



The educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk: A case study of a child and youth care centre in the Western Cape, South Africa

by

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DECLARATION

I, Lorna Yolande Balie, declare that the content of this thesis represents my own unaided work, and that the thesis has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represents my own opinions and not necessarily those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.



Signed

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Date

ABSTRACT

There exists a variety of explanations for why children and youth become 'at risk' of school disengagement, violent victimisation, institutionalisation (including imprisonment) and premature mortality (Abrams & Terry, 2014). However, few explanations help to understand how children and youth at risk can be better included within education and society, how educational and social inclusion programmes for children and youth at risk can improve, or where it is best placed to provide such interventions or programmes. Using an ecological and multi-dimensional approach, the current study utilised a Western Cape residential care institution for children and youth at risk as a case study by which to conceptually and vividly show the connections between the backgrounds of South African children/youths that are at risk, the cultures and practices of residential institutions in accommodating the needs of children and youth, and the teaching approaches that are adopted within the institution to socially and educationally include learners under their charge. The main purpose of this is to highlight the notable complexities in addressing the short-term and long-term individual needs of children and youth 'at risk' - both within institutions and outside institutions once they are discharged - and the contradictory challenges that are attached to structural and relational forms of risk and risk-taking. The study questions whether institutions and programmes can be expected to address social and structural dimensions of inclusion and human connection that inevitably and invariably fall outside of their educational scope and capabilities and seeks to understand what this means for the conceptualisation of issues of inclusion within the educational realm in South Africa.

The main research question that arises from this research is: In what ways are care of and education for children and youth at risk provided by a child and youth care centre in order to promote their educational and social inclusion? This question is further divided into three research subsidiary questions which are a) What are the risk factors experienced by youth, found in the previous institution(s), the family, the communities/neighbourhoods and among their peers that contribute to their being referred to the child and youth care centre? b) How do the child and youth care centre's rules, norms and values promote the social inclusion of children and youth at risk? and c) How do the teachers' teaching approaches promote the educational inclusion of children and youth at risk?

In order to answer these questions, this study developed a case study of a child and youth care centre located in the Western Cape in order to understand how it works towards the educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk. The following data was therefore collected at the institution through: one focus group with five teachers; in-depth semi-structured interviews with nine teachers, seven youths, one principal, one social worker, one educational psychologist, one occupational therapist,

three childcare workers, and two residential care workers; observations of classes and the institutional environment; and institutional documents. In addition to data collected at the institution, three experts (in their own respective fields which are Inclusive Education, Gangs and Teacher Wellness at the institution in question) and three government officials from the Western Cape Education Department were interviewed.

The study found that risk and risk taking was tied to a variety of social and institutional factors that shaped how vulnerable children and youth were socially included or excluded within society and within schools, and that led to their needs being addressed through residential care. The findings reveal that the factors that contribute towards youth being at high risk of the outcomes mentioned earlier include the lack of safety and security in schools, school cultures that are alienating, once disengaged from school children and youth experience many non-normative transfers between different kinds of institutions, domestic and gang violence, and unsafe and under-resourced neighbourhoods. The study further found that the child and youth care centre promotes social inclusion through its rules, norms and values by providing protection for children and youth (aided by legal and policy documents), by advocating and embedding the Circle of Courage in its programmes, and by promoting the values of reintegration into the family and community, and the values of care and family. These efforts, however, did not coalesce in ways that could fundamentally change how youth saw themselves or their risk taking in relation to their subsequent lives.

Furthermore, this view was reinforced by data that showed that educational inclusion is promoted by children and youth forming emotional attachments to their teachers, through teachers using sensitive and appropriate teaching methods, and implementing an adapted curriculum and structured, relational and developmental disciplinary techniques. These findings reveal that the child and youth care centre is able to promote educational and social inclusion in the short term but is unable translate these efforts into durable life lessons to prepare youth adequately for life outside the institution and long-term social inclusion, owing to the structural (De Finney et al., 2011) and relational nature of risk, which is beyond the scope and capabilities of the institution. This informed the extent to which youth could be ‘included’ and de-stigmatised’.

Recommendations include the DBE equipping schools and teachers adequately to deliver the CAPS curriculum especially for the needs of children and youth at risk; the Provincial Education Department providing schools with educational psychologists, social workers and occupational therapists to address the therapeutic and affective needs of children and youth, the provision of mentors and child and youth care workers to support teaching and learning; teacher trainers equipping teachers with appropriate and

effective disciplinary techniques; child and youth care centres (schools and intervention facilities) applying developmental, empowering and inclusive philosophies to address emotional and behavioural problems among children and youth; a more intense focus on academic achievement; and more inclusive school cultures.

The study's key contribution is to show how conceptualisations, processes, and practices of educational inclusion play out in relation to the institutional programmes of one Western Cape child and youth care centre, and how the views, and professional practices of a variety of professional role-players inform the ways in which the needs of children and youth that are deemed to be 'at risk' are addressed and provided for. This reveals the complex intersection of home, community, geographical space, institution, legal framework, educational programme, policy architecture, and policy objective in determining how risk and educational inclusion is understood, and how it is addressed within society and within the educational realm. It also highlights the complexity, and the structural and relational nature of risk experienced by children and youth in marginalised communities in contemporary South Africa.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This work is the result of many years of exploring, wrestling with and learning about a complex topic which I believe is important for various reasons and for various stakeholders. This journey was not undertaken in isolation, and so there are various communities and individuals to thank.

I firstly should like to thank my Lord, God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, for the favour, provision and unconditional love I received to complete this journey, and the privilege to be empowered to serve others.

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I wish to thank the CITE (Centre for International Teacher Education) community of scholars at CPUT. Your feedback and support as a community have taught me so much and your feedback has greatly improved my thinking and quality of work. I particularly should like to thank Marcina Singh and Tarryn Gabi de Kock for their friendship, advice, encouragement and support which has made this journey so much more enjoyable and the burden lighter to bear. I also wish to thank Melissa Krassenstein who undertook the data-collection process with me. Her friendship, beautiful character and insights made this experience so much richer.

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I finally wish to thank and acknowledge the generous financial assistance of the National Research Foundation (NRF) which funds the South African Research Chair in Teacher Education. Opinions expressed in this thesis and the conclusions arrived at, are those of the author, and are not necessarily to be attributed to the National Research Foundation.

DEDICATION

Compassion isn't just about feeling the pain of others; it's about bringing them towards yourself. If we love what God loves, then, in compassion, margins get erased. "Be compassionate as God is compassionate," means the dismantling of barriers that exclude.

Gregory Boyle

I dedicate this thesis to the children and youth who have lost hope and do not envision a bright future for themselves. I see you and hope that this work will make your future a bit brighter. You are not alone and there are many fighting alongside you and on your behalf.

