed. Males represented 75% of the total population and female learners only 25%. Their ages ranged from 15 years to 19 years and the group included South African as well as non-South African citizens.

The racial composition, according to the South African race classification, for the learner participants was as follows: Three male and one female black African learner participants; six male and four female black Coloured participants; two white males and four non-South African males.

The age ranges included: one 15-year-old female learner participant; two male and two female 16-year-old learner participants; nine 17-year-old male learner participants; four male and one female 18-year-old learner participants and one female 19-year-old learner participant.

The learner participants indicated that they were all at mainstream schools before, but had repeated Grade 9 once, twice and even three to four times over the last few years. Others were out of school because they were living on the streets or had to move around frequently

or were displaced due to instability in their country. Some of the learner participants' interviewed were living in children's homes due to social problems at home or not having anyone to take care of them. Ten of the participants who were interviewed were living with their parents or families, but were facing other personal problems.

#### **4.3.3 Parents/guardians/care-workers selection**

Five biological parents, four care-workers and one social worker among parent/guardian participants were interviewed. The care-workers and social workers were the guardians of the learners who resided at children's homes. The learners who lived with their biological parents lived in the surrounding communities.

#### **4.3.4 Educators' selection**

The educator participants included the total population of educators at the school, the principal and four female and four male educators. Eight of the educator participants were Coloured and one was white. The group's teaching experience ranged from two, to forty-three years. Three of the educators did not have recognised teachers' diplomas but had formal degrees or ABET certificate qualifications. The other six educators were all qualified, with either post-graduate degrees or first degrees and a diploma in education.

#### **4.4 Data gathering procedure**

A sample of twenty (20) learners was interviewed from a population of one hundred and two (102) learners from the YCS. The learners were selected from the different ABET Level 1, 2, 3, and 4 classes. A sample of five (5) learners from different children's homes were selected, ten (10) learners from the surrounding communities and five (5) foreign nationals from other African countries. The researcher gathered information from the learners regarding what they hoped to achieve with the qualification they would receive at the school. Data were collected on the differences between their current school and the school they had attended previously. (See Appendix D – Interview guide for learners).

Structured interviews with ten (10) parents/guardians were held to obtain data about the learners' background. Information about reasons why the children were enrolled at the school and why they dropped out of school and wanted to re-access an educational institution again was collected. Information was also gathered as to why it was difficult for these specific

learners to access government or mainstream schools. (See Appendix I – interview guide for parents/guardians).

Structured interviews were conducted with the nine (9) educators to gather data about the school programme and learners' attitudes, behaviour and progress attending the school. The full staff complement were involved to obtain all the necessary data from different perspectives; also to gather information about the learning programmes they offered, as well as individual views about ways in which YCS differed from mainstream schools and whether the school met specific needs in their communities (see Appendix A – Interview guide for educators and principal).

#### **4.5 Data capturing**

Polit and Hungler (as cited in Brink, 1991, p. 16), state that data collection in qualitative research requires a minimum of researcher-imposed structure and a maximum of researcher involvement. The researcher is the primary instrument for data collection. The researcher uses multiple forms of data in any single study. Any potentially useful data should be recorded thoroughly, accurately, and systematically, using notes, audiotapes, or any other suitable means (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001, p. 158). In the present study data were collected by means of interview guides with each participant. The interviews were all audio-taped and transcribed *verbatim*. McMillan and Schumacher (2001, p. 443), support this method of data collection and state that interviews may be the primary data collection strategy.

I collected data from the learners, parents/guardians/care-workers and educators. All interviews were audio-taped to ensure complete capture of the verbal interaction and it provided adequate material for reliability checks. The tape-recording of the interviews ensured that important information was not lost (Christensen and Johnson, 2008). I taped additional notes regarding observations during the interviews to record the interviews to ensure complete data capturing.

An audio-recorder was used to record personal interviews with participants together with written notes. The reason for the audio-recording of interviews was to uphold accuracy and in addition, the interviewees could be asked to check transcripts for correctness. The interviewees were also asked to comment on the interpretation of the data in order to avoid discrepancies.

The audio recordings as well as the transcripts were stored on a computer hard drive which was stored in a safe place, while hard copies of the transcripts were also kept. The audio recordings and hard copies will be destroyed after five (5) years. This is stated in the consent form to ensure all participants are aware of this arrangement.

#### **4.5.1 Coding and data analysis**

After having collected the data, the interviews were transcribed and then the data were manually coded in order to identify concepts and categories and to indicate what each participant said. Similarities and differences in the opinions of the participants were highlighted by comparing categories. After the researcher had identified the trends and patterns that emerged from the data that had been interpreted, I compared the results with the theoretical framework discussed in my literature review (See 3.3 and also Ch. 2) as well as in my research questions. The data analysis process enabled me to analyse and develop new insights relating to learners who ‘dropped out’ of school who became socially excluded, and how social inclusion through capability development addressed ‘dropout’.

The data that were gathered were analysed and coded according to the themes and research question.

#### **4.6 Ethical considerations**

I followed ethical procedures throughout the course of my research in a way that confidentiality and anonymity were respected. I gathered data from participants in a respectful manner. All records related to the data will be kept in storage for five (5) years.

The data in the study included confidential details of the participants. The information will be kept confidential by using pseudonyms to substitute real names of participants, institutions and the research site. I sought informed consent (Appendix C, E, F) from all research participants before the interviews (Johnson and Christensen, 2008). I also sought parental/guardian consent (Appendix K) in the case of minor learners (Johnson and Christensen, 2008).

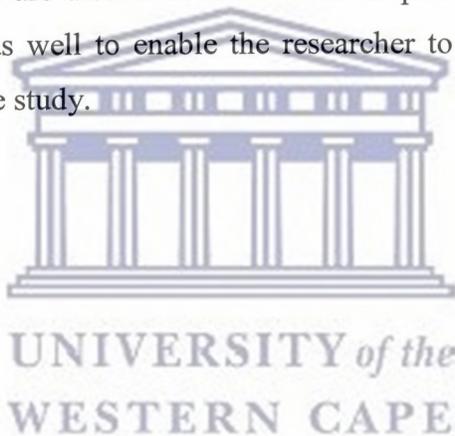
This research project was registered at the University of the Western Cape. Consent from the Management Committee of the YCS (Appendix L) was obtained (Creswell, 2005). The

permission and the ethical clearance ensured that the rights of the participants in the study were protected (Creswell, 2005).

#### **4.7 Limitations of the study**

The study was confined to only the YCS as the only day school which caters for young and over-age learners and follows the ABET curriculum that operates in the Cape Town Metropole area. The data that were collected originated at YCS. It could have been insightful if the researcher could have had interviews with staff from schools that learners had previously attended. It could broaden the researcher's understanding of those schools' reasons for denying the dropouts access to their classes. In spite of the relatively small sample the interviews with various participants produced abundant evidence of the need for a school such as YCS and the benefits to learners of the school.

Data analysis of the findings are discussed in the next chapter. Personal profiles of learner participants are scrutinised as well to enable the researcher to draw conclusions about the categories that emerged in the study.



## CHAPTER FIVE

### DATA ANALYSIS

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter opens with a look at the research questions: *How has capability development facilitated the social inclusion of learners who have dropped out of school? And what are the reasons for dropout?* As mentioned in the previous chapter the overarching aims of the study were to investigate an initiative which addresses the social exclusion of learners who have dropped out of school, and to generate new knowledge about the relationship between capability theory, school dropout and social inclusion. In this chapter I present the data analysis and identify the themes that emerged in each of the categories by illustrating how these relate to the significant issues that are present in the literature consulted on the topic under study. The importance of the research site, the Youth Care School in Salt River, Cape Town is highlighted again as it is the only institution in the Western Cape that caters for the needs of these special young learners by teaching an ABET curriculum which can enable learners to finally qualify for the external national GETC (General Education and Training Certificate). This independent day school is registered with the WCED and follows the WCED school calendar (See complete description of YCS in Section 4.2.3). In the next section I present a profile of the participants.

#### 5.2 Profile of participants

##### **Learner profiles (See full learner profiles in Appendix M1)**

##### **Non-South African boys (See Appendix M1.1)**

William is a 17-year-old Burundi male living in a children's home in Salt River.

Luther is a 17-year old Zambian male placed in a children's home.

Ferdinand is a 17-year-old Zimbabwean male currently staying in a home for boys in Salt River.

Theodore is an 18-year-old Sudanese male who lives in a home for adults in Salt River.

### **South African boys (See Appendix M1.2)**

Shaheed is a 17-year-old black Coloured male from Mitchells Plain.

Ntsikelelo, an 18-year-old black African male also resides at the children's home in Salt River. Zain is a 16-year-old Coloured male who lives with his parents in Woodstock.

Azaad, an 18-year-old Coloured male from Philippi, lives with his parents and sister.

Cecil, a 17-year-old black African male from Mpumalanga who lives in a children's home in Athlone.

Arthur is a 17-year-old White male who lives with his parents and younger sister in Strandfontein.

Jacob is a 17-year-old black African male who lives in a children's home in Khayelitsha.

Charles is an 18-year-old black Coloured male who lives in Macassar in a children's home for boys.

Shaun is a 17-year-old White male who lives with his mother and grandmother in a shelter in the northern suburbs of Cape Town.

Samih is an 18-year-old Coloured male who lives in Maitland with his father, stepmother and five siblings.

Moegamat is a 17-year-old Coloured male from the Cape Flats.

### **Girls (See Appendix M1.3)**

Nomaindia is a 19-year-old black African female living with her father and other siblings in Khayelitsha.

Michelle, a 15-year-old Coloured female, lives in a children's home for girls in Cape Town.

Elizabeth is an 18-year-old Coloured female from Hanover Park. She is living with her parents and a brother.

Charmaine is a 16-year-old Coloured female from Grassy Park who lives with her mother and five siblings and an extended family.

Shireen is a 16-year-old Coloured female who lives with her grandmother, aunt and uncle.

### **Parents/guardians/care-worker profiles (See full Profiles in Appendix M2)**

#### **Parents (See Appendix M2.1)**

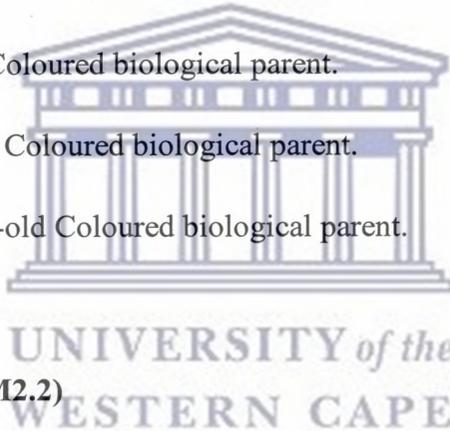
Mrs Carelse is a 41-year-old black Coloured female biological parent.

Mrs Kamaldien is a 39-year-old black Coloured biological parent.

Mrs Joshua is a 39-year-old Coloured biological parent.

Mrs Sullivan is a 50-year-old Coloured biological parent.

Mrs Groenewald is a 49-year-old Coloured biological parent.



#### **Guardians (See Appendix M2.2)**

Mr Jansen is a 48-year-old white male guardian.

Ms Hendricks is a 38-year-old Coloured female and is a care-worker at a children's home for girls in Wynberg. She is also a guardian.

Mr Kannemeyer is a 36-year-old Coloured male, is the guardian and teacher's assistant.

#### **Care-workers (See Appendix M2.3)**

Mrs De Vos is a 65-year-old Coloured is a care-worker.

Mr Sobetwa, a 34-year-old black African care-worker.

## **Educator profiles (See full educator profiles in Appendix M3)**

### **Male Educators (See Appendix M3.1)**

Mr Saunders is a 45-year-old Coloured male and is the principal of YCS.

Mr Arendse is a 44 year old black African male.

Mr Adriaanse is a 35-year-old Coloured male.

Mr Noor is a 46-year-old Coloured male.

Mr Carelse is a 68-year-old Coloured male.

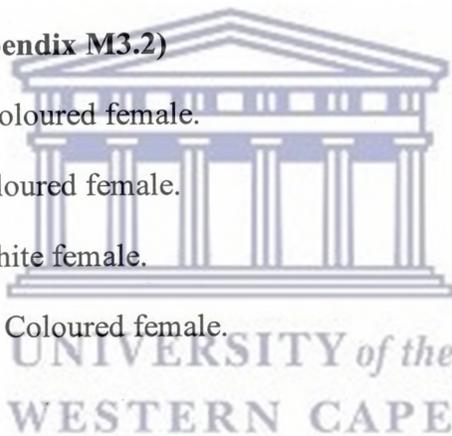
### **Female Educators (See Appendix M3.2)**

Mrs Kader is a 59-year-old Coloured female.

Du Preez is a 44-year-old Coloured female.

Ms Smith is a 48-year-old White female.

Mrs Johnson is a 51-year-old Coloured female.



Note: I considered triangulation, but decided to reveal the distinct voices of the learners, parents/guardians/care-workers and educators. Nevertheless, I could identify similarities and differences amongst the participant groupings.

## **5.3 Education and social exclusion**

As stated earlier, the term 'social exclusion' refers to René Lenoir's (1974, 1989), definition as a state or situation by which people are excluded. In Room (1995, p. 70), Redmond defines social exclusion as "the processes in society that lead some people to be excluded from a range of institutions and activities". Silver (1994) has identified social exclusion from

education as a multi-dimensional concept based on which people may be excluded from education.

In this study I focus on dropout from school and social exclusion. In the next section I present my data analysis that shows dropout as a form of social exclusion.

#### **5.4 Causes of dropout and social exclusion**

Research suggests that a range of interrelated demand and supply factors interact to influence how and why children drop out of school (Hunt, 2008, p. 98). Some of these are: household income and financial circumstances (Heyman, 2000, pp. 833-848), direct and indirect costs of schooling (Levin, 1989, pp. 47-60), school fees, income shocks, child labour, migration, household contexts (Garnier, 1997, pp. 395-419), bereavement and orphanhood, education of household members, household perceived benefits of schooling, health, pregnancy, disability and special educational needs, gender, rural and urban factors, fragile states (political conflict), age, marriage and notions of adulthood, school supply and quality of provisions, supply of schools and processes and practices.

In this study I discovered the following causes of dropout: conflict and violence; repetition of Grades and over-age; drug abuse; financial factors and religion. In the following sections comments by learners who experienced trauma of this nature can contribute to drawing a final conclusion to prove that conflict and violence have serious negative effects on learners.