For those compassionate ones who work tirelessly with and on behalf of the most vulnerable children and youth in our society – your work is a glimmer of hope in a dangerous world.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
ADHD	Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder
ANC	African National Congress
AsgiSA	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa
CAPS	Curriculum, Assessment and Policy Statement
CJCP	Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention
CPTD	Continuing Professional Teacher Development
CV	Curriculum Vitae
CYCC	Child and Youth Care Centre
DAS	Development Appraisal System
DBE	Department of Basic Education
DBST	District-based Support Teams
DHET	Department of Higher Education and Training
DOJ&CD	Department of Justice and Constitutional Development
DSD	Department of Social Development
EBD	Emotional and Behavioural Disorder
ESS	Education Support Services
FAS	Foetal Alcohol Syndrome
FET	Further Education and Training
GCIS	Department of Government Communication and Information System
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GET	General Education and Training
HEQF	Higher Education Qualifications Framework
HEQSF	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework
HOD	Head of Department
IDP	Individual Development Programme
IIAL	Incremental Implementation of African Languages
IMG	Institutional Management and Governance
ISPFTED	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development

ISS	Institute for Security Studies
IQMS	Integrated Quality Management System
LiEP	Language in Education Policy
LITNUM	Literacy and Numeracy
MRTEQ	Policy on Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications
MTSF	Medium-term strategic framework
NCESS	National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
NCSNET	National Committee on Education Support Services
NDP	National Development Plan
NEET	Not in Education, Employment and Training
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NGP	National Growth Plan
NNSSF	National Norms and Standards for School Funding Act
NSC	National Senior Certificate
NSSF	National School Safety Framework
OBE	Outcome-based Education
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OT	Occupation Therapist
PBS	Positive Behaviour Support
PLF	Positive Learning Framework
PMDS	Performance Management and Development System
RAP	Response Ability Pathway
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RNCS	Revised National Curriculum Statement
SAPS	South African Police Service
SASSA	South African Social Security Agency
SEF	Systemic Evaluation Framework
SEN	Special Education Needs
SGB	School Governing Body
SIAS	Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment and Support
SNE	Special Needs Education
TVET	Technical Vocational Education and Training

UN DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNISA	University of South Africa
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WC	Western Cape
WCED	Western Cape Education Department
WSE	Whole School Evaluation
YiP	Young in Prison

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CHAPTER ONE: Background to the Study

History suggests that it is not possible to create an environment so oppressive to totally vanquish the capacity of some to survive and overcome, but some environments come close (Luthar, 2003:359-360).

1.1 Introduction

The Republic of South Africa is founded upon and strives towards the highest law of the land – the Constitution, which provides the framework all laws and policies are based on. The Constitution is “prescriptively socially inclusive” (Meyer, 2014:16) and promulgates the tenets of equality and freedom for all. In Section 7 of the Bill of Rights it states that the State “must respect, protect, promote and fulfil the rights in the Bill of Rights”, which means it is the onus of the state to realise the rights of its citizens (Meyer, 2014:16-17). However, despite the South African Constitution being one of the most progressive in the world (South African Government, 2019), South Africa also has one of the most unequal societies in the world, which in 2015 was exemplified by a Gini coefficient of 0.63. This also indicated a widening gap between the rich and poor since the end of apartheid (Sulla & Zikhali, 2018: xv).

Considering the disparate South African context, many children and youth in South Africa grow up in conditions that are not conducive to social inclusion. This lack of social inclusion influences other areas of their life, including firstly, access to education, and secondly, access to quality education. According to the Human Opportunity Index for 2015 which measures the opportunities available for children, and how equitable a service is distributed among groups, school attendance and the completion of tertiary education for those between 18 and 25 in South Africa, is 30% and lower (Sulla & Zikhali, 2018:46,48).

In addition, there is a range of circumstances contributing to unequal opportunities and access such as health insurance, school attendance, tertiary education, access to water of good quality, and school infrastructure, which all contribute to the realisation of the rights and responsibilities of children and youth as citizens, and also to the actualisation of the Constitution (Sulla & Zikhali, 2018:49). Given this context, children and youth, particularly in South Africa, are at risk of various circumstances that may lead to educational and social exclusion. This study, however, focuses specifically on one state residential care institution that provides care and education for children and youth who have experienced educational and social exclusion. These children and youth eventually encounter the legal system, are considered to be “in need of care and protection” and are referred to a child and youth care centre for

care and education. This chapter presents the background to and context of the study, followed by the research problem, the research questions, the aims of the research, an overview of the methodology, and definitions of concepts used in the study. It concludes with a description of the structure of the thesis.

1.2 Background and Context

The recently promulgated Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act, No. 4 of 2018 made provision for the establishment (subject to available resources) of intervention facilities in Section 12 E for learners who are found guilty of serious misconduct. These intervention facilities are meant to provide therapeutic care, educational provision and in some facilities, residential care to address serious misconduct of learners. Before this Act was promulgated, several issues with such facilities were highlighted by the public, including an NGO, Equal Education. Equal Education (2018:46-49) in their submission outlined a number of issues in respect of these facilities, such as the lack of inter-sectoral collaboration which is necessary in facilities such as these; grouping learners guilty of misconduct together, thereby potentially exacerbating existing behavioural problems; removing learners from their families and communities for a substantial amount of time; vague descriptions of the nature of these facilities and the nature of misconduct; vagueness about the kinds of interventions these facilities should emphasise (whether therapeutic or educational); and the discrepancies of different laws (e.g. South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996 vs. Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act, No. 4 of 2018) regarding the treatment of misconduct in schools.

In South Africa, particularly in the Western Cape (Western Cape Government, 2014:31-32), the need for the legal provision of these facilities arose because of the increasing numbers of reports of learners, those of compulsory school-going age of 7–15 years (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2018a) and youth,¹ those aged between 15 and 34 (Stats SA, 2018a:8), particularly males at school-going age, displaying emotional and behavioural difficulties in school (Burton, Leoschut &

¹There are various age ranges for the category of youth in South Africa since each sector defines it differently. The National Youth Policy 2020 (The Presidency, 2015:10) defines youth as those between the ages of 14 and 35, the Department of Correctional Services defines youth as those between the ages of 18 and 25 (Department of Correctional Services, 2005), but for the purpose of the study, youth are defined as those between the ages of 15 and 34 based on Stats SA's national statistics.

Bonora, 2009:17-18; Weeks, 2012:333; Du Plessis, 2015:383; University of Witwatersrand, 2017). Dixon (2007) has warned that these behavioural difficulties have the potential to put children and youth at risk of various negative consequences that may disrupt their education and paths towards social inclusion. In schools, difficult behaviour may even spill over into violence which is also endemic in South Africa. Media reports show that teachers are being and feeling increasingly threatened (Maphanga, 2018).

This problem was brought graphically to public attention and amplified when a teacher was stabbed to death in his classroom by one of his learners in September 2018 (Maphanga, 2018). Immediately following this incident, the Minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, called a meeting of education stakeholders, at which the acting director, Phumla Williams of the Department of the Government Communication and Information System (GCIS), declared the intention of education stakeholders' collaborating with local communities to find a solution. She stated that "the meeting will discuss how different key stakeholders in the education sector can work together with communities to ensure that we arrest the growing unacceptable behaviour at our schools" (Maphanga, 2018). The Department of Basic Education (DBE) therefore recognises this growing behavioural problem in schools and the need for inter-sectoral and multiple stakeholder collaboration to address behavioural problems among learners. Du Plessis (2015:383) argues that if the widespread discipline problems are not addressed, it may put the education system in crisis.

According to the Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act, No. 4 of 2018, learners who display emotional and behavioural barriers to learning (as described in the Education White Paper 6: Special Needs Education: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001)) (now onwards referred to as White Paper 6) or are guilty of serious misconduct in school can be referred to an intervention facility by the Head of Department at their school (as indicated by the Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act, No. 4 of 2018), with the consent of their parents. However, in addition to this group of learners, learners who may have already dropped out of school, and who have come into contact with the legal system, may be referred to child and youth care centres (as provided for by the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005) by the Children's Court. These children and youth are the focus of this study and are legally considered to be "in need of care and protection", which in this study refers to children and youth at risk. However, these facilities (which from now onwards and for the purpose of this study are referred to as institutions) are meant to fulfil similar functions as those described in the Western Cape Provincial School Education

Amendment Act, No. 4 of 2018, which is to address behavioural problems by providing education and therapeutic care, and in some instances, residential care.