##### **5.4.1 Conflict and violence**

The data show that the most common reason amongst learners for dropping out of school was conflict and violence. Conflict and violence are two of the causes of dropout which is a form of social exclusion: it is clear that conflict has caused learners to drop out.

The data reveal that several learners were exposed to some form of conflict or violence which resulted in them having to leave their previous school or even dropout.

Conflict and violence as reasons for dropout are symptoms of social injustice, the cause of social injustice. Barry's justification of why social exclusion is "normatively bad" is that

social exclusion can be a symptom of or cause of, social injustice. Social exclusion can lead to exclusion from “unequal educational and educational opportunities” (Barry, 2002, p.20).

Below are *verbatim* reports of learners who were victims of different kinds of violence and conflict. These reports support literature findings as well as serve as empiric evidence in the study. Violence in schools contributed to learners’ dropping out.

Moegamat, who still lives and attended school in a gang-infested area, was exposed to a traumatic experience when he witnessed his friend’s stabbing at school. This is how he explained the situation:

*“They stabbed my friend in front of me and he died in front of me. It was traumatic for me. That was in 2010. My mother decided that I should change schools”* (Interview: Moegamat, 16 October 2012).

His mother felt that he needed to change schools as the previous school was not a safe place to be and gangsterism and violence were what he was exposed to daily.

Michelle, who had some bad personal experiences of being abused, was advised by her social worker to leave her previous school as it brought back memories of all the bad things that happened to her in the past. She said:

*“I had to move into a different environment. I had to change schools because I was abused. I was not forced to but I had no choice. Actually, the social worker recommended it because of what happened to me”* (Interview: Michelle, 11 October 2012).

Bullying led to Theodore and Shaun dropping out of school.

Theodore felt he was targeted and bullied by the principal of the school which he attended and felt uncomfortable so he decided to leave the school. He explained that,

*“My father, who was a teacher at the same school that I was at, was accused of stealing, but he was robbed. The principal hated me for that. So I dropped out”* (Interview: Theodore, 10 October 2012).

Shaun said he was bullied by other learners because he came across as different in his appearance and the way he dresses. Other learners would target him and he would get involved with the wrong kind of friends outside of school and would bunk school.

*“They bullied me at the school where I was and that was the reason why I stayed at home”* (Interview: Shaun, 15 October 2012).

This resonates with Dieltiens, and Meny-Gibert (2008), who argue that social exclusion is concerned with the outcomes and processes that lead to exclusion. Social exclusion can be about the child’s peers making him/her feel like an outsider/inadequate – or about the child feeling conscious of his/her difference.

Family conflict can cause disruption in the lives of learners. This made Shireen’s experience with her father difficult to attend school:

*“I had problems with my daddy. I had to hide from him. He came to my school and caused problems”* (Interview: Shireen, 22 October 2012).

He would come to her school and cause problems as she was the eldest daughter and was in the middle of the conflict between her mother and father.

The data collected from the parents/guardians/care-workers show a similar trend as it also indicated that learners struggle to perform academically after being exposed to some form of conflict or violence either at home, at school or in their society.

Conflict in society prompts migration. Migration may be causing learners to drop out of school in their home countries. Migration is common in South Africa as learners from other countries seek refuge and are placed in places of safety as they have to flee abuse and bad economic environments in their country. William and Ferdinand explained their migration trauma as follows:

*“My brother was arrested in Burundi. I became scared and ran away. The police accused him of being a robber”* (Interview: William, 03 October 2012).

*“I ran away from home in Zimbabwe because of the political situation in the country. The police were killing people and burning down the houses. Now I live in a shelter. I left school because of the principal. He told me that I was supposed*

*to get papers for studying in this country”* (Interview: Ferdinand, 03 October 2012).

Luther was exposed to human trafficking and ended up in Cape Town with nowhere to go, saying that

*“I was brought here unknowingly from Zambia”* (Interview: Luther, 11 October 2012).

Conflict and violence were recognised by learners and parents as reasons for leaving their previous school or dropping out of school. Although it seems that conflict and violence affected a large number of participants participating in this study none of the published educators included in the literature review mentioned violence and conflict as reasons for dropout.

In the South African literature which I reviewed, conflict and violence as reasons for dropping out were also not discussed. This reason for dropout has been generated by my empirical investigation. It was the most common reason for dropout cited by participants. Although it was not anticipated, it is not surprising, given the levels of violence in society.

Based on the empirical evidence collected during personal interviews with learners the conclusion has to be drawn that violence and conflicts have serious negative effect on learners.

#### **5.4.2 Repetition of grades and over-age**

Studies in other countries do not make it clear whether over-age is due mainly to repetition or late entry to schooling. Evidence in literature reveals that timeous enrolment in primary schooling is associated with family wealth and parents' schooling, and negatively associated with school costs (Ilon and Moock, 1991, p. 112). This means that for a variety of reasons it is the poor who are more likely to enrol late, and who repeat Grades and dropout. Psacharopoulos and Patrinos (1996, p. 115), suggest a strong relationship between over-age, repetition and dropout.

Several studies have shown that the cause of over-age is grade repetition and not late entrance (Verhine and de Melo, 1999, pp. 557-568). Schiefelbein and Wolff (1992, p. 116), contend that 'age heterogeneity' is a cause of repetition. This is largely because of the effect on

learning and teaching methods in the classroom where there are children of various ages in the same grade. "It is very difficult for the teacher to generate learning experiences of interest for the whole range of ages."

Hunt (2008, p. 112), further states that the support given and the attitude of the learners' guardians and educators are very important to learners in terms of how they would respond if they failed a grade more than once. Because of the embarrassment and humiliation at failing a grade, many learners want to transfer schools or dropout.

A reason indicated by both learners and parents for leaving their previous school was the repetition of Grades. Learners would be repeating Grade 9 as they need to pass all their subjects in order to progress to Grade 10. They struggle with academic work as educators cannot cope with the big classes and give little individual attention to learners who are either struggling or are too slow to keep up with the rest of the class.

Ten of the twenty learner participants who were interviewed said that they repeated various Grades (that is half of all learners who were interviewed as participants in the sample) over the years before enrolling at the YCS. Some repeated Grade 9 once, twice, thrice and even six times.

*"I failed Grade 9 thrice"* (Interview: Azaad, 11 October 2012).

Arthur again thought that mainstream school was too hard and he would fail in every grade. After failing Grade 9 once he decided to change schools and came to the YCS.

*"School was too hard. I keep on failing. I failed Grade 8 and Grade 9. I failed Grade 9 once and then came to YCS."* (Interview: Arthur, 11 October 2012).

Elizabeth became despondent with school as she failed Grade 9 three times already and it would have been her fourth time in Grade 9. As a result she decided to leave school.

*"I failed Grade 9 three times. I struggled academically. It would have been my fourth time in Grade 9"* (Interview: Elizabeth, 04 October 2012).

Nomaindia could not understand as to why she failed as she attended school every day and would pass throughout the year but would be unsuccessful at the end of the year. She felt it was not worth it to attend school and opted to drop out of mainstream school.

*“School was not worth it. During the year I was passing but the end of the year I failed. I repeated Grade 9 six times”* (Interview: Nomaindia, 11 October 2012).

Parents/guardians/care-workers also indicated that the main reason for dropout is repeating of Grades.

*“My daughter could not finish her Grade 9 at high school. The principal at Belthorn Primary recommended YCS. She (my daughter) would have repeated Grade 9 for the fourth time at Alexander Sinton”* (Interview: Mrs Carelse, 04 October 2012).

*“He had great difficulty at a normal school. He could not get past Grade 9. I got advice from an educational psychologist. He referred us to YCS”* (Interview: Mrs Groenewald, 22 October 2012).

Repeating grades over the years made one learner feel devastated as described by a parent. The difference between primary school and high school seems to be another factor as learners get more attention during their primary school years. During the first two years of high school learners cannot cope because they are left to work more independently. Since there is little time spent on independent study in many of the schools learners struggle with this different practice. They would thus fail and having to repeat a grade makes them feel like a failure and they would then want to drop out of school. Mrs Joshua really felt that school was difficult for her son as he himself questioned why he should attend school when he failed in every grade, despite attending school every day. She mentioned reasons why she thought he failed: it might be the fact that educators did not give enough attention to the learners. She also pointed out that maybe educators do not have the patience, especially high school educators. She felt that high school was too overwhelming for her son and that was where he got lost.

*“He repeated every year and it left him devastated. He questioned why he must go to school every year and then having to repeat. He wanted to drop out. I think it is a lack from the educators at the previous school for not giving enough attention to the learners. I think they did not explain properly. At primary school teachers have more patience but at high school they think you need to do things on your own. I think that is where he got lost”* (Interview: Mrs Joshua, 16 October 2012).

*“The reason was that when he went to another school, they said that he was over-aged. He was 16 years old when we applied to Salt River High and they recommended YCS”* (Interview: Mrs Suleiman, 22 October 2012),

#### **5.4.3 Drug abuse**

Based on the experiences of learners who abused drugs their unruly behaviour often was the cause of being expelled from school.

Hunt (2008, p. 112) states that drug and alcohol abuse has been identified by learners as a major problem within schools. It was identified by learners as one of the contributing factors to learner dropout. It was also pointed out that learners drink, smoke and use drugs during school hours. The learners at YCS also pointed out similar reasons. The learners who use illegal substances tend to act out at school and can become disruptive and violent and would thus be expelled from the school. This is what some learners had to say:

*“I was expelled because I was in the office too often with various complaints. I had a drug problem”* (Interview: Shaheed, 04 October 2012).

*“I went to rehab for two months during exam time. When I came out of rehab they told me I could not go back to the high school. I missed the exams and failed. Aunty Amy told me they found a new school for me”* (Interview: Charles, 15 October 2012).

#### **5.4.4 Dysfunctional home environment as a cause of social exclusion**

*“The children would drop out because of their dysfunctional home environment. There is not enough food and the parents are not working. Nowadays the pressure of school fees, uniform, stationery, etc., is too much for the parents. The parents are struggling and the child would drop out and end up on the street. Those who come from the streets and are in residential care will also be using certain drugs and being at school they would act out and become violent, rude and will not be doing their schoolwork. Due to such reasons the schools would expel a child because of bad behaviour and the use of drugs”* (Interview: Mr Sobetwa, 23 October 2012).

*“He was disruptive. He was expelled in Grade 9. He was aggressive and was using drugs”* (Interview: Mrs Kamaldien, 04 October 2012).

#### **5.4.5 Financial factors**

Hunt (2008, p. 112), finds that difficulties within the learner’s home environment were identified by teachers and learners as the main factor negatively influencing their success at school. School fees being unaffordable and payment being enforced by schools were highlighted by learners as one reason for learner dropout. Motala (2007, p. 114), identifies when parents have difficulties in paying school fees it becomes a cause of dropout. Silver (1994, p. 117), identifies social exclusion from education as a multi-dimensional concept based on how people may be excluded from education, which are: parents being unemployed and not having the possible earnings to afford school fees and costs related to schooling.

Parents not being able to provide financially, was a factor indicated by learners, parents/guardians and care-workers. Unemployment amongst parents and parents struggling to provide for school fees, food, uniforms and transport is a reason why learners do not attend school regularly and then drop out. According to Dieltiens and Meny-Gibert (2008) social exclusion is concerned with the experiences of poverty and its inequitable outcomes and processes that lead to exclusion. Social exclusion can be either the institution excluding the learner for non-payment, or for not having uniform or about the community and institution acting in concert to exclude via the SGB.

*“School fees were a problem. My mother would do a job and the people whom we stayed with would beat her and want her money. She could not pay the school fees and she did not know anyone who could help”* (Interview: Ntsikelelo, 10 October 2012).

#### **5.4.6 Religion**

A reason which was identified by a few learners who left their previous schools was amongst Muslim boys who were desperately seeking a school which could accommodate them as they spent a number of years studying Arabic after they left the mainstream schools. No mainstream school could accommodate them as they were too old and missed out on mainstream subjects while studying at the Arabic schools. They faced a huge backlog in terms of academic subjects especially numeracy and literacy skills.

*“After I finished primary school I decided to do Arabic studies”* (Interview: Zain, 11 October 2012).

*“I was in an environment where there were lots of bad influences. My father thought I would be influenced. He took me out of school. He said I must do Islamic studies in order to stay on the right path”* (Interview: Samih, 15 October 2012).

Mrs Suleiman, a parent concurred.

*“After Grade 7 at primary school he went to study the Koran for two years and he wanted to further his education”* (Interview: Mrs Suleiman, 22 October 2012).

Educators were not familiar with reasons why learners left a previous school. Educators said nothing or did not know why learners left previous school. It was surprising that they did not know. A possible reason for this could be that not all educators are involved in the initial interviewing when parents and learners apply for a placement at the school.

Sullivan (2000), states that the concept of social exclusion provides a framework for understanding the interconnectedness of life circumstances, social categorisations and social problems. According to Sullivan (2002) social exclusion may be experienced by individuals and by groups or communities and it has become a driver for policy development and service delivery at both levels. Interventions are as varied as the social problems they are designed to deal with, but they implicitly rely on the participation and involvement of individuals, groups and communities toward achieving social inclusion for them.

### **5.5 Dropout and social inclusion: reasons for enrolling at YCS**

In contrast to reasons learners gave for leaving their previous schools learners who were interviewed were equally excited about being accepted at YCS. Below is a variety of reasons offered for enrolling at the YCS.

### 5.5.1 Educational reasons

The collected data indicated that most learners who enrolled at the YCS wanted to continue their education. Learners said that this was their last chance to complete a basic education. Other participants were unsuccessful at their previous schools and felt that they needed to change schools.

The following learners responded by indicating the following as reasons for enrolling at YCS.

*“To get a better education. To carry on with the grade I left off last”* (Interview: William, 03 October 2012).

*“...because of education. Also they (the teachers) do not shout and insult learners”* (Interview: Ferdinand, 03 October 2012).

*“At YCS it was my last chance to get a Grade 9 qualification and getting into college”* (Interview: Elizabeth, 04 October 2012).

*“YCS gave me another chance to further my education. I was struggling with the work at Belgravia High. I never used to go over my work and I used to be lazy. Now it is much easier, the schoolwork is more ‘understanding’”* (Interview: Azaad, 11 October 2012).