It is also important to acknowledge that these institutions and the overall education system are embedded within a vastly unequal society as described earlier, where inequality manifests economically, culturally, politically and socially – a context which can be said to contribute to the culture of violence in South Africa and to affect the lives of children and youth directly and indirectly (Roostenburg & Oliphant, 2012:33). Mampane and Bouwer (2011), Sayed et al. (2017:5-12) and Galtung (1990) argue that violence is used as a form of domination and may be viewed by some, particularly those living in high poverty level areas, as a legitimate means to resolve conflict. In addition, violence in this current study is defined much more broadly than the kind of physical or direct violence that may result in violent victimisation or premature and unnatural death. The definition is widened to include psychological and/or emotional deprivation as defined or caused by structural violence (Western Cape Government, 2014:8). This is an indirect, invisible form of violence with no identifiable perpetrator, making it difficult to place blame. Studies have found that various forms of violence, physical and psychological, are related to the systems and structures of society that exist, making it impossible for people to meet their basic needs (Galtung 1990; Farmer, et al., 2004:307).

An example or manifestation of this systemic violence would be the conditions in which marginalised communities are located and where there are few job and development opportunities, few recreational activities for children/youth, a lack of safety, and frequent exposure to physical violence (De Lannoy et al., 2018). In addition to these factors, a situational analysis study of youth in the Western Cape (Western Cape Government, 2014:12) shows that youth have very little reliable physical or emotional support and this may influence them to adopt risky behaviour in order to meet their basic needs. This kind of environment makes it difficult for residents' well-being and may lead to the further marginalisation of young people.

This study therefore argues that children and youth who display behavioural difficulties at school are at ‘state of risk’²— a term used to describe the high probability of the occurrence of a negative future event or outcome (Moore, 2006:3). The negative future outcomes addressed in this study for children and youth include school disengagement³ (which includes leaving school early,⁴ suspension and/or expulsion) (Lamont et al., 2013:e1000; Hancock & Zubrick, 2015:4-5), violent victimisation, institutionalisation (ranging from state or private care to incarceration), and/or premature mortality (which in the context of this study results from structural, psychological and physical violence) (Abram & Terry, 2014:1). Children and youth exposed to school disengagement, violent victimisation, institutionalisation and/or premature mortality, are not only at risk, but are also vulnerable to the external dangers in their environment (Fraser, 1995:10), unfortunately a reality in South Africa. Weybright et al. (2017:1) states that findings are consistent in showing that school dropout leads to “poor psychological, physical, social and economic health.” This problem is however not unique to South Africa, and is a global phenomenon (Du Plessis, 2015:383; Weybright et al., 2017:1), manifesting in countries such as the United Kingdom (Evans et al., 2016), and the United States (Millner, 2012).

In order to address the problem of children and youth being at risk of these negative outcomes within the South African context, there are various interventions in place. These interventions range according to the severity of risks children/youth experience and include school interventions, intervention facilities, child and youth care centres and secure care centres (Western Cape Government, 2019). This study, however, as mentioned earlier, looks at a specific state residential care institution that provides therapeutic care and educational provision under the Children’s Act, No. 38 of 2005, similar to the intention of intervention facilities described in the Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act, No. 4 of 2018.

²This state of risk is often transient and transitional; however, risk could become an even bigger problem if this state becomes permanent (Anlezark, 2011:1).

³Hancock and Zubrick (2015:4-5) define disengagement variously, including learner disengagement on different levels ranging from content, class, school and education as a whole as well as different types of disengagement which include emotional and behavioural disengagement. These levels and types of disengagement may also be indicators of early school leaving.

⁴Leaving school early is also known as school dropout or as early “withdrawal”, or “attrition” (Hartnack, 2017:1). It is defined by De Witte et al. (2013) as “leaving education without obtaining a minimal credential”.

In addition, besides the value of therapeutic care, education for children and youth is viewed as a tool for personal development; a means of gaining knowledge, values and skills acquisition; and as a tool for socialisation (Free, 2008:23). Overall, education is essential to young people's development as contributing members of society (UNESCO, 2015:29). Education is therefore important in uplifting children and youth, and in helping them to overcome certain challenges. In addition, as was articulated by award-winning author and academic, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, "children are the future of any society ... if you want to maim the future of any society, you simply maim the children" (Ngugi, 1993). Part of the argument of this study is that the way a society treats its most vulnerable members gives us an indication of the quality and future of that society. It is therefore important for society to invest in the healthy development of the most vulnerable members of society, including children and youth (Moore et al., 2016:485).

1.3 Research Problem

This study looks at a child and youth care centre, and its attempts at including children and youth at risk into school and society. The concept of inclusion in this study is therefore not only viewed as an educational issue, but also is more broadly conceived as a societal phenomenon tied to educational inclusion. Inclusion of and for children and youth at risk is therefore discussed more broadly using terms such as risk and protection, vulnerability and resilience, and exclusion and inclusion which are embedded within the social fields in which the child/youth is in (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). These social fields are further influenced by broader phenomena such as social, economic and education policies, economic systems, and global issues. This process of inclusion also attempts to work against, or counteracts the effects of, structural violence (Sayed et al., 2017:5-12) and direct violence that may lead to young people's exclusion from educational opportunities and to social exclusion. Broadly, this study looks at social cohesion through the lens of a child and youth care centre and their work in terms of including children and youth at risk into education and society.

While much research has been conducted on inclusive education for children with disabilities (Connor et al., 2008; Srivastava et al., 2015), relatively few studies (Attar-Schwartz, 2009) have shown how children and youth at risk are catered for and included within the education system through specialised institutions, therapeutic care and educational provision, especially within the South African context. Saldaña (2013:228) argues that schools are sites of socialisation, and based on his argument, this study

assumes that institutions, such as child and youth care centres and schools, also fulfil an educational and socialisation role. These institutions are arguably intended to instil positive values among young people, as children and youth spend most of their time at these various institutions (Western Cape Government, 2014:59). This means that these institutions, including schools, have the potential to influence positively the thoughts and behaviours of young people.

The interventions at these institutions therefore do not need to be viewed as a last resort, as argued by Knorth et al. (2007:124), but they could be viewed as a positive intervention during critical times of development for children and youth. During their study, Knorth et al. (2007:125) found that most children and youth referred to residential care show improvement within their residential care institutions. However, some do not improve, and others become worse (Knorth et al., 2007:125). There are different variables that affect the outcome of treatment within these institutions, including the severity or kind of problem, and the nature of onset (Knorth et al., 2007:125). Another study by Attar-Schwartz (2009:429) identifies the need to look at the intersection between the individual family and institutional context with low academic achievement. In addition, many studies have shown that the school, together with the family and community, has significant potential to influence the development of children and youth and can affect their propensity to get involved in severe risks such as criminal activity (Stephenson, 2007:3). This current study does not look at these specific intersections, but instead touches on them. In addition, few studies have investigated the family, school, peer, and community factors simultaneously, through an ecological perspective, to understand risk (Luthar, 2003:369). The research problem and question of the current study thus emerges from this dearth of studies on the link between the types of risk, school engagement and behavioural difficulties. It therefore focuses on the intersection of the individual child/youth and his/her background, the institutional context, and its educational and care provision.

Relatively few of these kinds of institutions exist for this purpose in South Africa, including the Western Cape (Western Cape Government, 2019), which is one of the reasons this current study develops a case study of a child and youth care centre in order to understand the institutional culture that promotes educational and social inclusion. This institution, described as a child and youth care centre in the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, provides therapeutic and residential care together with educational provision for male children and youth who have been referred to it by a Children's Court in the Western Cape. This institution acts as both a child and youth care centre and a special school, as the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) oversees it. This institution provides the intended interventions

vaguely described in the newly promulgated Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act, No. 4 of 2018, but for children and youth who have a legal status.

Another reason for developing a case study of a child and youth care centre such as this is to understand who the children and youth are who are referred to it, and the kind of risks they have experienced and are exposed to. The nature of this institution can therefore be described as one that addresses both the vulnerability and danger (Fraser, 1995:10) these children and youth may experience and pose to themselves, others and society.

While there are many explanations for why children and youth engage in risk-taking behaviour, there has been very little recent literature on the institutions catering for these children and youth, or the teaching approaches that teachers use to care for and educate children and youth at risk (Attar-Swartz, 2009). In order to understand how the educational and other needs of children and youth at risk can better be addressed, this study attempts to understand clearly what the risks that they have experienced are, and how these risks are being addressed – or not – at an institution specialised to work with them.

In addition, the current study intends to show that effective interventions are much needed (Souverein et al., 2015:2) for the life trajectory of those children and youth who are at high risk of school disengagement, a life of crime and violence, institutionalisation/imprisonment and premature mortality. The study investigates whether and to what extent institutions such as child and youth care centres and their attempts at including children and youth at risk into education and society could potentially act as a protective factor and interrupt this negative trajectory, as well as act as an effective and sustainable intervention (Pearce et al., 2003:1682). This study is located among wider debates on risk, institutionalism and teaching approaches for children and youth who display difficult behaviour. The research questions for this study are presented in the following section.

1.4 Research Questions

The main research question of this study is:

“In what ways are care of and education for children and youth at risk provided for by a child and youth care centre in order to promote their educational and social inclusion?”

The research question is answered by looking at three components of educational provision for children and youth at risk: the backgrounds of the children/youth, the institutional culture necessary to create an inclusive environment for these children/youth, and the teaching approaches used. The research subsidiary questions that operationalise these are:

1. What are the risk factors experienced by the youth, found in previous institution(s), the family, the communities/neighbourhoods and among their peers that contribute to their being referred to the child and youth care centre?
2. How do the child and youth care centre's rules, norms and values promote the social inclusion of children and youth at risk?
3. How do the teachers' teaching approaches promote the educational inclusion of children and youth at risk?

1.5 Research Aims

The research hopes to contribute the following to the field:

- To understand the needs of and risks faced by children and youth in contemporary South Africa through an inter-disciplinary lens.
- To make a conceptual contribution in terms of a conceptual framework to help identify, understand, reduce risk, and to enhance protective factors.
- To understand what is necessary to create an inclusive and restorative institutional environment for children and youth at risk.
- To understand the most effective teaching approaches for teaching children and youth at risk and for these approaches to be adopted in teacher training programmes.
- To understand the form that more effective educational and therapeutic interventions should take for children and youth at risk who have the propensity to enter a life of crime and experience other forms of social exclusion

1.6 Overview of the Methodology

This study uses a qualitative approach and a case study research design. It draws on data from various sources and uses various data-collection methods, including semi-structured interviews, a focus-group discussion with teachers, structured classroom observations, unstructured institution observations,

informal conversations with staff members, and institution documents and reports. Multiple data sources and collection techniques ensure triangulation of the data, hence the rationale for interviews involving a range of participants such as teachers, staff members, youth, experts, government officials, and embarking on observations and analysing various documents. Data-collection instruments included semi-structured interview guides designed specifically for participants and their role and knowledge base, and observation guides.

Purposive sampling is used to select participants. Research participants include staff of the institution, such as the school management team, the educational psychologist, the occupational therapist, the social worker, childcare workers, teachers and youth. All these interviews were conducted at the institution. Each staff participant provided insight into an aspect of the institution's function, work, values and culture. Youths were only selected if they were 16 years and older, and if they were willing to be interviewed and felt comfortable to participate. Their interviews were conducted in either English or Afrikaans, depending on the language they felt most comfortable with. Participants external to the institution were also interviewed and included government officials, an academic, an expert on gangs, and a researcher who specialises in teacher wellness. The government officials provided insight into the broader educational dilemmas for children and youth at risk, and the broader institutional and societal challenges facing these young people. An expert and academic were able to provide insight into both inclusive education and gangs.

ATLAS.ti was used to analyse the data. The data was organised according to several major themes which emerged during the process of the analysis. These are presented in the findings chapters (Chapters 5 – 7) and organised using the conceptual framework developed for this study.

1.7 Defining Concepts

This section attempts to clarify the meaning of some of the concepts utilised in this study. The conceptual debates surrounding some of these terms are discussed in depth in the literature review. The concepts that are clarified and defined in this section are 'children and youth at risk', 'social field', 'social inclusion', 'social exclusion' and 'social cohesion'.

The term, 'children and youth at risk', is viewed as a contested term, owing to the possible stigma that accompanies it. However, this term is useful for this study and should be reframed in such a way as not

to place blame or remove agency from those who are found to be in risk-related conditions. It is difficult to define children and youth at risk, since this may encapsulate too broad a group of young people and there are many ways to define risk. What one can learn – and for the purposes of research – from various definitions of children and youth at risk, is that for a definition of children and youth at risk to hold or to be useful, the persons in question need to be described in as comprehensive and sensitive a way as possible: what they are at risk of needs to be clear, and their level of agency should be included. Owing to the broad and vague ways in which risk is defined, this study has therefore developed its own definition of children and youth at risk:

Those who are highly likely to disengage from school early, enter a state care institution or prison, experience violent victimisation and/or premature mortality due to their involvement in, and the effects of structural, psychological and/or physical violence. The likelihood of experiencing these kinds of risks is increased by systemic, societal and intrinsic factors, including age and gender. Risk is however relational and there is the possibility of preventing and reducing the increase in risk, depending on the will of the individual who is at risk, the enhancement of protective factors and addressing larger systemic and societal factors that contribute to long-term risk.

A discussion of how this definition is developed is discussed in depth in the literature review (see Chapter 3). Furthermore, a description of how and where risk could be encountered is encapsulated through the concept of ‘social fields’, which, developed by Bourdieu (cited in Swartz, 2016), is defined as:

Arenas of production, circulation, and appropriation and exchange of goods, services, knowledge, or status, and the competitive positions held by actors in their struggle to accumulate, exchange, and monopolize different kinds of power resources (capitals). Fields may be thought of as structured spaces that organize around specific types of capitals or combinations of capital. In fields actors strategize and struggle over the unequal distribution of valued capitals and over the definitions of just what are the most valued capitals.