*“I came to YCS to learn, to educate myself. I know education is the key to life. I don't like to be at home”* (Interview: Luther, 11 October 2012).

*“...To get my Grade 9 certificate and to be able to continue with my studies”* (Interview: Nomaindia, 11 October 2012).

*“...because my marks were not good and I kept on failing at the other school and I wanted to make a change in my life”* (Interview: Arthur, 11 October 2012).

There seemed to be an overall agreement amongst learner participants in realising that they needed to complete a basic education to access future studies. They also realised that without education there was no hope or future for them.

### 5.5.2 Access to schools

The learners indicated that other schools did not want to accept them as they were seen as dropouts and too old for that grade.

According to Inbar (1990, pp. 69-88), everyone experiences some failures in life which may or may not have a bearing on future options. The failures might not be a significant indicator of one's potential ability. Schooling, a reflection of modern social structure, strives toward a hierarchy based on achievements, competition, and comparison. Failure in school is determined by the discrepancy between measured achievements and formal expectation. Failure is often considered an indicator of one's low ability, thus narrowing the scope of future options. The more final a failure is considered to be, the lower the probability of finding options open in the future. Consequently, real equal opportunity must be based on different assumptions about status of failure. Not being successful should not be translated into absolute failure. Failure in a certain task does not necessarily represent the whole individual. Therefore, failure should not be considered final, should not be seen as an ultimate indicator of one's potential ability determining to a great degree one's future, but should be looked upon as a temporary setback which may be overcome. This notion lies at the very core of the second-chance idea.

Walberg and Herbig (1990, p.118), distinguish between two types of groups labelled as failures: those who failed because of a decision error, and those who failed because of their own deficiencies. For the first group, 'the second-chance system becomes more necessary with the decrease of the reliability of the decision procedures' (Walberg and Herbig, 1990, p. 118). For the second group, 'an effective second-chance system, therefore, has to be flexible and cannot be installed in the same way as for the first-chance system' (Walberg and Herbig, 1990, p.118).

Second-chance is both a right and an obligation. It is the right of every individual. It is the right to expect second-chance options to be available, and it is the obligation of society to offer them. At the same time it is each one's obligation to pursue them. One is doomed to choose second-chance options, but it is not a self-perpetuating process. The paradox is that too often those who are in most need of a second-chance; those who are on the weak side of society, are not strong enough to pursue the options being accepted at a school where no one

judges you is another reason for coming to YCS. The learners feel a sense of belonging at YCS. Also for other learners this was their last chance or option to get an education.

*“I did not think I would be accepted at other mainstream schools. Here (at YCS) they cater for dropout learners”* (Interview: Shaheed, 04 October 2012).

*“They (the other school) said that I am too old to start Grade 8. My mother was a security at Salt River High and the educators at that school referred her to YCS”* (Interview: Zain, 11 October 2012).

*“I came here because it was my last resort. No other school would want to take me. This school is for children who have been out of school or who dropped out of school and came here”* (Interview: Shaun, 15 October 2012).

*“I came here because I thought that YCS is a better school and also I thought the other schools will not take me because of my age and I did not have Grade 8. I did not think they would accept me”* (Interview: Samih, 15 October 2012).

Inbar (1990), argues that one of the causes of failure in school is determined by the discrepancy between measured achievements and formal expectation (See Section 5.5.2). In the next section the importance of school culture and philosophy is reflected in the reasons learners offered for choosing to attend YCS.

### **5.5.3 The YCS has a caring environment**

Learners came to the Youth Care School because they were told that YCS is a school that cares for individuals and educators will help and are very understanding of their situation.

Many of the participants interviewed realised that at YCS there is a caring environment which meant that they could speak out about the challenges they were facing, which assisted them in becoming confident, successful and developing a more positive approach to life and feeling a sense of accomplishment academically. The learner respondents had the following to say why they thought the YCS has a caring environment.

*“YCS is a school that cares. They help us. Other schools don't care if you do not do your work. I did not get much help that I get here”* (Interview: Jacob, 15 October 2012).

*“I think maybe the home thought I needed to be with people who understand me and my situation”* (Interview: Michelle, 11 October 2012).

*“To improve my behaviour and to learn to achieve and be a better person in life”* (Interview: Cecil, 11 October 2012).

*“...because someone told me about the school and the Grades and the opportunities and about the good educators”* (Interview: Charles, 15 October 2012).

*“...because I heard from the Rabbi about this school and he said it was a nice school”* (Interview: Charmaine, 15 October 2012).

*“...because other schools have gangsters, but this school – not a lot about gangsterism”* (Interview: Moegamat, 16 October 2012).

*“I heard from a friend about YCS. She explained about the nice school that can deal with my situation. It is a good opportunity. YCS offers a lot. The teachers are good. They concentrate on you when you struggle with something”* (Interview: Shireen, 22 October 2012).

#### **5.5.4 A no-option choice in selecting a school**

Some learners did not have much say in choosing a school as they had no options. They were brought to YCS because the care worker at a home thought it was the best school for them under the circumstances.

*“I was forced to come here but I do not regret coming here”* (Interview: Theodore, 10 October 2012).

*“I was not sure what school they were going to put me in. Tannie Elsa put me here. Other learners of our home come to this school”* (Interview: Ntsikelelo, 10 October 2012).

## 5.6 Parents/guardians/care-workers' view on reasons for enrolling their child at YCS

Parents/care-workers/guardians or social workers indicated that they were referred to YCS and were told that it is a good school. YCS seemed to be the best option for many parents and guardians as they could accommodate their child who had been out of school for some time; failed a number of times; could not cope with the work; or displayed behavioural problems which mainstream schools could not cope with.

In interviews with individual parents/guardians/care-workers these were the reasons they identified for enrolling their child at YCC:

*"...because learners weren't formally stimulated during critical formative years, which was to their disadvantage in terms of their schooling they could not cope with the schoolwork and dropped out. Most of our learners at the home did not attend school regularly, especially primary school. They missed out on school and YCS was the only school that could accommodate them with the ABET curriculum (Interview: Mr Jansen, 03 October 2012).*

*"I met a few boys from the Homestead on the bus. They told me about the school and I went to see YCS and I thought that it was the right school for the boys to go to" (Interview: Mrs De Vos, 16 October 2012).*

*"We first looked at options around before we decided what will suit his needs. They (the boys) struggled academically at mainstream schools. The programme at this school will help him to make them successful young men. In the assessment the school also showed that they would be capable of helping them" (Interview: Mr Kannemeyer, 19 October 2012).*

*"The reason is that most of our boys in our place of care are behind in their academic level. They missed 2-3 years of schooling. They've been on the street for so long. Mainstream schools do not take them. Abet schools take them; Also YCS. My own research indicated that it is one of the best ABET schools in Cape Town. This is one of the reasons we sent our boys here" (Interview: Mr Sobetwa, 23 October 2012).*

*“He was disruptive. He was expelled from Salt River High. A friend told me about YCS. He was accepted. I only hear good things about the school”* (Interview: Mrs Kamaldien, 04 October 2012).

*“First we did not know about the school. We went to Wynberg High and they said why don’t we try YCS”* (Interview: Mrs Joshua, 16 October 2012).

Several parents/care-workers/guardians were referred or were recommended to apply for a position for their child at YCS. As indicated above, various reasons were indicated as to why they wanted to enrol their children at YCS.

## **5.7 Educators view on learners’ reasons for enrolling at the YCS**

### **5.7.1 Educational reasons**

In a similar vein as indicated by learners, educators concurred that it is for educational reasons that learners enrol at YCS. According to the educators, learners realise that they need a basic qualification to access further studies at FET Colleges. This is the opportunity that YCS offers learners who dropped out/opted out of school and would like to complete their basic education.

Educators at the school indicated that learners are aware that they need a basic education to access further studies. Educators who were interviewed had the following responses about reasons why learners enrolled at YCS:

*“Most learners want to complete Grade 9 to be able to go back into mainstream or to be able to go to a FET College to continue their studies. Sometimes it is the parents who want their children to complete their education”* (Interview: Mrs Du Preez, 03 October 2012).

*“First and foremost they [the learners] admitted that they are the problem. Being at home made them realise they needed schooling. Some said that they could not cope in bigger classes in mainstream. They would be bored and disruptive. These are the things they admit to. They do know the qualifications they get here. They can go to a FET College. That is important to them”* (Interview: Mrs Kader, 16 October 2012).

*“Most say they want to learn, they want to go to college and they want to become artisans. They were marginalised. They are still youth, they want to belong. They come to school, even for the slice of bread. They feel part. They don’t see the negative side of their behaviour. They are happy being at school. It will take long to correct their behaviour and the damage done in their lives”* (Interview: Mr Adriaanse, 17 October 2012).

*“The level fours hope to get a school leavers’ certificate. The lower levels attend this school to catch up on numeracy skills to gain a basic education”* (Interview: Mrs Smith, 19 October 2012).

*“Mostly they indicate they want to complete at YCS to go to a FET College or back to a mainstream school”* (Interview: Mrs Johnson, 24 October 2012).

*“They want an education, to get access to a college or they want to go back to mainstream. Another reason is that they want to learn English”* (Interview: Mr Saunders, 24 October 2012).

It seems that most learners want to further their studies according to the interviews with the educators.

### **5.7.2 YCS’s ways of dealing with learners experiencing difficulty academically and personally**

Another reason educators indicated why learners enrol at YCS is that YCS can deal with learners who are experiencing learning difficulties or those who are behind academically in terms of their age and grade. The smaller classes and individual attention that they get at YCS is another reason and learners would perform better academically and their behaviour also improves.

During the interviews with individual educators they cited a variety of reasons why learners enrolled at YCS:

*“Partly because other schools reject them. They don’t know what to do as their academic abilities are very low and they cannot cope. They also display behavioural problems and other schools don’t want them. Then they would want to come to YCS as they heard from others that this is a school that can deal with*

*those learners. Also because the classes are small and the individual attention that is given to learners” (Interview: Mr Arendse, 12 October 2012).*

*“Some students experience a disruption in their education. Some have not attended ‘normal’ school for 4 years. Some come from Islamic schools. They do not have a solid foundation in basic education. They, the caregivers or parents, have identified that there is a basic need for education. Others come from established mainstream schools and have experienced problems. This school allows space and time for one-on-one interaction. Also we do not know the entire history of students and the truth about certain students is not told. It only comes out later. Students stay at home for a year or longer and then they are too old to go back to school. Then they are best suited to come here” (Interview: Mr Noor, 23 October 2012).*

*“They know classes are too big at mainstream schools to get special attention. Because of disadvantage in one or two learning areas, that cause learners to drop out of mainstream schools. At YCS they are accommodated in smaller classes and they get more attention and more in depth teaching” (Interview: Mr Carelse, 23 October 2012).*

Educators reported that the smaller classes, the one-on-one interaction, patience of educators and individual attention are all factors that contribute to a learner being successful.

### **5.8 Ways in which YCS addresses social exclusion**

The term social exclusion has its origins in René Lenoir (1974, 1989, p. 113), referring to a state or situation by which people are excluded, consisting not only of the poor but of a wide variety of people, namely the social misfits.

Redmond defines social exclusion as the “processes in society that lead some people to be excluded from a range of institutions, activities, or environments: the ‘denial’ or non-realisation of civil, political, and social rights of citizenship” (Room, 1995, p. 115).

Children are citizens entitled to rights and capabilities and social exclusion directly violates their rights and capabilities, which are recognised by the Convention of the

Rights of the Child and national legislation governing the rights of children (UNICEF, 1989; BMFSFJ, 1998).

Applying the capabilities approach by Sen (1992, p. 116), one can define social exclusion as the inability to participate in and be recognised by society. This is exactly what happened to learners who dropped out. They felt that they were not participating and being recognised by society. This includes participation in society and recognition of people by society in terms of equality or equal opportunity. To refine the capability failure would be to define more specific rights and capabilities that are necessary for the child to be able to interact equally in social events and be recognised as an equal by the rest of society.

### 5.8.1 Responses from learners

Learners indicated that they were all treated the same. No one at the school made them feel uncomfortable. Most respondents said that educators were patient and they helped and supported learners as cited by the following learners:

*“No one makes you feel uncomfortable at the school. Everyone fits in very well and gets along with each other. Everyone is treated the same”* (Interview: William, 03 October 2012).

*“The school includes you in all activities and you must socialise with others. I find it easier to make friends”* (Interview: Elizabeth, 04 October 2012).

*“The school believed in me and I learnt a lot”* (Interview: Luther, 11 October 2012).

*“The school will find out what is wrong with you. They make the time and make sure you are not left behind”* (Interview: Michelle, 11 October 2012).

*“I feel part of the class. The teachers give you the necessary support and you can talk to them”* (Interview: Arthur, October 2012).

*“Everyone is treated equally. The school also offers counselling and motivates learners every day in order for them not to feel left out”* (Interview: Jacob, 15 October 2012).

*“Everyone is talking to me and they are nice to me. They respect me and I feel included in the school programme. I feel part of the school. The educators encourage learners all the time and tell them never to give up”* (Interview: Samih, October 2012).

*“I feel included at school as I always feel free to help the teachers or where help is needed. The mere fact that the teachers acknowledge me makes me feel good. The teachers give me the confidence. The teachers encourage all the learners all the time”* (Interview: Theodore, 10 October 2012).

*“I am always involved in the programmes at the school. I am also a prefect and feel included at the school. The school is supportive and offers counselling, extra classes and they make time to listen to you and the teachers will see how they can assist you”* (Interview: Shireen, 22 October 2012).

Most learners indicated that they felt included in the school programme and activities. If they felt left behind there would always be an educator to assist or who offered additional help. Learners felt that they are acknowledged and heard and that there were people who believed in them.

### **5.8.2 Responses from parents/guardians/care-workers**

The parents/care-workers/guardians that were interviewed indicated that from the feedback they received from their children, YCS is a school that includes everyone irrespective of race, gender, religion or social background. Their responses are cited below:

*“The school makes all learners feel included especially if they struggle with academic work by offering additional classes. The school offers opportunities in other activities like soccer to make everyone feel included”* (Interview: Mr Jansen, 03 October 2012).

*“Educators offer help to learners and refer them to seek help in matters that they cannot assist with. The educators offer advice and talk to learners”* (Interview: Mrs Kamaldien, 04 October 2012).

*“If the school and educators did not make learners feel included they would have dropped out already. There are always additional classes that learners can attend”* (Interview: Mrs de Vos, 16 October 2012).