This definition refers to a structured space within which there is a struggle to not only gain capital, but to define what is valued capital. Children and youth navigate within structured spaces where the value of different capitals is often already determined. These structured spaces or social fields are characterised by their own value systems and power dynamics, as well as risk and protective factors which have a great effect on behaviour that is not always apparent. “Field analysis brings these separate units into a broader perspective that stresses their relational properties rather than their intrinsic features and therefore the multiplicity of forces shaping the behaviour of each” (Swartz, 2016). The term social field is adopted and adapted by other social theorists such as Lewin, who uses a social-psychological perspective and DiMaggio and Powell, who study organisations and institutional theory (Swartz, 2016). In this study, the specific social fields that are analysed are institutions, families, communities and peers.

The term, 'risk', specifically among children and youth, could be reduced through the process and outcome of social inclusion. In contrast, social exclusion "is a process that involves interacting circumstances and experiences across all the spheres of life over a period of time" (Bynner, 2000:4). All spheres of life in this study are explained through social fields as described earlier. Sen (1992, cited in Bynner, 2000:4), argues that the lack of capabilities is the main factor leading to social exclusion, as socially excluded people are unable to gain access to material, social and emotional capital that enables those capabilities that contribute to a functioning adult life. Using the concept as conjoined terms (Sayed et al., 2003), social exclusion and inclusion occur simultaneously, meaning that inclusion in one respect may mean exclusion in another. Social inclusion is therefore defined in this study not only on a micro and relational level as described by Koster et al. (2009:128) in their analysis of literature using the concept of inclusion in the following way:

Friendship, acceptance, interaction, relationships, social status and bullying are aspects... Others include performing a task together, initiation, interactive partnerships, pupils' self-perception of acceptance, perceived loneliness and perceived social competence.

Social inclusion is also defined by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA) (2009) according to macro level and structural issues as:

A process by which efforts are made to ensure equal opportunities for all, regardless of their background, so that they can achieve their full potential in life. It is a multi-dimensional process aimed at creating conditions which enable full and active participation of every member of the society in all aspects of life, including civic, social, economic, and political activities, as well as participation in decision-making processes.

Both definitions are important in this study as children and youth feel a sense of belonging through social relations and interaction with peers and adults. However, their long-term inclusion is determined by structural factors. Swart and Pettipher (Landsberg, Krüger & Swart, 2016:9). defines inclusion as "a reconceptualisation of values and beliefs that welcomes and celebrates diversity, and not only a set of practices". In addition, Swart and Pettipher ((Landsberg et al., 2016:3) argues that "inclusion is a complex, multidimensional and controversial concept". In the context of education it requires "informed practitioners with a sound theoretical knowledge base from which informed decisions can be made". Inclusion in education therefore is not necessarily simple to achieve and requires knowledgeable and skilled teachers within in a supportive community that understands and promotes the ideals of social inclusion (Landsberg, Krüger & Swart, 2016:4). For the purpose of this study, more attention is given

to the second definition as it addresses participation in all aspects of life including human relations and education, including lifelong social inclusion and is applicable to the South African context.

Furthermore, this study addresses the larger issue of social inclusion, which is social cohesion. Social cohesion is a collective rather than individual responsibility (Sayed et al., 2017:7). Sayed et al. (2017:7-8) conceptualised social cohesion as not only the cultivation of positive relations, trust building and a common purpose related to social justice and equity, but “structural issues and structural factors in society that militate against equality”. Furthermore, the conceptualising of social cohesion draws from Fraser’s 3Rs (Fraser, 1995, 2007) that incorporate redistribution, recognition, and representation, which underpin reconciliation or social cohesion (Novelli et al., 2015). This conceptualisation of social cohesion considers larger structural, social, economic and political factors such as the distribution of wealth and resources, recognition of culture and identity, representation and participation within politics, and furthermore, reconciliation or social cohesion as an outcome of these 3Rs. This study makes use of these definitions and concepts to highlight the larger structural and social factors influencing risk and protective factors for children and youth in South Africa.

1.8 Structure of the Thesis

This thesis comprises nine chapters which are described below.

Chapter 1 briefly describes the background to and context of the study, and presents the research problem, the research questions, and the research aims of the study. It also provides an overview of the methodology used and defines certain concepts.

Chapter 2 directs the reader in understanding in detail the social and educational contexts that give rise to the issues briefly described in the first chapter. The contexts are unpacked in order to understand the complexity of the issues the research questions attempt to answer and link to the conceptual framework by describing the macro-system, which is the broader national context.

Chapter 3 critically reviews the key literature, including previous and similar studies that have attempted to address similar issues to those in the current study. Key concepts such as ‘risk’ and ‘exclusion’, and the concept of ‘children and youth at risk’ are unpacked. Other concepts such as neo-institutional theory

and teaching approaches in relation to the research questions are discussed. The chapter concludes with a conceptual framework that links the concepts covered in the literature review.

Chapter 4 describes the methodology of the study. This chapter illustrates the philosophical orientation towards knowledge for this study, the research design, positionality, sampling, data-collection techniques, data management and analysis, the trustworthiness of the data, and a discussion of the limitations of the study.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to answering the first research sub-question, “What are the risk factors experienced by the youth, found in previous institution(s), the family, the communities/neighbourhoods and among their peers that contribute to their being referred to the child and youth care centre?” Part of the conceptual framework is employed to organise and analyse the data.

Chapter 6 attempts to answer the second research sub-question, “How do the child and youth care centre’s rules, norms and values promote the social inclusion of children and youth at risk?” In this chapter neo-institutional theory is employed to explain and interrogate its institutional culture.

Chapter 7 is dedicated to answering the third research sub-question, “How do the teachers’ teaching approaches promote the educational inclusion of children and youth at risk?” The literature on teaching approaches for children and youth at risk is applied to analyse the data.

Chapter 8 synthesises the main findings for each of the points of the conceptual framework which are the background of children/youth at risk, the institutional culture and the teaching approaches employed. The relationships between these points are discussed in depth.

The thesis ends with a concluding chapter, Chapter 9, which summarises the main findings of each research question in order to answer the main research question which is “In what ways are care of and education for children and youth at risk provided for by the child and youth care centre in order to promote their educational and social inclusion?” This chapter provides recommendations for policy makers, practitioners, and for future research. It also highlights the main contributions of this study and ends with some reflection on the research journey.

CHAPTER TWO: Context of the Study

2.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a more detailed description of the context in which this study is located than that sketched in Chapter 1. Shenton (2004:70) argues that a clear and detailed understanding of context is particularly important in qualitative research as it allows readers and other researchers to compare this context with their own environments, relate the findings to their own contexts, and in this way can assist them in transferring the results and conclusions where possible. This chapter therefore presents the background to South Africa and the Western Cape in terms of the historical, legislative, educational and socio-economic factors constituting the contextual factors which have affected, and continue to affect, children and youth. This includes the historical shift from a segregated to a more inclusionary and equitable policy and legal environment concerning children and youth at risk. This chapter highlights those specific challenges facing children and youth in South Africa which place them in a vulnerable position and at risk, while providing a description of the existing institutional provisions for children and youth with specific needs and a description of the institution under study.

2.2 The Background to South Africa

In this section, the following contexts within South Africa are discussed: the geography, the population, the national administration, the economy, a brief history and politics, and education.

2.2.1 Geography

The Republic of South Africa is located at the tip of the southernmost part of the African continent. The land surface area covers 1 219 090 square kilometres (70 693 square miles) and the coastline is 2 798 kilometres (1 738 miles). It borders Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Swaziland towards the North, and it surrounds Lesotho – a landlocked country. This case study is located in the Western Cape – one of the nine provinces in South Africa and the southernmost province of South Africa (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018).