*“Learners are included in all activities taking place at the school. It is a supportive environment at the school and my son feels included”* (Interview: Mrs Joshua, 16 October 2012).

*“Learners are offered extra classes but if they do not want to take up the offer they could feel excluded. There are regular phone calls and work would be sent home if learners need assistance at home”* (Interview: Mrs Hendricks, 18 October 2012).

Parents were aware that at YCS the educators go the extra mile to make sure no learner is left behind. YCS has a full inclusionary programme in place.

### **5.8.3 Responses from educators**

*“Educators try to include all learners in all sorts of activities at school. We would have a valedictory or have a girls’ choir that makes everyone feel part of the school”* (Interview: Mrs Du Preez, 03 October 2012).

*“We try to meet the needs of all learners; by talking to them, encouraging and motivating them. Colleagues offer extra classes to assist learners who struggle”* (Interview: Mr Arendse, 12 October 2012).

*“What works in my class is to get over-confident learners to assist their peers. The one-on-one teaching method is very helpful in terms of getting learners to feel part of the school and the classroom setting. This helps built their confidence and they feel included”* (Interview: Mrs Kader, 16 October 2012).

*“At first it is difficult to say whether learners feel included in the school. It is only later in the year that they feel included. It can improve especially with the girls. Having a school with a majority of boys is not easy for the girls. They might feel excluded in some activities. They might feel marginalised. Girls also have different needs. The school offers what they can with the resources they have. Educators make extra time available to learners – to those who need help*

*academically. Usually excluded learners have attention seeking behavioural problems” (Interview: Mr Adriaanse, 17 October 2012).*

*“Learners feel included in school especially in academic programmes as the school has volunteers who assist with the Literacy programme. Educators have an open door policy and the Trauma Centre offers counselling services to learners at school who need help” (Interview: Mrs Smith, 19 October 2012).*

*“Educators would identify and discuss with other staff members how to assist learners who feel excluded. In a discreet way it will be addressed in an appropriate manner” (Interview: Mr Noor, 23 October 2012).*

*“Learners would be included in the day-to-day running of the school with the appointment of prefects to assist educators. In this way learners with leadership qualities feel included in school programme. On special days learners are allowed to get involved and organise programme – this gives them a sense of belonging and help boost their self-esteem. Educators try to include as many as possible of the learner body when arranging special programmes. That is helping with Information Technology equipment, sound equipment, performances and other activities. At one stage or another almost everyone will be included in some sort of activity or the other at the school” (Interview: Mr Carelse, 23 October 2012).*

*“Educators at the school make a point of including everyone in the school programme. The school is a non-racist, non-sexist school and everyone feels included” (Interview: Mr Saunders, 24 October 2012).*

According to the data collected from learners, parents/guardians and educators, they were all in agreement that YCS is a school that addresses social exclusion. All learner participants indicated that they feel included at the school with regards to all activities taking place at the school. Parents/ guardians also acknowledged that educators at YCS make sure that all learners are included especially with regards to the academic programme. Parents/guardians are aware that learners who need the extra help are given extra classes in order for the learners to feel academically included. No learners are left behind, according to the parents/guardians.

The data reveal that educators ensure that all learners get equal opportunities to be part of all extra-curricular activities or programmes at the school. According to educators, this helps to boost their confidence and self-esteem which they might have lacked.

### **5.9 Social inclusion and capability development at YCS**

Education is one of the most important factors affecting the development of children. Education has great intrinsic significance as access to education and it is an important right (see Article 28 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996), and being educated is an important and valuable capability. Adding to that, getting educated is an important participatory process for children and equal access for all to this process allows participation in, and respect by society. Many of the early calls for mass education in the 18th and 19th centuries viewed the inclusionary nature of the education process, and the fostering of citizenship through education as more important than the skills one may acquire through education (Rothschild, 1998).

According to Martin (n.d., p. 113), social inclusion is the process through which we value all individuals and recognise their diverse contributions to communities. All children have the right and entitlement to be socially included in their school and educational setting. Social inclusion is important because all children have a right to a good education, to feel valued, have the opportunity to fulfil their potential and take part in educational opportunities with their peers.

Martin (n.d., p. 113), states that social inclusion helps build a climate in which good learning can take place, encouraging respect and tolerance for others, educating for citizenship and laying the foundations for lifelong learning. It is about enabling individuals to participate effectively in economic, social, political and cultural life. Social inclusion is about reducing inequalities so that the least advantaged have opportunities equalling those of the rest of society. Martin further states that social inclusion is about enabling children and young people to achieve more than they thought possible, irrespective of socio-economic background, gender, race or levels of ability and disability. In effect, social inclusion is the process through which we value all individuals and recognise their diverse contributions to

communities. This approach is all evident through the responses from the learners attending YCS.

In South Africa, the newly formed post-1994 state-initiated policy, changed to create an enabling policy environment to effect inclusion of all learners. YCS is an initiative of a non-governmental organisation that addressed social exclusion and the study revealed that the school has successfully developed capabilities to include learners who were previously marginalised.

The capabilities that learners at YCS have developed are contributing to them feeling socially included and evidence from the raw data speaks to this; learners are feeling socially included at YCS and the wider society as they feel valued and have the opportunity to fulfil their potential and take part in educational opportunities with their peers.

The capabilities that appear in the literature, which were developed at YCS are: the capability of learner agency; the capability of being treated with dignity and the capability to exercise choice and the capability to read, communicate and argue. New capabilities developed at YCS which emerged are: the capability of discipline, positive attitude and sense of belonging and capabilities that educators developed for the development of '*functionings*' amongst learners: are patience and encouragement.

YCS was established to enable learners who had dropped out to develop capabilities which facilitated their social inclusion. In this section I discuss the capabilities the learners developed at YCS. There is clear evidence from the data that YCS enabled participants to develop capabilities which facilitated their social inclusion into the school and wider society.

Sen (1995, p. 117), states that the capability approach is a "concentration on freedom to achieve in general and the capabilities to function in particular". Sen claims that a person's well-being must be evaluated in the light of a form of assessment of the functionings achieved by that person (Sen, 1992, p.39). This capability to achieve functionings reflects the persons' real opportunities or freedom of choice between possible lifestyles (Sen, 1993, p. 117).

Capability "represents a person's freedom to achieve well-being" (Sen, 1992, p.48), so that "acting freely and being able to choose are.... directly conducive to well-being" (Sen, 1992, p. 51). Sen (1992, p. 116), further stresses the importance of choosing a life one has reason to

value, that is a life reflectively chosen. Capability is freedom and rationality combined. In education we need to keep in mind that if we aim to develop adult capabilities, this will mean not only capability but also functioning in children in order to produce a mature adult capability. Sen's (1999, p. 117), argument emphasises not only the freedom a child may have in the present, but also the freedom they will have in the future. Sen (1999, p. 117), states that if a child refuses, or is denied or restricted in his or her access to the goods of education (exclusion), this will in turn reduce opportunities in adult life and restrict future individual freedom and agency. Sen (1999, p. 117), therefore says that lifelong education begins with the very young child, and children are key to a better future.

According to Walker (2006, p. 118), Nussbaum (2000, p. 114), has produced a list of capabilities which claims to be universal and cross-cultural. Nussbaum's list of capabilities overlaps with Walker's list as shown in the literature review (See section 3.7.2) and includes the capability of: practical reason (being able to plan one's life); affiliation (being able to live with and toward others, to recognise and show concern for other human beings); to engage in various forms of social interactions; to be able to imagine the situation of another and to have compassion for that situation; to have the capability for both justice and friendship; having the social bases for self-respect and non-humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others; having use of all senses, imagination and thought; emotions and bodily health and bodily integrity.

The data collected from the learners, parents/guardians/care-workers and educators show that YCS enabled participants to develop additional capabilities. The two most prominent capabilities which were developed at YCS are the capability to read, communicate and argue and the capability of confidence. Other capabilities are also highlighted and new capabilities which emerged from the data collected are discussed in the next section.

### **5.9.1 Context of caring for capability development**

In their responses several participants referred to the context of caring that was created for the development of their capabilities.

Many of the participants who were interviewed stated that at YCS there is a culture of caring. This means that the learners could speak out about the challenges they are facing, which assisted them in becoming confident, successful and having a more positive approach to life

and feeling a sense of accomplishment academically. The learner participants had the following to say why they thought the YCS has a caring environment.

*“YCS is a school that cares. They help us. Other schools don’t care if you do not do your work. I did not get much help that I get here”* (Interview: Jacob, 15 October 2012).

*“I think maybe the home thought I needed to be with people who understand me and my situation”* (Interview: Michelle, 11 October 2012).

*“To improve my behaviour and to learn to achieve and be a better person in life”* (Interview: Cecil, 11 October 2012).

*“...because someone told me about the school and the Grades and the opportunities and about the good educators”* (Interview: Charles, 15 October 2012).

*“...because I heard from the Rabbi about this school and he said it was a nice school”* (Interview: Charmaine, 15 October 2012).

*“...because other schools have gangsters but this school – not a lot about gangsterism”* (Interview: Moegamat, 16 October 2012).

*“I heard from a friend about YCS. She explained about the nice school that can deal with my situation. It is a good opportunity. YCS offers a lot. The teachers are good. They concentrate on you when you struggle with something”* (Interview: Shireen, 22 October 2012).

Mrs Carelse, a parent, concurred with Jacob in that YCS is a school that cares.

*“YCS is a caring school and you can see it in my child as she cares for other children when she teaches them the recorder”* (Interview: Mrs Carelse, 04 October 2012).

### **5.9.2 Capability: Allowing self to be treated with dignity**

Data collected from learners substantiate the capabilities Nussbaum identified as “being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others” (Nussbaum, 2000,

p.114) Allowing yourself to open up, to allow yourself to be treated in a dignified manner was a capability that was developed amongst learners at YCS.

The UNICEF Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), was signed and ratified by the majority of countries in the world. The rights that may be relevant to social inclusion and exclusion are the following:

Of relevance is article 28, which states

Parties recognise the right of the child to education (...) and on the basis of equal opportunity shall, in particular make primary education compulsory and available free to all; encourage the development of different forms of secondary education (...), make them available and accessible to every child, and take appropriate measures such as the introduction of free education and offering financial assistance in case of need; (...) take measures to encourage regular attendance at schools and the reduction of dropout rates; (...).

Article 29:

Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential (...); the preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship amongst all peoples, ethnic, national, and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin.

Failure in meeting any of these rights mentioned, for whatever reasons, could be seen as social exclusion, as all of these rights deal with the ability of the child to interact with society on equal terms.

According to learner participant Shaheed, the school turned his life around as they assisted him to overcome his drug problem. He no longer uses drugs. He is more open with people and does not keep things inside. He talks to the teachers when he needs help. He says that the school motivated him to study hard and to make the right choices. The capabilities sharing the YCS approach has developed for Shaheed and others, according to Nussbaum's list (2000, p. 114) list the following capabilities: having the social bases for self-respect and non-

humiliation; being able to be treated as a dignified being whose worth is equal to that of others and emotions and bodily health and bodily integrity.

*“I am more open with people, I don’t keep things inside. I talk to teachers when I need help”* (Interview: Shaheed, 04 October 2012).

Similarly Zain and Cecil indicated that they do not feel humiliated when asking for help.

*“I learnt to ask for help”* (Interview: Zain, 11 October 2012).

*“If you don’t understand the schoolwork the educators will help you”* (Interview: Cecil, 11 October 2012).

Charles and Shireen also had this to say:

*“The educators at the school do help the learners when they struggle with their schoolwork and motivate them”* (Interview: Charles, 15 October 2012).

*“The educators would help me and they believe in me. You only need to ask for help”* (Interview: Shireen, 22 October 2012).

Shaun thought that the other learners at the YCS were non-judgemental. Whereas at the previous school he found it very difficult to fit in and was bullied and stated that was one of the reasons why he dropped out. At YCS he found the educators friendly and he could cope with the work. Here the learners were not violent. The school taught him some important social skills on how to get on with others. He declared the school had given him a second-chance to further himself, in education and in life. Shaun was no longer bottled up and was able to talk about his situation. He has made friends and came to school every day. He never wanted to stay at home on a school day. He says the school has opened his eyes and showed him that there is always a second-chance for people in need. Walker (2006, p. 169), identifies that “the capability of not being subject to fear which diminishes learning, either from physical punishment (bullying) or verbal attacks” helped him to develop his potential.

This was identified from the data collected from Shaun.

*“They bullied me at the school where I was and that was the reason why I stayed at home. Here at YCS the learners don’t judge you”* (Interview: Shaun, 15 October 2012).

Mrs Du Preez, an educator concurred with Shaun that the capability of not being subject to fear, physical punishment and developing emotions and imagination for understanding, empathy, awareness and discernment are being developed at YCS. She stated,

*“When learners came to YCS they felt they did not fit in, but that has improved. Not being bullied at the school and being accepted for who they are has given them the skills to cope with life”* (Interview: Mrs Du Preez, 03 October 2012).

In a similar vein parents/guardians/care-workers also indicated in the data collected that helping was a capability that YCS had developed amongst their learners. As confirmed by Mr Jansen, Mrs Suleiman and Mr Kannemeyer:

*“The learners from YCS are able to help the younger boys at the home with their homework”* (Interview: Mr Jansen, 03 October 2012).

Clearly this capability was made possible through the example that is set at the school.

*“The school has given my son a chance. He helps others who are struggling with their schoolwork”* (Interview: Mrs Suleiman, 22 October 2012).

*“Our learner from the home is always willing to assist others”* (Interview: Mr Kannemeyer, 19 October 2012).

Educators also identified the capability to help others.

*“Learners are able to help others in the class with their academic work”* (Interview: Mrs Du Preez, 03 October 2012).

*“Learners are confident to ask for help when they do not understand the work. They feel proud of themselves if they find that they can do something now which they struggled with before. The older learners who have been at YCS for more than one year would take the new ones under their wings and help them”* (Interview: Mrs Kader, 16 October 2012).

*“They are also able to help others in class and are eager to assist”* (Interview: Mr Carelse, 23 October 2012).

Being treated as a dignified being, respect for self and for others is a form of social relations which the culture at YCS has developed in learners.

### 5.9.3 Capability: Self-confidence

Education is an enabling factor and the capability of self-confidence is identified as a capability according to Walker (2006, p.118). Several learners indicated that their confidence improved since they've been at YCS.

According to participant Shaheed, the school turned his life around. He is more open with people and don't keep things inside. He talks to the teachers when he needs help. He says that the school motivated him to study hard and to make the right choices, which has improved his confidence. He is now more interested in his schoolwork. His confidence has improved as he is able to talk to people. He is now also confident to read aloud.

*"Like in reading and understanding sentences in word problems in Maths, I have a better understanding. I am more confident now. I never used to talk to people a lot. I never used to read. Now we read newspapers in class. I am more confident in reading aloud. I am more open with people, I don't keep things inside. I talk to teachers when I need help"* (Interview: Shaheed, 04 October 2012).

*"I am very confident now. Now I am not shy anymore"* (Interview: Charles, 15 October 2012).

*"I read easier and write better. I am confident to speak in front of people (address people). Now I speak to others. I was always keeping things to myself. I never wanted to speak"* (Interview: Shireen, 22 October 2012).

YCS has presented Azaad with more opportunities to further his studies at a FET College. He is much more confident and believes in himself now. Ever since he had been unsuccessful at a mainstream school and failed Grade 9 three times, though he attended school regularly, he has changed. He is much more hopeful now.

*"I am not shy to talk to people. I am confident now. I believe in myself, that I can do it"* (Interview: Azaad, 11 October 2012).

YCS acknowledged her capability as head girl, according to Nomaindia. The school presented her with opportunities which she never thought she would ever achieve which boosted her self-esteem and gave her the confidence to believe that she can accomplish things

in the future. A lot of support and encouragement comes from educators at YCS to assist learners to do better academically.

*“YCS made me see the real me, who I am”* (Interview: Nomaindia, 11 October 2012).

Arthur says that the school has made him feel proud of himself. He is much more confident now. The school has made him believe that he can do something with his life.

*“Since I’ve been at YCS I feel part of the class and my marks are good. I am much more confident. The school has made me believe again that I can do something”* (Interview: Arthur, 11 October 2012).

The educators at the school do help the learners when they struggle with their schoolwork and motivate them, according to Charles. He says it is the way they explain the work that makes it easier to understand. He says he is much more confident and not shy anymore.

*“The school gave me the confidence. I am very confident now. Now I am not shy anymore”* (Interview: Charles, 15 October 2012).

Shireen acknowledged that the school made a significant impact on her as the educators were very supportive. The educators believe in her. She is now more confident to speak in front of people, a bigger group of people. She used to keep to herself and never wanted to speak, but now she speaks to others.

*“I am confident to speak in front of people. Now I speak to others. I communicate more. I was always keeping things to myself. I never wanted to speak”* (Interview: Shireen, 22 October 2012).

Parents/guardians responded similarly to that of the learners regarding the capability of confidence that the learners developed since they started at YCS.

Mr Jansen indicated that the school offers their learners stability and security and their self-esteem and confidence improved since they enrolled at YCS. Mrs Carelse and Mrs De Vos concur with Mr Jansen, their children are more confident now.

*“The school offers stability and security to those learners who suffered severe trauma and upheaval and disruptions in their lives. The learners living at the*

*children's home have a better outlook on life and are more positive ever since they've been at YCS. Their self-esteem and confidence have improved since they enrolled at YCS"* (Interview: Mr Jansen, 03 October 2012).

*"My daughter is now motivated to learn whereas before she never wanted to go to school. She is eager to attend school and feel she must be there. She helps others at church and teaches the recorder to young children. The school taught her more about life. She is much happier now than before. She appears to be more confident. 'Sy het uit haar dop gekruip' (translated: she is much more confident). Her personality has changed ever since she enrolled at the school"* (Interview: Mrs Carelse, 04 October 2012).

*"My son is more confident and respectful. He has a better sense of choices now and he is not involved in any negative activities"* (Interview: Mrs Kamaldien, 04 October 2012).

*"I could see the remarkable difference the school has made in the lives of current learners and past learners who attend or attended YCS. They become more confident, they can speak in public and all credit is due to YCS"* (Interview: Mrs De Vos, 16 October 2012).

*"My son is a calmer child as his temperament has changed. He is more outspoken and is not scared to take risks whereas before he was withdrawn. He has a sense of belonging and hope now and looks forward to going to college, to study further"* (Interview: Mrs Joshua, 16 October 2012).

*"The school has given my child a chance. He is very happy in the environment and is really excelling academically. He is a confident person and has learnt a lot at the school. At this school he has a sense of belonging"* (Interview: Mrs Suleiman, 22 October 2012).

*"My son is able to get more attention at this school as there are fewer learners in the class. He is more interested in his schoolwork and does his homework regularly. I can actually see evidence of schoolwork whereas before at the previous school there were never any notes in his books. Although he is lazy to*

*read he is now more confident when he communicates with others” (Interview: Mrs Groenewald, 22 October 2012).*

*“YCS has a holistic approach to educating the child. They look at where the child comes from, how he could be helped. YCS has been able to uplift kids, empower them and also help them with their self-esteem. After being at the school for a while you can see them becoming proud young men, not embarrassed about where they stay and showing respect to self and others. One boy is particularly eager to learn and wants to assist the home schooling group in the afternoons when he gets home” (Interview: Mr Sobetwa, 23 October 2012).*

The educators responded in the following way on what they thought the school offers in terms of a capability such as self-confidence and how learners are included in the school.

*“Learners are now more confident in their academic work whereas before they felt like failures not being able to pass at the mainstream school. They are more confident now than when they first enrolled at the school. Also their self-esteem improved, not being bullied at the school and being accepted for who they are” (Interview: Mrs Du Preez, 03 October 2012).*

*“The learners are confident and are pursuing further studies and careers” (Interview: Mr Arendse, 12 October 2012).*

*“Learners are confident to ask for help when they do not understand the work. They feel proud of themselves if they find that they can do something now which they struggled with before. The older learners who have been at YCS for more than one year would take the new ones under their wings” (Interview: Mrs Kader, 16 October 2012).*

*“Learners are more confident especially after a few months at the school. They calmed down as the year progressed. The school has also given them confidence, self-esteem and skills” (Interview: Ms Smith, 19 October 2012).*

*“I have seen learners grow in confidence when speaking English and in answering questions. It improves as the year progresses. Their readiness to participate in programmes and to do assignments and tasks gives you a sense of*

*accomplishment. The YCS also developed in the learners a sense of direction*” (Interview: Mr Carelse, 23 October 2012).

*“YCS has improved the confidence, rebuilt the learners’ self-esteem and developed individuals with enquiring minds with a hope of a better future, to escape poverty”* (Interview: Mrs Johnson, 24 October 2012).

#### **5.9.4 Capability: Respect, recognition, self-esteem and leadership**

Nussbaum (2000, p. 114), includes “the capability of having the social bases for self-respect.” Sen, attaches the importance of the relations a person has with others, to the social role of education and generally the capability to be a full participant in society, so a capability for social relations is arguably important, embedded in social networks of care and support (Gasper and Van Staveren, 2003, p. 111; Nussbaum, 2003a, p. 114). In the context of schooling, social relations might take the form of an institutional culture, supportive teachers, caring from and for peers in the learning arrangement which develops confidence. Learners developed respect, recognition and self-esteem, which is a capability that was developed YCS at (Walker, 2006, p. 118).

The capability that was developed at YCS for Nomaindia was to be treated with respect, the school showing empathy, compassion and generosity. She had the following to say:

*“If you don’t have money for transport or something to eat, the school (YCS) will provide”* (Interview: Nomaindia, 11 October 2012).

A capability identified by Charmaine which was developed at YCS is the capability to be respectful to others. She says:

*“My manners improved. The learners at the school are very respectful toward each other. There is no fighting with each other and everyone greets each other”* (Interview: Charmaine, 15 October 2012).

Parents/guardians/care-workers, Mrs Kamaldien and Mr Sobetwa agrees:

*“My son is more obedient and respectful ever since he enrolled at YCS. This is due to the teachers”* (Interview: Mrs Kamaldien, 04 October 2012).

*“The YCS has a holistic approach to educating the child. After being at the school for a while you can see them becoming proud young men, not embarrassed about where they stay, and they show respect to self and others”* (Interview: Mr Sobetwa, 23 October 2012).

According to Mrs Joshua, her son has developed the capability of a sense of belonging at YCS, whereas before he did not feel he fits into the previous school.

*“My son has a sense of belonging and hope now and looks forward to go to college, to study further”* (Interview: Mrs Joshua, 16 October 2012).

Educators also acknowledge that YCS has developed respect as a capability amongst the learners.

*“It is expected of learners to respect learning at school”* (Interview, Mrs Du Preez, 03 October 2012).

YCS has developed respect and self-esteem amongst the learners and the learners, parents/guardians/care-workers and educators agree that this capability is important for their personal development and their positive approach to life.

My data prompt a new dimension to this capability and it is the capability of leadership which was developed at YCS with some of the learners. Leadership is a capability which some of the participants said was developed at YCS. Learners who never thought they had these capabilities were presented with the opportunity to lead and became confident, positive role models to the other learners at the school. It also allowed them to develop respect, recognition and self-esteem.

*“The school has brought out my leadership capabilities when I was elected as prefect and it made me feel good”* (Interview: Ntsikelelo, 10 October 2012).

*“YCS acknowledged my ability as head girl. The school presented me with opportunities which I never thought I would ever achieve”* (Interview: Nomaindia, 11 October 2012).

*“Another capability that the school developed in learners was that they developed leadership skills in some of the learners when they were elected as prefects. When some learners came to YCS they felt that they did not fit in. They*

*were negative but afterwards the school taught them the skills to lead and to be role models to others” (Interview: Mrs Du Preez, 03 October 2012).*

*“YCS not only teaches the curriculum but also develops and enables learners to become positive role models” (Interview: Mr Noor: 23 October 2012).*

### **5.9.5 Capability: Learner agency, autonomy and choice**

The capability approach attaches great importance to agency, and to genuine reflective choice. Education in any context should promote agency and education should facilitate the development of autonomy and empowerment, or what Nussbaum (2000, p. 114), describes as “practical reason, being able to plan one’s life.”

Sen’s (1999, p. 19), concept of ‘agency freedom’ by which he means “someone who acts and brings about change, and whose achievements are to be judged in terms of her own values and objectives” is central to the capability approach. Agency is then one’s ability to pursue goals that one values and is important for the life an individual wishes to lead; agency and well-being are deeply connected. It then follows that education ought to contribute to agency freedom, and hence to ask how education and education policy seeks to contribute to human capabilities. Moreover, education is understood here to be a capability in itself, and education is also understood to be made up of a number of separate but intersecting and overlapping constitutive capabilities.

The data collected indicated that several learners at YCS have developed their capability to take responsibility for their own learning in order to improve their situation, as is the case with William.

*“I attend extra English classes on Thursdays after school with Caroline from Scalabrini. I am not shy now. I am confident” (Interview: William, 03 October 2012).*

Parents/guardians/care-workers concurred that their learners take responsibility for their own learning.

*“There is a change in behaviour and attitude which can be ascribed to the school. Also there is an interest in reading” (Interview: Mr Kannemeyer, 19 October 2012).*

*“I can actually see evidence of schoolwork whereas before at the previous school there were never any notes in his books”* (Interview: Mrs Groenewald, 22 October 2012).

*“The one boy is particular eager to learn and want to assist the home schooling group in the afternoons when he gets home”* (Interview: Mr Sobetwa, 23 October 2012).

These students and educators’ comments about the development the children showed support for Saito’s statement, “Education plays a role in influencing both intrinsic and instrumental values” (Saito, 2003, p. 23).

The contribution of Sen’s capability approach is to illuminate the concept that education involves both intrinsic and instrumental values. Sen discusses the relationship between capital and human capability as an expression of freedom. Both place humanity at the centre of attention, and to be closely related to each other. Human capability focuses on the ability – the substantive freedom – of people to lead the lives they have reason to value and to enhance the real choices they have. Sen articulates the role of human capabilities in three ways; these include, well-being and freedom of people, second, influencing social change and finally, economic production (Sen, 1999, pp.296-297).

The data collected from an educator indicated that at YCS opportunities exist to develop the capability of the knowledge of values and for learners to be responsible.

*“At YCS learners learn about values and to be responsible”* (Interview: Mr Saunders, 24 October 2012).

White (1973, p. 22), resonates with Sen in relation to education. He claims that adopting an extremely libertarian position vis-à-vis the child is irrational. In other words, making no effort to teach a child anything, since we do not know what is good or bad for the child, does not lead the child to improve his/her well-being: “Letting children learn what they wanted in this way might well restrict the range of possible things which they might choose for their own sake, they might fail to learn about other things which might also have been included” (White, 1973, p.22). White makes this valuable comment when he points out that Giving temporary freedom to a child does not always mean that the child will have freedom in future, and similarly, restricting the temporary freedom of a child may well expand the

freedom that the child will have in future. Therefore we have to consider the freedom for a child in a lifelong perspective.

For educational guidelines, White (1973, p. 22), proposes that the least harmful course we can follow is to let a child determine what the good shall be for him or her as far as possible. He claims that as long as we ensure “(a) that he knows about as many activities or ways of life as possible which he may want to choose for their own sake and (b) that he is able to reflect on priorities amongst them from the point of view not only of the present moment but as far as possible of his life as a whole”, it is right to restrict a child’s liberty now so as to give him as much autonomy as possible in future.

Arthur and Michelle indicated that the school has inspired and helped them to believe that there is hope.

*“The school inspired me a lot”* (Interview: Michelle, 11 October 2012).

*“The school has made me believe again that I can do something”* (Interview: Arthur, 11 October 2012).

Theodore also felt that the capability the school developed in him was to motivate him to learn and succeed. He stated,

*“They encourage you to study harder and to finish your work. Never to give up, to do what you want to achieve”* (Interview: Theodore, 10 October 2012).

Having choices and making the right choices is a capability identified from the data collected from a parent/guardian/care-worker which is evident in the literature as indicated by Mr Kannemeyer:

*“Our learner from the home has been eager to attend school. He is now choosing friends more carefully and is no longer involved in negative activities”* (Interview: Mr Kannemeyer, 19 October 2012).

YCS enables learners to gain access to further studies as revealed from the data collected from educators.

*“YCS enables learners to gain access to colleges, employment opportunities and personal growth”* (Interview: Mr Adriaanse, 17 October 2012).