2.2.2 Population

Of a population of some 57.73 million, 29.5% of the population is below the age of 15. Most South Africans reside in Gauteng (25.4%) and KwaZulu-Natal (19.7%) (Stats SA, 2018:1). The Western Cape has 11.5% of the population, that is, 6 621 100 people (Stats SA, 2018:1-2). The life expectancy was estimated in 2018 to be 67 for females and 61 for males (Stats SA, 2018:1). The distribution of the country's population according to race is 80.9% black⁵, 8.8% coloured, 7.8% white and 2.5% Indian/Asian (Stats SA, 2018:2). While there are eleven official languages, the language of communication for business and politics is English (World Education News and Review, 2017). Most of the Western Cape population is of mixed ethnicity: coloured, followed by black, white and then Indian/Asian people. The most widely spoken language in the Western Cape is Afrikaans, followed by isiXhosa and English (Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2018).

2.2.3 Administration

South Africa since 1994 has been a constitutional democracy. It has a three-tier system of government and nine provinces, including the Western Cape. South Africa is a Republic which has taken the form of a constitutional democracy. The republic has three capitals: Pretoria, the administrative capital located in Gauteng, Bloemfontein, the judicial capital located in the Free State, and Cape Town, the legislative and provincial capital city of the Western Cape (South African Government, 2018b).

2.2.4 Economy

South Africa is a middle-income emerging market country (Forbes, 2017) and one of the largest developing economies of Africa (BBC, 2018). The income gap in South Africa is among the widest in the world (Forbes, 2017). The Gross Domestic Product (GDP) was worth 349.42 billion US dollars in 2017 (Stats SA, 2018; Trading Economics, 2018). The GDP per capita stood at 7524.51 USD in 2017. Using the purchasing power parity based on data submission in 2011, South Africa is the third largest

⁵ While the terms black, white, coloured, Indian/Asian are race categories based on the Population Registration Act, No. 30, 1950 (Union of South Africa, 1950) and are still commonly used in South Africa. This terminology, however, is not subscribed to by the researcher, as it perpetuates categories of race.

economy in Africa, surpassed only by Egypt (second largest) and Nigeria (largest) (Stats SA, 2017). These positions often change, as in 2016 it was announced that South Africa had regained the title of the largest economy of Africa (BBC, 2016). However, of direct relevance to the current study, the national economic context has created constraints on youth economic development owing to “the poor GDP rate, lack of transformation of the economy, and low levels of youth economic participation” and “high levels of youth unemployment, lack of critical management skills, lack of access to finance and economic opportunities” (Republic of South Africa. Department of Trade and Industry, 2013:10). Other constraints include an “inexperienced workforce, de-industrialisation, poor infrastructure, and the volatility of our currency with our major trading partners” (Republic of South Africa. Department of Trade and Industry, 2013:10). These constraints pose a challenge to reducing inequality and militate against social mobility of the poor and the youth.

2.2.5 History and Politics

South Africa’s history over nearly five centuries is one of contest, fraught with racial strife and conflict over land between various groups at various times: European settlers, indigenous groups and groups from other parts of Africa (Briney, 2017). This historical development, through the pre-colonial, colonial, post-colonial, apartheid and post-apartheid/democracy periods, has had, and continues to have, a major influence on the current state of affairs in South Africa, in the form of racial and spatial inequality, unequal land distribution, and socio-economic inequality. These issues continue to affect the country and its people, particularly in areas such as education, access to services, employment, and wealth distribution (Briney, 2017).

During apartheid, which was introduced in 1948, a range of legislation entrenched racial discrimination and removed many rights, including the right to vote, from those who were not classified as ‘white’. This legislation formalised separate trajectories of social and economic development among racial groups (Naicker, 2005; Lomofsky & Lazarus, 2001; Swart and Pettipher, 2016:17). Of historical relevance to the current study, which contextualises the risks and structural violence affecting children and youth daily, is the Bantu Education Act, No. 47 of 1953 (Bauer, 2020), Extension of University Education Act, No. 45 of 1959 (Thompson, 2020), and the Group Areas Act, No. 36 of 1966 (Kloppers & Pienaar, 2014) which governed and restricted all areas of life for people of colour, including their movement, access to resources, and ownership of land, employment opportunities, marriage relations and education access and quality.

The first democratic election in 1994 brought the ANC into power and the ANC government has remained in power to the present. The ANC is currently facing national issues of high unemployment especially among youth (Tracey-Temba, 2015), erratic xenophobic attacks on African foreigners (Tracey-Temba, 2015), internal and widespread corruption especially among high-ranking officials (Adam, 2018), an increasing number of cases of violent crime (BBC News, 2019), poverty and inequality (Stats SA, 2018c:11), inefficient service delivery (PSA, 2015) and the downgrading of the international credit rating to full junk status (Bloomberg, 2020).

2.2.6 Education

In the goal to achieve segregation, in 1953, under the leadership of the National Party which came to power in 1948, a slew of legislation was passed, notably the Bantu Education Act (South African History Online, 2017c; South African History Online, 2017d). The aim of the Bantu Education Act was to ensure that white people dominated black people and designated the black person as an inferior human being. Black schools were underprivileged, rigidly controlled and poorly resourced. During this time the curriculum and racially based education system effectively excluded many learners based on race, disability and gender. Many dropped out, were pushed out, or failed (Department of Education, 2001:5).

In 1994 the new democratically elected government was tasked with undoing all the racial, unequal and inequitable legal and policy framework promulgated and enforced by the National Party. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No. 108 of 1996 (Republic of South Africa, 1996) was the founding document on which national unity and democracy were built and all former apartheid legislation and policies which led to the exclusion of the majority of South Africans were overturned. Major efforts were made to provide and ensure access to health, housing, and quality education, and ensure that further exclusion was prevented, especially within the education system. The Bill of Rights (Section 29) states that everyone has the right to education, which includes basic education, further education, and adult education and training, which the state should progressively make available within reason (Dalton et al., 2012).

The legislation overturned included the Bantu Education Act (1953), the Indian Education Act (1965) and the Coloured Persons Education Act (1963) (South African History Online, 2017c). Separate education departments, based on race, had been developed and governed by their own legislation (South

African History Online, 2017c). The education system was divided along racial lines as well as ‘ordinary’ learners and learners with ‘special education needs’ (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001:5). After 1994, the school education system was centralised under the then Department of Education (now separated into the DBE and the Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET)), with each province’s education department governed by a provincial education department. The new laws and policies introduced since 1994 have sought to create a more inclusive education system. Radical shifts and commitments have been made since then to include all in the political, economic, cultural and social life of the state.

After 1994, South Africa adopted many international laws that provided the current inclusive policy framework. These include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations General Assembly, 1948), United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (United Nations General Assembly, 1989), the Dakar Framework for Action (UNESCO, 2002) and the Jakarta Declaration on the Right to Basic Education (UNESCO, 2005). South Africa also adopted the principles in the UNESCO (1994) Salamanca Statement on Principles, Policy and Practice in Special Needs Education.