*“YCS has given the learners access to an education for a qualification, to further their studies and to access decent employment”* (Interview: Ms Smith, 19 October 2012).

*“The learners are in a position to make the right choices now”* (Interview: Mr Saunders, 24 October 2012).

It is clear from the data that learners had more choices since they enrolled at YCS and they were able to exercise their choice in choosing further education, friends and making informed lifestyle choices. The data reveal that learner agency, autonomy and choice are capabilities that YCS developed amongst the learners at the school.

### **5.9.6 Capability: Reading, communicating and arguing**

The following authors identified the capability to read, communicate and argue

Sen (1995, p. 117), argues that, “Education can be seen as an important factor in broadening human capabilities which include human capacities”.

Sen (1990, p.126) states that “a person can benefit from education in reading, communicating, arguing, in being able to choose in a more informed way and to be taken seriously by others:... the ability to be well nourished, to avoid escapable morbidity or mortality, to read, write and communicate, to take part in the life of the community, to appear in public without shame”.

Saito (2003, p. 27) says “Education plays a role in developing the capability to read, communicate and argue.”

Most learners indicated that their capability to read, write and communicate improved significantly as teachers at YCS were more patient and spent a lot of time on reading. They also had a lot of support with the help of volunteers who assisted some participants and that helped learners to improve their reading, writing and communication abilities.

Michelle gave the same feedback regarding reading, writing and communication that had improved since she started at YCS.

*“I communicate better. My reading and writing improved”* (Interview: Michelle, 11 October 2012).

Ferdinand said that his English was not very good and he could not write in English before, but now he could write in English.

*“I am much friendlier and communicate better. Now I can write letters to friends. I write jokes. I can speak in public now. At my home I was asked to speak to other children from Kalksteefontein. I read the Bible to them. Before, I was scared to come to school because of the teachers. Now at YCS I am not scared. I am confident and the teachers are patient”* (Interview: Ferdinand, 03 October 2012).

Elizabeth indicated that since she started at YCS her marks in all her subjects improved tremendously. Her reading ability improved. At the mainstream school she failed Grade 9 three times but being at YCS she could see that she was able to learn and do well. She planned on studying Travel and Tourism at a FET College and was accepted. *“My future looks so much brighter now,”* she added.

*“My reading improved. I understand words now which I did not before”*  
(Interview: Elizabeth, 04 October 2012).

Zain learnt to communicate with other learners and to ask for help. It was quite clear that this school is different from the Arabic Studies School which he attended, but he felt very good to be here, to be able to catch up on his schooling.

*“I learnt how to communicate with other learners and ask for help”* (Interview: Zain, 11 October 2012).

Luther also indicated that the school taught him to communicate better and his reading and conversational skills improved since he enrolled at the school.

*“The school taught me to communicate. I improved my reading since I came here”* (Interview: Luther, 11 October 2012).

Jacob said that at the YCS his communication skills and abilities had improved. Now he encouraged other children who were out of school to go back to school. He could now choose where he wanted to go and study. He said that the school made a huge difference in his life. They assisted him when he needed help. They never refused him any help. According to him it is a good school.

*“My reading, writing and communication have improved. Now I can read and write more”* (Interview: Jacob, 15 October 2012).

According to Shamih the school helped the learners to improve their schoolwork and taught him to be positive all the time and never to give up. The principal and teachers encouraged him all the time. They enabled him to read, write and communicate better. He was learning a lot now. He said it is a very nice school.

*“The school helped me a lot with reading, writing and communication”*  
(Interview: Samih, 15 October 2012).

Charmaine said that her reading and spelling improved, as well as her manners. She had totally changed ever since she started at YCS. She said that because the school has such strict rules, she was now more disciplined. She was now reading at home. Before she never used to take out her books but now she read and went over her schoolwork. Her English improved and she spoke much clearer now.

*“I am reading better, before I used to read very badly. My spelling improved”*  
(Interview: Charmaine, 15 October 2012).

Moegamat said that he used to struggle with reading but with the smaller classes and the volunteers, who took him for extra reading sessions, his reading improved a lot. He was much more confident and found it easier to talk to people.

*“First I was struggling to read. Now I can read a bit better. I did not like to talk to people but now I can talk to any person. I can read now. I can spell now”*  
(Interview: Moegamat, 16 October 2012).

*“I can read better. I did not know some of the stuff. I learnt this at this school”*  
(Interview: Shaun 15 October 2012).

Parents/guardians/care-workers agreed with what learners had to say about what YCS was offering learners in terms of capabilities and how it facilitated the social inclusion of learners who dropped out of school.

Most parents/guardians/care-workers indicated that their children’s ability to read, write and communicate improved significantly as teachers at YCS were more patient and spent a lot of time on reading.

*“YCS taught the learners to speak, write and read English better. The learners living at the children’s home have a better outlook on life and are more positive ever since they’ve been at YCS”* (Interview: Mr Jansen, 03 October 2012).

*“There is an interest in reading and his reading and writing skills improved. He has a more positive outlook on life and takes on challenges”* (Interview: Mr Kannemeyer, 19 October 2012).

*“He communicates more openly now. Although he is lazy to read he is now more confident when he communicates with others”* (Interview: Mrs Groenewald, 22 October 2012).

*“The school has helped learners a great deal with their reading and writing. They are able to express themselves. One boy is particularly eager to learn and wants to assist the home schooling group in the afternoons when he gets home”* (Interview: Mr Sobetwa, 23 October 2012).

The capability to be able to read, communicate and argue has facilitated the social inclusion of learners at YCS and the wider society.

### **5.10 New capabilities developed at YCS**

The investigation into causes of social exclusion and ways in which these could be eliminated or minimised had prompted the new capabilities that were revealed in the data that were collected at YCS. The data revealed the new capabilities that were developed at YCS in the next section. These capabilities were not included in the refereed works of authors like Sen, White, Saito, Nussbaum, Robeyns and Walker in the literature review (See section 3.7).

#### **5.10.1 Capability: Discipline**

Discipline is one of the capabilities which was identified in the current study. Learners now owned the capability.

One parent said that her son is now more disciplined and can work on his own.

*“My son is more disciplined now and would sit with his books, whereas before he did not do it”* (Interview: Mrs Joshua, 16 October 2012).

### **5.10.2 Capability: Positive attitude**

Learners discovered this change of belief in their own ability at CYS.

*“My future looks so much brighter now,”* (Elizabeth, 04 October 2012)

Parents/guardians/care-workers identified the fact that their learners are more positive toward life and school and this is all new.

*“He has a more positive outlook on life and takes on challenges”* (Interview: Mr Kannemeyer, 19 October 2012).

*“The educators instil a sense of positivity at the school”* (Interview: Mrs Du Preez, 03 October 2012).

### **5.10.3 Capability: Sense of belonging**

Learners who felt they did not belong, now have a sense of belonging and feel part of the school.

A reason indicated for dropping out of school was; “not liking the school”:

*“I did not want to be at that school”* (Interview: Charmaine, 15 October 2012).

This implies that they now have a sense of belonging through being at YCS.

Educators’ response to sense of belonging.

*“At this school he has a sense of belonging”* (Interview: Mrs Suleiman, 22 October 2012).

### **5.10.4 The capabilities educators developed**

The investigation revealed that in order for participants in the project at the YCS site teachers, guardians and care-workers had to develop specific capabilities to complement their existing

capabilities in order to meet the needs of learners. According to numerous responses of learners teachers displayed two new capabilities. These are the capability of patience and encouragement which they display in order to help and motivate the learners at YCS. Learner, parent and educator responses cited below support the statement regarding both these capabilities.

#### **5.10.5 Educator Capability: Patience**

Learners pointed out that educators are very patient and this helps with their learning.

*“At YCS the teachers are more patient”* (Interview: Ferdinand, 03 October 2012).

*“The teachers are very patient with the learners”* (Interview: Charmaine, 15 October 2012).

#### **5.10.6 Educator Capability: Encouragement**

The second unexpected result that was revealed in the study was educators' continued encouragement to learners to motivate them to succeed. This result was revealed in learner comments cited below.

*“A lot of support and encouragement come from educators at YCS to assist learners to do better academically. The school encourages learners to talk when they have problems as they acknowledge that it can sometimes be a barrier for learners and then they struggle to do well academically”* (Interview: Nomaindia, 11 October 2012).

In the last chapter some key concepts in the study will be summarised, followed by conclusions regarding participant capabilities based on the evidence revealed in findings on the issues needed to minimise social exclusion. In the next section some recommendations will follow and the chapter will be concluded by looking at the limitations of the study and a look ahead to possible new research in order to minimise learner social exclusion.

## CHAPTER SIX

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS BASED ON FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 6.1 Summary

The research problem that was addressed in this study is the following: Learners who drop out of school are more inclined to become socially excluded than those who complete their schooling. Initiatives aimed at social inclusion through capability development could address the dropout issue. This study has shown how the research problem can be addressed through meaningful intervention on a suitable research site by skilled, dedicated educators with support of guardians and care-workers. The aims of the study were: to investigate an initiative which addresses the social exclusion of learners who have dropped out of school; and to generate new knowledge about the relationship between capability theory, school dropout, and social inclusion.

The research questions were: (1) How has capability development facilitated the social inclusion of learners who have 'dropped out' of school and (2) What are the causes of dropout? I investigated causes of dropout and social exclusion, then researched possibilities of capability development to minimise social exclusion and achieve social inclusion at YCS. This study has shown that capability development has facilitated the social inclusion of learners who dropped out of school and re-entered education at YCS.

It was a qualitative study which provided rich data that contributed to a deep understanding of the school dropout and social exclusion phenomenon at the school under investigation. My experience as the current principal of the school under investigation contributed to the execution of the research. Structured interviews and observation were chosen as the preferred research instruments. Structured interviews were conducted with 20 (twenty) learners, 20 % of the 102 learners at YCS; 10 (ten) parents/guardians/care-workers and 9 (nine) educators. The learner participants that were interviewed were South African and non-South African learners at YCS. The parent/guardian/care-worker participants were biological parents,

guardians, social workers or care-workers of the learners. All educators, including the principal of the school, were interviewed.

The selection of the participants contributed to the success of study as the sample represented the total population of learners, parents/guardians/care-workers and educators.

For the study I developed a theoretical framework which incorporated capability theory, education policy and philosophy, social exclusion and social inclusion. The conceptual and theoretical framework was framed by the social exclusion theory and Sen's (1985) capability theory that analysed dropout as a form of exclusion and alternative schools as forms of capability development and social inclusion.

I audio-taped all interviews and took notes to ensure complete capture of the verbal interaction that provided adequate material for reliability checks. All the data were captured electronically and stored it in various forms, for example in USB, e-mailed to myself, on the external hard drive as well as hard copies to ensure these valuable data are not lost due to technical computer problems. All the interviews were transcribed. I commenced with data analysis by coding the data, thereafter I studied the data and identified themes, trends and patterns. The data analysis process revealed sufficient evidence to analyse and develop new insights relating a variety of causes of learner dropout from mainstream schools. A large percentage of the dropouts became socially excluded. The study also investigated ways in which social inclusion implementing capability development theory in practice addressed the dropout problem.

The data gathering process was challenging in terms of setting up appointments with parents/guardians/care-workers as I had to meet them at their homes and children's homes which were widespread in terms of distance and location. The learners and educators were at the research site and it was easy to set up appointments with them.

## **6.2 Conclusions based on Findings**

### **6.2.1 Dropout and social exclusion – expected findings**

The data revealed anticipated findings which included expected reasons why learners drop out of school. These reasons included: repetition of Grades and over-age; drug abuse; financial factors and religion.

### **6.2.2 Capability development and social inclusion**

The educational policy and philosophy of educators employed at YCS enabled learners to develop the following capabilities which were also identified in the literature:

The context of caring for capability development; the capability to allow learners to be treated with dignity; the capability of self-confidence, respect, recognition, self-esteem and leadership, learner agency, autonomy and choice and the capability to be able to read, communicate, argue were revealed in learner responses as capabilities they developed at YCS.

The participants reported improvement in their educational capability, a positive change in their self-esteem, in their belief in their own ability to accomplish something and in their belief that they could be of value to others. The context of caring which was developed at YCS enabled the learners to develop capabilities which included them not only at the school but in society as a whole.

### **6.3 Dropout and social exclusion - unexpected findings**

In contrast to the expected findings which were cited in literature (See Section 2.2 and Section 2.4) some unexpected findings as causes of social exclusion were revealed. The literature reviewed for this thesis is limited in terms of violence and conflict as a reason for dropout. Violence and conflict were revealed as two of the main reasons for dropout in the current study. Although the literature reveals that safety or a safe environment must be created (as a capability), none of the participants indicated that YCS developed this capability, since implicitly learners felt safe. Their learning was not affected in any way as they were not exposed to physical punishment or verbal attacks at YCS. They generally felt safe at YCS. The capability identified by Walker (2006) as generally feeling safe at school

was not mentioned by learners, parents/guardians/care-workers and educators, but appears in the literature. Walker (2006) identifies the capability of not being subject to fear which diminishes learning, fear either of physical punishment or verbal attacks, none of which were mentioned by any of the participants. However, it is clear that the fear caused by abuse, prompted their dropout from school and search for a safer environment. It is clear that schools are violent places. Therefore projects like the Safe Schools initiative by the WCED and trauma counselling by the Trauma Centre should be implemented at all schools to create a safer environment.

### **6.3.1 Learner Capability development and inclusion**

New capabilities that were developed were the capability of discipline, having a positive attitude and having a sense of belonging. Learner responses clearly revealed the new capability – discipline (See Section 5.9.1). Parents/guardians and care-workers endorsed this new learner capability.

A second learner capability that was developed was having a positive attitude. Learner responses revealed that they thought better about themselves and had hope for their future. Many of the learners expressed their intention to finish Grade 9 in order to enrol at a FET College or start training as an artisan. This capability was supported in interviews with parents, guardians and care-workers. Educators also noted this change in learner attitude.

The third learner capability that developed in the caring atmosphere at YCS was a sense of belonging. For the first time in their lives these learners who had always been excluded for many different reasons now felt they belonged somewhere. They declared themselves willing to make friends, talk to people and wanted to attend school. As in the previous two capabilities parents and guardians and also educators supported this new capability. Learners developed loyalty towards YCS and educators. The data collected indicated that if learners are happier; they perform better academically and feel included at the school. This was a new functioning for them.

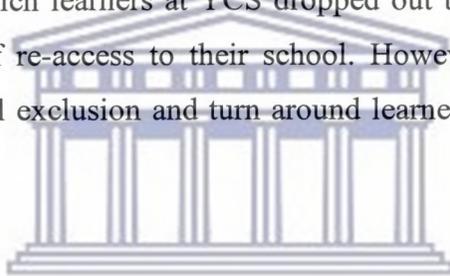
### **6.3.2 Educator Capability development**

An unexpected finding was that educators developed their own capability to create an enabling environment for learners to develop their capabilities. The capability that educators developed is that of patience and secondly encouragement as a further new capability to

include all learners at the school. YCS is more accommodating and tolerant with regard to differences amongst learners than is the rule at mainstream schools. It was found that learners needed the extra attention, the smaller classes, someone who listened and understood them with the result that learners felt socially included. Learner responses indicated their awareness of and gratitude to the educators for their patience and willingness to help them. Parent responses also reflected their gratitude for the help and encouragement to their children.

#### **6.4 Limitations**

The study was confined to only one school which is the only independent day school that offers the ABET curriculum to learners between the ages of 14 – 19 that follows the WCED mainstream school calendar. As mentioned above it would have been beneficial to greater understanding between different schools if there were dialogue between the previous mainstream schools from which learners at YCS dropped out to understand the ex-schools' reasoning for their denial of re-access to their school. However, the aim of the study to minimise the effects of social exclusion and turn around learner attitudes to social inclusion was successful.



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#### **6.5 Recommendations**

Based on the research findings and interpretation, the following recommendations are offered:

##### **Recommendation one**

I recommend that effective intervention programmes should be implemented to move dropouts back into mainstream educational institutions and to create opportunities and experiences that do not contribute to the cycle of poverty, social problems, social exclusion, unemployment and crime which are issues that need to be addressed urgently.

##### **Recommendation two**

All schools should do what YCS is doing – create a caring and safe environment for all learners.

### **Recommendation three**

Schools should create an inclusive learning environment to accommodate learners with different needs than the ordinary learner.

### **Recommendation four**

Schools should develop capabilities amongst learners – to be treated with dignity; to develop the capability of self-confidence; to develop the capability for respect, recognition and leadership; to develop the capability for learner agency, autonomy and choice.

### **Recommendation five**

Learner support programmes at all schools in the form of counsellors and social workers are imperative to address personal and social challenges that learners are facing. Such measures could prevent or at least minimise dropout.

## **6.6 New theoretical perspectives**

Lessons can be learnt from the successful efforts of the YCS as a form of intervention to eliminate or minimise dropout. An environment like that at YCS is required in order for capabilities as mentioned in literature to be able to thrive.

It showed conclusively in this study that YCS has developed capabilities that enable learners to feel safe and thrive academically in a caring environment. In a sense and by coincidence YCS has provided a caring environment and inadvertently YCS has addressed violence. Interventions like YCS enable learners to grow their sense of agency and their belief in them and connect them with experiences and opportunities so that they may take the lead in their lives.

Finding effective ways for learners who are socially excluded to get back into a school and society as a whole where they feel included is an issue of urgent, national concern. I would suggest that the Life Orientation curriculum should be reviewed with the view to enable learners to learn more about violence and to find ways to address violence and ways to overcome it. Adequate training for educators should also be provided to be able to identify

symptoms of abuse and violence which undermine optimal learning and develop ways to address problems that arise.

Sen (1999), states that if children refuse, or are denied or restricted in their access to the goods of education, it will reduce their opportunities that they might have in adult life and will restrict future individual freedom and agency. Sen (1999), therefore says that lifelong education begins with the very young child, and children are key to a better future. YCS is most successful for learners who are ready to change and those who want to make use of the opportunity. YCS is an example of an intervention that creates the kind of capabilities that Sen has identified. YCS has successfully developed the capability theory and has facilitated the social inclusion of learners who were previously socially excluded.

### **6.7 Conclusion**

Not all generally accepted capabilities cited in literature were revealed in the results of the current study. Walker's (2006) identification of capability of safety and security was only implicitly experienced by learners at YCS and never verbally commented on. On the other hand capabilities like violence and conflict in different manifestations of abuse were experienced as a serious cause for dropout to flee danger and escape to safety, even to migrate as in the case of the non-South African learners in the study. New capabilities, such as the above mentioned capabilities of discipline, a positive attitude and a sense of belonging evolved to the benefit of the learners.

A further conclusion that can be drawn is that Sen's capability development theory can promote social inclusiveness if people are treated as equal and with respect. It can be beneficial in the education situation.

In my study I have succeeded in investigating dropout and social exclusion; and an intervention for capability and social inclusion. I recommend that future research should investigate the capabilities that educators should develop in order to enable learners to develop capabilities for future individual freedom and agency.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR EDUCATORS

Name of interviewee \_\_\_\_\_ Date of interview \_\_\_\_\_

##### **Personal information:**

1. Name
2. Address
3. Age
4. Gender
5. Nationality
6. Race (according to SA race classification)

##### **Experience:**

7. How long have you been teaching?
8. What qualifications do you have?
9. What learning areas do you teach?

##### **About the school and learners:**

10. Any particular reason why you teach at this school? When and why did Youth Care School start?
11. Who attends this school?
12. Why do the learners attend this school?
13. Where are the learners from?
14. Indicate the ages of learners who attend this school.
15. What reasons do learners indicate for wanting to attend this school?
16. Explain a typical learner at this school (socio-economic background).
17. What was the most significant impact the school has had on the learners?

**Capabilities:**

**A. Read, write and communicate:**

1. How has YCS enable learners to read, write and communicate?
2. Do the learners feel confident to read, write and communicate?
3. Has their reading, writing and communication skills improved since they enrolled at YCS?
4. How has it improved?

**B. Community Life:**

1. Do they participate in community programmes?
2. If they do name the community programmes that the YCS learners participate in?

**C. To appear in public without shame:**

1. Would you say their self-esteem/ confidence improved since they enrolled at YCS?
2. If YES: How did it improve?

**D. What a person is able to do or be:**

1. Are YCS learners able to help others with the knowledge/education they gained at the school?
2. If YES: How do they help others?

**E. Aspiration:**

1. Are the learners motivated to learn?
2. Do they feel they want to change their circumstances?
3. If answer YES: How do they plan on doing that?



**F. Inclusion:**

1. Does the learners at the school feel included in the school programme?
2. What kind of support does the school and educators offer to learners who feel left out/feel left behind (excluded)?

**G. Choices:**

1. Do they have the necessary information on the possible choices they have after they leave the YCS?
2. Do they have a better sense of direction in their life about the choices they could make?
3. What difference has the school made in their life?



## APPENDIX B

### (EDUCATORS)

#### **Request for consent in research study: Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion. The case of YCS.**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I request consent from you to form part of the research for my thesis for the M.Ed. degree offered by the University of the Western Cape. The key focus of the research is to investigate school dropout, over-age learners, exclusion and inclusion amongst learners. The aim of the study is to generate new knowledge about school dropout, social exclusion and social inclusion.

As a participant you are requested to make yourself available for an interview at a date and time that will suit you and the School and not impact negatively on the teaching and learning process. I also give an undertaking to adhere to the ethics codes pertaining to these types of research and assure the School that all information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. All records and data will be kept in secure storage for five years.

Yours faithfully

\_\_\_\_\_  
M.D. Solomon (Student number 8508092)

**APPENDIX C**

**CONSENT FORM**

**(EDUCATORS)**

**Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion. The case of Youth Care School.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a (designation) \_\_\_\_\_ at

(Name of School) \_\_\_\_\_ agree to be part of the research and have been informed of my right not to take part.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX D

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LEARNERS

Name of interviewee \_\_\_\_\_ Date of interview \_\_\_\_\_

#### Personal information:

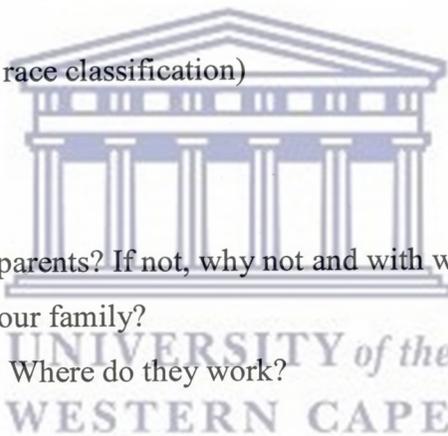
1. Name
2. Address
3. Age
4. Gender
5. Nationality
6. Race (according to SA race classification)

#### Family particulars:

7. Do you live with your parents? If not, why not and with whom do you live?
8. How many people in your family?
9. Do your parents work? Where do they work?

#### Schooling history:

10. What school did you attend previously?
11. Did you attend school regularly? If not, why not?
12. Why did you leave your previous school?
13. Did you ever repeat a grade/s?
14. Were you turned away by other schools? Why?
15. Were you out of school for a while?



**Current schooling:**

16. Who brought you to this school? Did you come willingly? Are you enjoying it?
17. Explain why you enrolled at this school?
18. What is different from your current school to that of your previous school?
19. Is your current school easily accessible from where you live?
20. What else is important that the school is offering you?
21. What was the most significant impact the school has had on you?

**Capabilities:**

**A. Read, write and communicate:**

1. How has YCS enabled you to read, write and communicate?
2. Do you feel confident to read, write and communicate?
3. Has your reading, writing and communication skills improved since you enrolled at YCS?
4. How has it improved?

**B. Community Life:**

1. Do you participate in community programmes?
2. If you do, name the community programmes that you participate in?

**C. To appear in public without shame:**

1. Would you say your self-esteem/ confidence improved since you enrolled at YCS?
2. If YES, how did it improve?

**D. What a person is able to do or be:**

1. Are you able to help others with the knowledge/education you gained at the school?
2. If YES. How do you help others?

**E. Aspiration:**

1. Are you motivated to learn?
2. Do you feel you want to change your circumstances?
3. If answer YES. How do you plan on doing that?

**F. Inclusion:**

1. Do you feel included in the school programme?
2. What kind of support does the school and educators offer learners who feel left out/ feel left behind (excluded)?

**G. Choices:**

1. Do you have the necessary information on the possible choices you have after you leave the YCS?
2. Do you have a better sense of direction in your life about the choices you could make?
3. What difference has the school made in your life?



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**APPENDIX E**

**(LEARNERS)**

**Request for consent in research study: Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion. The case of YCS.**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I request permission from you to form part of the study for my thesis for the M.Ed. degree offered by the University of the Western Cape. The study looks at reasons why learners dropout of school and why they want to come back to school.

I would appreciate it if you can make yourself available for an interview at a date and time that will suit you and the school and I will ensure that it will not impact on your school work. I will also make sure that whatever is discussed will remain confidential and no names will be used. All records and data will be kept in secure storage for 5 years.



Yours faithfully

\_\_\_\_\_  
M.D. Solomon (Student number 8508092)

**APPENDIX F**

**CONSENT FORM**

**(LEARNERS)**

**Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion. The case of Youth Care School.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a learner at (Name of School) \_\_\_\_\_ agree to be part of the research and have been informed of my right not to take part.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



## APPENDIX G

### PARENTAL/GUARDIAN CONSENT (IN THE CASE OF MINOR LEARNERS)

#### Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion. The case of YCS.

Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I request consent from you as parent/guardian to allow your child/ward to form part of the research for my thesis for the M.Ed. degree offered by the University of the Western Cape. The key focus of the research is to investigate school dropout, over-age learners, exclusion and inclusion amongst learners. The aim of the study is to generate new knowledge about school dropout, social exclusion and social inclusion.

As a participant your child/ward are requested to make himself/herself available for an interview at a date and time that will suit him/her and the School and it will not impact negatively on the teaching and learning process. I also give an undertaking to adhere to the ethics codes pertaining to these types of research and assure you as parent/guardian that all information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. All records and data will be kept in secure storage for 5 years.

Yours faithfully

\_\_\_\_\_  
M.D. Solomon (Student number 8508092)

**APPENDIX H**

**CONSENT FORM**

**(PARENTS/GUARDIANS)**

**Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion. The case of Youth Care School.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, a parent/guardian of (name of child/ward) \_\_\_\_\_ at

(Name of School) \_\_\_\_\_ agree to allow my child/ward to be

part of the research and have been informed of my right not to permit my child/ward to take part.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



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## APPENDIX I

### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Name of interviewee \_\_\_\_\_ Date of interview \_\_\_\_\_

#### Personal information:

1. Name
2. Address
3. Age
4. Gender
5. Nationality
6. Race (according to SA race classification)
7. Occupation
8. Highest level of education

#### About the school and child/ward:

9. Are you the parent or guardian of the learner attending Youth Care school?
10. If not parent, why is he/she in your care?
11. How many members in your family?
12. Why did you choose YCS?/ Why did you enrol your child/ward at this school?
13. Did your child/ ward repeat any Grades? What do you think were the reasons for him/her repeating a grade/s?
14. Did your child/ ward leave school? Reasons
15. Why did he/she return to this school?
16. What makes this school different from the others?
17. Were you turned away from other schools when you wanted to enrol your child/ward?
18. What reasons were given for non- acceptance at the other school/s?
19. What is the most significant impact the school has had on your child?

**Capabilities:**

**A. Read, write and communicate:**

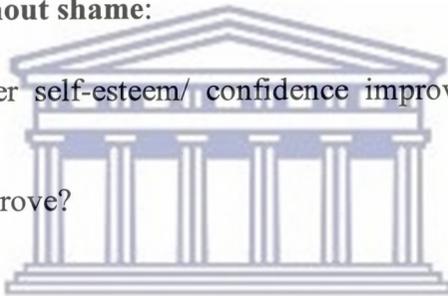
1. How has YCS enable your son/daughter to read, write and communicate?
2. Does your child feel confident to read, write and communicate?
3. Has his/her reading, writing and communication skills improved since he/she enrolled at YCS?
4. How has it improved?

**B. Community Life:**

1. Does he/she participate in community programme.
2. If YES, name the community programme/s that your child participates in?

**C. To appear in public without shame:**

1. Would you say his/her self-esteem/ confidence improved since he/she enrolled at YCS?
2. If YES, how did it improve?



**D. What a person is able to do or be:**

1. Would you say that your child is able to help others with the knowledge/ education he/she gained at the school?
2. If YES. How does your child help others?