National policies and initiatives that were also adopted during this transition period include the White Paper on Education and Training in a Democratic South Africa (Republic of South Africa. Department of Education, 1995), the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996, the White Paper on an Integrated National Disability Strategy (Republic of South Africa. Ministerial Office of the Deputy President, 1997), the National Commission on Special Needs in Education and Training (NCSNET), and the National Committee on Education Support Services (NCESS) (Republic of South Africa. Department of Education, 1997), and White Paper 6: Building an Inclusive Education and Training System (Republic of South Africa. Department of Education, 2001) (see Appendix A for a full list of legislation and policies promulgated after 1994 to create a more democratic and inclusive society). Those that are relevant to this study include the White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001), and the Policy on Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support (SIAS) (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2014). There was also the recognition of the paucity of and the need to strengthen education support services across the system, which include professionals such as school psychologists, social workers and therapists (Daniels, 2010:634,636). Education support services were included as part of the broad strategies for an inclusive education and training system, along with inter-sectoral collaboration, support for psycho-social learning environments, community-based support, and preventative and a developmental support approach (Daniels, 2010:635).

Owing to the change in education policy and legislation, learners with diverse learning needs were now – post 1994 – able in theory to access both the education system and the curriculum. Despite South Africa's having almost a 95% rate of participation, which is high even according to global standards and in line with the Bill of Rights in the Constitution, retention until Grade 12 remains low, since almost 60% of South Africans drop out of school without the basic credential of a national school-leaving certificate (Hartnack, 2017:1). However, there is still a high failure, repetition and dropout rate in Grades 10–12 (OECD, 2008:49). The number of learners who fall out, drop out, or fail, pose a growing concern for the future of the country, affecting the economy and social cohesion.

The reasons for this weak performance and school dropout vary, which White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001) attributes to barriers to learning. These barriers may be systemic, societal, pedagogical or intrinsic. Barriers to learning, according to White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001) “refer to difficulties that arise within the education system as a whole, the learning site and/or within the learner him/herself which prevent access to learning and development” (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2014). The ‘barrier’ as White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001) suggests, could be addressed through a variety of ways and processes. Interventions to address these barriers could have as their focus the classroom, the school, the district, the province or could be addressed at a national level. There were a few ways suggested that teachers and schools could accommodate learners. The policy also listed the external challenges that it saw as creating barriers to learning, such as negative attitudes towards difference, a curriculum that does not accommodate learners’ special needs, inappropriate language and communication, inappropriate infrastructure, environments and support, policy, legislative gaps, unrecognised or lack of parent involvement, and inadequately trained staff (Republic of South Africa. Department of Education, 2001:7). Lomofsky and Lazarus (2001:315) argue that extreme poverty in South Africa is the main challenge to implementing inclusive education. It is also recognised by various education stakeholders that it is difficult to implement a policy such as this given the multiple challenges that exist and arise. Implementers may therefore use aspects of the policy and negotiate its feasibility, meaning and application within their context (Hughes & Talbott, 2017).

At the time of the publication of White Paper 6, seven years after the first democratically elected government came into power, teacher training was still as fragmented as it had been under the apartheid

education system and teachers lacked the skills to address these diverse learning needs. Engelbrecht (2006:257) also argues that the in-service training for teachers in South Africa tends to be fragmented and short-term, lacking in in-depth content knowledge. Furthermore, these in-service training programmes do not take the unique contextual influences that bear on the way in which schools function into consideration.” Therefore, there was a strong commitment to change the way teachers were being trained in order to address diversity in all its forms (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001:4). A number of teacher quality- and standards-related policies were developed to address this gap, including the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa 2011–2025, the Policy on the (Revised) Minimum Requirements for Teacher Education Qualifications (MRTEQ) (2015), the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) Management System and the Standards Framework for Teachers and School Leaders. Besides the lack of appropriately trained teachers, one of the challenges of implementing education for and ensuring its accessibility to all, is the paucity of resources to do so effectively. Capital and human resource investment are required to achieve this.

Despite its being almost 20 years since the introduction of White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001), and the efforts and drive towards a more inclusive education and training system, the current education system still presents challenges in implementing a fully inclusive education system free from prejudice and discrimination. Many children and youth remain disadvantaged and alienated from equitable access to education and the support needed to succeed (University of South Africa et al., 2018:9). Currently, schools that are not inclusive, suffer from several issues, including low academic performance, absenteeism, dropout and learners who engage in risk-taking behaviour (University of South Africa et al., 2018:9). Findings of a study conducted by the University of South Africa et al. (2018:13) reveal that 70% of learners with disabilities are excluded from the education system, exclusion is taking place within the classroom owing to language policies, “more than 40 percent of learners enrolled in Grade 10 do not obtain school-leaving matriculation at Grade 12”, teaching training programmes for inclusive education are non-integrative, and very few pre-service teachers have a positive view on inclusive education. Therefore, a great deal needs to be done in order to reach a fully inclusive education and training system.

Regarding the current state and management of education in South Africa, it is at present overseen by two national departments, the DBE and DHET). The three levels of the South African education system are primary education, secondary education, and tertiary education. The DBE oversees primary

education and secondary education, which comprise the Foundation Phase (Grade R–3) and the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4–5). Secondary education comprises the Senior Phase (Grade 7–9) and Further Education and Training (FET – Grade 10–12). On completion of the FET phase, learners receive the National Senior Certificate (NSC or certificate pass). Currently, the curriculum followed during the General Education and Training phase (GET) is CAPS, which has received criticism for its rigidity (Fataar, 2012:58). Tertiary education overseen by the DHET comprises the National Higher Certificate (second tier of the NSC pass) and National Diploma (third tier of pass) or a bachelor's degree (highest level of the NSC pass), followed by honours or master's and then the PhD (World Education News and Review, 2017). The DBE (2018b) reported in the 2017 school realities report that 12 892 273 million learners attended mainstream and independent schools, totalling 25 762 schools, and were taught by 433 320 teachers. There were 454 Special Needs Education (SNE) schools or institutions in South Africa, serving 119 403 learners and 10 059 teachers recorded in 2015 and 2016. Of these institutions, 79 are located in the Western Cape, the second largest number of institutions, followed by Gauteng (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2018c:28).

Despite all these efforts, South Africa has unfortunately gained the reputation of one of the worst education systems in the world (Jansen, 2017) despite the government having devoted a substantial percentage of the country's GDP and budget to education to improve this status. In 2013 it spent almost 20% of the budget on education (World Education News and Review, 2017). Challenges facing the education system include poor educational outcomes and the poor quality of education offered at most schools in the country. The DHET reported that 1 million learners drop out of school annually before reaching Grade 12, and 50% of learners drop out of school during Grade 10 And 11 before matriculating, according to a study published in 2015 (World Education News and Review, 2017). In addition, racial inequality is linked to educational outcomes: statistics between 2008 and 2013 show that 44% of black and coloured youth between the ages of 23 and 24 attained secondary education compared with 83% of Indian youth and 88% of white youth (World Education News and Review, 2017).

This section, in providing a brief description of the background of South Africa in terms of the country's geography, population, administration, economy, history, politics, and its past and current state of education, highlighted the challenges and opportunities faced by South Africans, particularly in terms of the unequal social, employment and education opportunities. In the next section the challenges specific to children and youth are described and discussed.

2.3 Challenges facing children and youth in South Africa

The many barriers to learning facing children and youth in South Africa include societal, systemic and intrinsic barriers. In this section the societal barriers to learning are discussed particularly as they relate to the various social challenges facing children and youth in the Western Cape. These challenges include children and youths' enrolment in education, poverty, unemployment, crime, violence, and drugs.