**E. Aspiration:**

1. Would you say that your son/daughter is motivated to learn?
2. Does he/she feel that he/she wants to change his/her circumstances?
3. If answer YES. How does he/she plan on doing that?

**F. Inclusion:**

1. Does your child feel included in the school programme?
2. What kind of support does the school and educators offer to learners who feel left out / feel left behind (excluded)?

**G. Choices:**

1. Does your child have the necessary information on the possible choices he/she has after he/she leaves YCS?
2. Does your child have a better sense of direction in his/her life about the choices he/she could make?
3. What difference has the school made in your child's life?



**APPENDIX J**

**(PARENT/GUARDIAN)**

**Request for consent in research study: Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion. The case of YCS.**

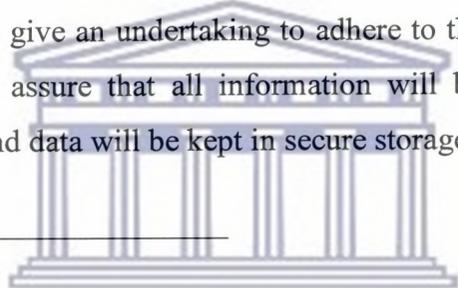
Dear \_\_\_\_\_

I request consent from you to form part of the research for my thesis for the M.Ed. degree offered by the University of the Western Cape. The key focus of the research is to investigate school dropout, over-age learners, exclusion and inclusion amongst learners. The aim of the study is to generate new knowledge about school dropout, social exclusion and social inclusion.

As a participant you are requested to make yourself available for an interview at a date and time that will suit you. I also give an undertaking to adhere to the ethics codes pertaining to these types of research and assure that all information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. All records and data will be kept in secure storage for five years.

Yours faithfully \_\_\_\_\_

M.D. Solomon (Student number 8508092)



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**APPENDIX K**

**CONSENT FORM**

**(PARENT/ GUARDIAN)**

**Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion. The case of Youth Care School.**

I, \_\_\_\_\_ a Parent/Guardian of a learner at (name of school) \_\_\_\_\_  
agree to be part of the research and have been informed of my right not to take part.

Date \_\_\_\_\_ Place \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_



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## APPENDIX L

### The Chairman

#### **Request consent to conduct a research study at school: Capability theory, school dropout, exclusion and inclusion. The case of YCS.**

Dear Sir

Consent is hereby sought to conduct research for my thesis for the M.Ed. degree offered by the University of the Western Cape. The key focus of the research is to investigate school dropout, over-age learners, exclusion and inclusion amongst learners. The aim of the study is to generate new knowledge about school dropout, social exclusion and social inclusion.

The following participants are needed in the research: Twenty (20) learners, eight (8) educators including principal and ten (10) parents/guardians.

The participants are requested to make themselves available for an interview at a date and time that will suit the School and will not impact on the teaching and learning process. I also give an undertaking to adhere to the ethics codes pertaining to these types of research and assure the school that all information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. All records and data will be kept in secure storage for five years. The interview questions are attached.

All participants will also be informed of:

- The aims, objectives and methods of the research to all parties concerned.
- The maintenance of confidentiality and anonymity by eliminating any kinds of materials or information that could lead to others identify the subjects or subjects involved.

It is also further requested that the School provide the researcher with the timetable of the school and other relevant information that may enhance the study.

M.D. Solomon (Student number 8508092)

## **APPENDIX M**

### **PARTICIPANT PROFILES**

#### **APPENDIX M 1**

##### **LEARNER PROFILES**

###### **APPENDIX M 1.1**

###### **NON –SOUTH AFRICAN BOYS**

William is a 17-year-old Burundi male living in a children's home in Salt River. He had to flee his country after the arrest of his brother and he is not sure whether his brother is still alive. He attended school in his country up to Grade 7.

Ferdinand is a 17-year-old Zimbabwean male who ran away from home because of the political situation in his country and is currently staying in a home for boys in Salt River. He was 11 years old at the time and according to Ferdinand the police were killing people and burning down houses in his country. He left his mother and two siblings behind.

Theodore is an 18-year-old Sudanese male who lives in a home for adults in Salt River. He grew up with his father and only got to know his mother at the age of 9. His mother did not stay with them in Namibia. She lived in Uganda. The reason for him and his other brother being in the home is because his mother could not take care of all of them. She struggles to find work but is taking care of their younger brother. The whereabouts of his father are unknown. He dropped out of school when he was in Grade 8 in Namibia. According to Theodore he could not really attend school as they moved from place to place in South Africa.

Luther is a 17-year-old Zambian male who was placed in a children's home in Salt River by the courts. According to Luther he was brought to South Africa unknowingly. He was out of school for two years. He has an aunt and sister living in Zambia.

## APPENDIX M 1.2

### SOUTH AFRICAN BOYS

Shaheed is a 17-year-old black Coloured male from Mitchells Plain. He was expelled from a high school in Salt River due to his drug problem and disruptive behaviour at school. He was out of school for six months and then attended an ABET Centre in the area where he did not complete the programme. His mother brought him to YCS after hearing about the school from a friend.

Ntsikelelo, an 18-year-old black African male also resides at the children's home in Salt River. He says that he has been living on the streets in Cape Town for 14 years. He says he was born on the street and decided to go and live at the shelter. He has a mother, two brothers and a sister, but is not sure of their whereabouts.

Zain is a 16-year-old Coloured male who lives with his parents in Woodstock. Both his parents live in the same house but they are divorced. He has two older brothers and a sister. He completed mainstream school up until Grade 7 and then decided to study Arabic and the Koran at an institute in Salt River. After doing Arabic studies for two years he decided that he wanted to go back to mainstream, but the mainstream schools turned him away because he was too old for Grade 8.

Azaad, an 18-year-old Coloured male from Philippi, lives with his parents and sister. He attended a mainstream school in Athlone but failed and repeated Grade 9 three times despite attending school every day. He was referred to YCS by an educational psychologist.

Cecil is a 17-year-old black African male from Mpumalanga who lives in a children's home in Athlone. According to Cecil, his mother passed away when he was five years old and he never knew his dad. He lived with his grandmother before he ran away from home. He did not attend school at the time. In Cape Town he attended a high school in Salt River and was in Grade 8. He admits that he was influenced by his friends and bunked school. His social worker decided he needed to change schools and applied to two other schools, but was turned away because of his age. She finally placed him at YCS.

Arthur is a 17-year-old White male who lives with his parents and younger sister in Strandfontein. He attended a technical school in Pinelands, but found it difficult and failed

Grade 8 and had to repeat and then failed Grade 9 again. This made him to want to give up and he did not want to attend school any longer. His mother wanted to enrol him at another school but they said his marks were too low and referred him to YCS.

Jacob, a 17-year-old black African male who lives in a children's home in Khayelitsha, says the reason for him living in a home is because of family issues. He has a father, stepmother and two brothers and a sister who lives in Hermanus. His mother's whereabouts are unknown. He left primary school because of his age and enrolled at YCS, where he has been for three years. He says he was out of school for three years and was just running around in the neighbourhood with friends. He recalls times when he was at school but could not go because he did not have school shoes and the other children would make fun of him.

Charles is an 18-year-old black Coloured male who lives in Macassar at a children's home for boys. He grew up with a foster mother on the Cape Flats because his parents could not take care of him. It became difficult for his foster mother to take care of him as she was a single parent with three children. He was then placed in a children's home for boys. He also admits that he messed up while he was staying with his foster mother. His biological mother has since passed away and he does not know the whereabouts of his father. When he attended a high school in Eerste River he was sent to a drug rehabilitation centre for his drug addiction problem and then missed out on school and missed an exam. He could not return to the high school and the home found a placement at YCS. During his mainstream school years he repeated Grade 4 and Grade 8.

Shaun is a 17-year-old White male who lives with his mother and grandmother in a shelter in the northern suburbs of Cape Town. He previously attended a high school in the southern suburbs of Cape Town but bunked school. He admits that it was because of the bad influences of friends that he dropped out of school. He also says that he was bullied at school because he dressed and behaved differently and that was the reason why he stayed at home. When he decided to go back to the high school they refused to take him back and he was out of school for 18 months until he enrolled at YCS.

Samih is an 18-year-old Coloured male who lives in Maitland with his father, stepmother and five siblings. His parents are divorced and both remarried. He attended an Islamic school because his father thought he would be badly influenced by other children in the mainstream

school. After he attended the Islamic school he was out of school for one year and helped his uncle with his business. His mother brought him to YCS.

Moegamat is a 17-year-old Coloured male from the Cape Flats. His parents are divorced and he lives with his mother and stepfather and other siblings. He witnessed the fatal stabbing of his friend at school. His mother decided that he needed to change schools because of the gangsters at the school and in the area where they live. She then brought him to YCS.

### **APPENDIX M 1.3**

#### **GIRLS**

Shireen is a 16-year-old Coloured female who lives with her grandmother, aunt and uncle. Her parents are divorced and according to Shireen, they do not really care about her. Her father is involved with illegal activities and her mother is too busy partying with friends. She has five siblings living with her father. She did not complete Grade 9 at the previous high school as her father caused problems at the school. She had to hide from him and had to drop out. She never repeated any grade. She was scared to go to another school as she felt she would not fit in. Her friend told her about YCS and her grandmother brought her to the school.

Elizabeth is an 18-year-old Coloured female from Hanover Park. She is living with her parents and a brother. She attended a high school but failed Grade 9 three times and a principal from a primary school referred her to YCS.

Charmaine is a 16-year-old Coloured female from Grassy Park who lives with her mother and five siblings and an extended family. She never attended high school regularly as she did not like the school. She attended school for only two to three weeks and stayed at home for the rest of the year. Her mother tried other schools but they were already full. Her mother's employer told her about YCS and then enrolled her at the school.

Michelle, a 15-year-old Coloured female, lives in a children's home for girls in Cape Town. She says the reason for her living there is because she was abused for five years by her aunt's boyfriend. She was staying with her aunt since birth and she is not happy with her family for allowing this to happen to her. She has a brother who is serving a jail sentence and she sometimes sees her mother when she visits her aunt. She started Grade 8 at a high school but

attended school for only a few months and found it difficult to cope emotionally, but did attend school regularly. The social worker recommended for her to move to a different environment.

Nomaindia is a 19-year-old black African female living with her father and other siblings in Khayelitsha. Her mother passed away a few years ago. According to Nomaindia she attended a school in the Strand regularly but never passed Grade 9. She was in Grade 9 for six years and was never out of school.

## **APPENDIX M 2**

### **PARENT/GUARDIAN/CARE-WORKER PROFILES**

#### **APPENDIX M 2.1**

##### **PARENT PROFILES**

Mrs Carelse is a 41-year-old black Coloured female who lives in Hanover Park and is the biological parent of one of the learner participants whom I interviewed.

Mrs Kamaldien is a 39-year-old black Coloured female and is the biological parent of one of the learner participants and lives in Mitchells Plain.

Mrs Joshua, a 39-year-old Coloured female, lives in Strandfontein and is the biological parent of one of the learner participants.

Mrs Sullivan is a 50-year-old Coloured female and lives in Woodstock. She is the biological parent of one of the learner participants.

Mrs Groenewald, a 49-year-old Coloured female, who resides in Philippi is the biological parent of one of the learner participants.

## **APPENDIX M 2.2**

### **GUARDIAN PROFILES**

Mr Jansen is a 48-year-old white male and is a social worker at a children's home in Salt River. He is the guardian of some of the participants whom I interviewed.

Ms Hendricks is a 38-year-old Coloured female and is a care-worker at a children's home for girls in Wynberg. She is also the guardian for one of the learner participants whom I interviewed.

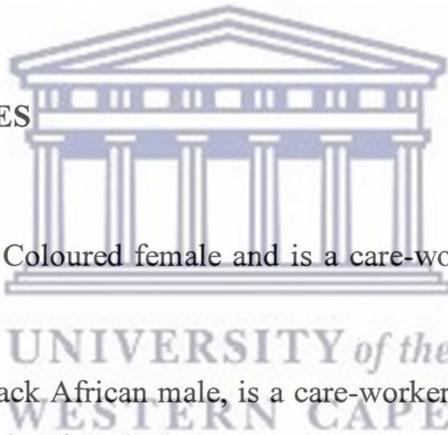
Mr Kannemeyer, a 36-year-old Coloured male, is the guardian and teacher's assistant of one of the learner participants at the children's home for boys.

## **APPENDIX M 2.3**

### **CARE-WORKER PROFILES**

Mrs De Vos is a 65-year-old Coloured female and is a care-worker at a children's home in Salt River

Mr Sobetwa, a 34-year-old black African male, is a care-worker and educational coordinator at one of the children's homes in Khayelitsha.



## **APPENDIX M 3**

### **EDUCATOR PROFILES**

#### **APPENDIX M 3.1**

##### **MALE EDUCATORS**

Mr Saunders is a 45-year-old Coloured male and is the principal of the school at the time of the study. He has 22 years' teaching experience and holds a B.Ed. (Hons) degree.

Mr Arendse is a 44-year-old black African male and has been teaching at YCS for 2 years. He holds certificates as a training facilitator, consultant and a part qualification in a BTech degree.

Mr Adriaanse is a 35-year-old Coloured male and has been teaching for 5 years. He has the following qualifications: BCom Hons, Marketing Diploma, Adult Training certificate and various business training courses.

Mr Noor is a 46-year-old Coloured male and has been teaching for 16 years. He holds a BA degree, HDE (Diploma in Education) and a Master's degree in Town and Regional Planning.

Mr Carelse is a 68-year-old Coloured male. He has 43 years' teaching experience and has the following qualifications: Primary Teacher's certificate, Higher Primary certificate, a BA degree and a B.Ed. (Hons) degree and various certificates in Adult Education.

#### **APPENDIX M 3.2**

##### **FEMALE EDUCATORS**

Mrs Du Preez is a 44-year-old Coloured female at YCS. She has been an educator at the school for 8 years and is also the deputy principal. She is a qualified educator and holds a Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree and a B.Ed. (Hons) degree.

Mrs Johnson is a 51-year-old Coloured female and has 26 years' teaching experience. She holds a HDE (Higher Diploma in Education) and a National Diploma in Adult Education (ABET Practice NQF5).

Ms Smith is a 48-year-old white female and has been teaching since 1987. She has a BA degree.

Mrs Kader, a 59-year-old Coloured female, has 25 years' teaching experience. She holds a BA degree and Higher Diploma in Education (HDE) (Diploma in Education).



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