2.3.1 Children and Youth Enrolment in Education

School dropout is a huge problem in the Western Cape. According to a report by the Western Cape Government (2014), the percentage of youth enrolment in education in the province has decreased. The dropout rate of youth aged 15 increased from 8.2% to 13%, and 7% at the age of 16. The racial group most represented in those who have dropped out by the age of 16 are coloured youth (16.9%), followed by black youth (11.2%). The highest education levels attained by youth (25–34) are in the Western Cape, where 77.4% of youth have completed between Grade 8 and 11. It also shows that 66.7% of youth have completed Grade 12, and 15.1% have obtained a bachelor's, master's or PhD degree (Western Cape Government, 2014:20). These numbers need to be improved given the link between education and the upliftment of youth, accessing opportunities, instilling values of respect, cultivating understanding and appreciation of others, and in general empowering marginalised youth as stated by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA, 2009:10), dropping out of school poses major setbacks for youth and their future and well as for promoting social cohesion.

2.3.2 Poverty

The Western Cape Government (2014) showed in a report that 15% of youth live in households with no employed adults, a situation which in turn affects the social mobility, health and overall well-being of youth (Western Cape Government, 2014:13). As mentioned earlier, South Africa is one of the most unequal societies in the world. This inequality manifests in the form of intergenerational and structural poverty (1 014 976 children in the Western Cape depend on child support grants (South African Social Security Agency, 2018)) as the effect of poverty has lasted for generations owing to the unequal distribution of wealth and development between racial groups over more than two centuries. The structural nature of poverty, the deprivation of land, and lack of quality education have led to the poor being unable to make a living or contribute in a productive way towards their communities (Western

Cape Government, 2014). Galtung (1969:171) calls this structural violence, which Swartz et al. (2012:30) defines as “the institutionalisation of social processes that differentially cause suffering through organising unequal access to social resources such as rights, security, capital and bodily and mental integrity, based on markers of difference”. These inequalities created in the past can have lasting effects on both present and future generations unless these cycles of poverty are stopped.

Race is also linked to poverty rates in South Africa, where the black population accounted for 90% of those in poverty in 2011 (World Education News and Review, 2017). This is because the apartheid system had formalised the exclusion of people of colour from many of the education, health, land and social services and economic systems. Besides material and physical impoverishment, there have been many long-lasting affective effects, such as emotional and psychological damage, trauma, disempowerment, together with the loss of dignity, hope, autonomy, purpose, safety, and security (Swartz et al., 2012:29-30). In other words, equality and poverty have been internalised and can be said to have shaped social behaviour (Swartz et al., 2012:30).

Poverty is an impediment that has long-lasting damaging effects. Poverty is linked to and manifests in many social issues, such as violence, homelessness, unemployment, low skills levels, vulnerability to fatal diseases and illnesses, little or no access to further education and training, and vulnerability to criminal activity, drug taking and selling, and potential involvement in exploitation in order to make money to survive (Arnot & Swartz, 2012:1). Swartz et al. (2012) argue that poverty has been found to prevent people from fully realising their citizenship rights and from fully developing their potential as human beings. It has also been found to create a sense of exclusion and marginalisation from the mainstream of society. Inclusion in social and economic systems allows individuals to develop their agency and to develop and define themselves as both part of a community and as individuals (Swartz et al., 2012:28-29). These authors argue that while those living in poverty can be viewed as formal members of a state or citizens of South Africa, they are in fact excluded from the rights and benefits of that citizenship (Swartz et al., 2012:29).

According to Chambers (2006, cited in Swartz et al., 2012:29), there are five dimensions of poverty. These include, “first, the lack of income and assets to generate income; second, physical weakness due to malnutrition, disability or sickness; third, physical or social isolation due to marginal location, the lack of access to goods and services, ignorance or illiteracy; fourth, vulnerability to any kind of shock or emergency and the risk of falling deeper into poverty; and fifth, powerlessness within existing socio-

economic and political structures” (Chambers, 2006 cited in Swartz et al., 2012:29). This five-point definition suggests that poor citizens, despite possessing citizenship rights, are excluded from the actualisation of these rights because of the barriers poverty creates, described by Arnot and Swartz (2012:2), “...poverty and marginalisation contribute to their [youth] exclusion from civic entitlements and democratic participation”. It is therefore important for children and youth to access education and other opportunities to experience social inclusion and improve their well-being.

2.3.3 Unemployment

The unemployment rate for South Africa in the second quarter of 2018 stood at 27.2% (Stats SA, 2018). Youth unemployment in South Africa constitutes a major problem, as the unemployment rate for youth (15–34) in the second quarter of 2018 was 38.8%. A lower level of educational attainment among youth correlates with a lower level of unemployment. Those who have attained less than a matric (Grade 12) level of education have an unemployment rate of 44.1%; those who have attained only a matric level of education have an unemployment rate of 39.1%, and those who have attained a graduate degree have an unemployment rate of 11.9% (Stats SA, 2018:7). In addition, the percentage of those between the ages of 15 and 24 who are ‘Not in Education’ (less than Grade 12 level pass), Employment (unemployed and discouraged work seeker) and Training (not enrolled in an educational or training institution) (NEET), currently stands at 31.6%, and those between 15 and 34 stands at 39.3% in the second quarter of 2018 (Western Cape Government, 2014:23; Stats SA, 2018:8). These NEETs are therefore at high risk of social exclusion. In Cape Town it is estimated by the Development Bank of Southern Africa that 50% of the youth in Cape Town between 15 and 24 years of age are unemployed, and 199231 youths are NEET. Unemployment is one of the most serious issues facing South Africa. Given that in the light of current macro-economic trends, youth unemployment is unlikely to be reduced significantly in the near future, it is imperative for young people to be provided with skills that could facilitate their self-employment (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2010:29).

2.3.4 Crime, Violence, Drugs and Gangs

Leoschut’s (2008:1) research, and the study of Burton et al. (2009: xiii), provided convincing evidence that young people are at a higher risk of being victims and perpetrators of violence in comparison with adults. Youth are constantly faced with issues of safety, especially those in the Western Cape who are

exposed to high levels of violence and crime and where over a quarter have family members who have been imprisoned, and under a quarter have a family member who has abused drugs. A study conducted by the Western Cape Government reports a strong correlation between drugs, violence, and gangs, and that gang activity is closely linked to the drug economy (Swingler, 2012, cited in Souverein et al., 2015). The social dislocation created by the forced removals in the 1960s created conditions for gang formation where children sought physical protection from threats in the communities in which their families had been transplanted (Swingler, 2012, cited in Souverein et al., 2015). Participants in a study conducted by Ward and Bakhuis (2010:50) reported failing social structures to be the main cause of gangsterism.

A study conducted by Burton and Leoschut (2013) found gangsterism to be a prevalent phenomenon in the Western Cape, accounting for 83% of the murders in the province (Western Cape Government, 2018). It affects male children particularly harshly, and youth, especially those attending school, as gangsterism in communities spills over into schools and young boys are initiated into gangs at a very young age (Western Cape Government, 2014:13-14). According to Ward and Bakhuis (2010:50), children as young as 12 are becoming gang members. In 2013, 12% of the 2 580 murders in the province were due to gangs (Swingler, 2012, cited in Souverein et al., 2015). Ward and Bakhuis (2010:53) revealed that gangs in the research participants' neighbourhoods made them feel very unsafe, over and above other kinds of violence and threats. Young people in these studies believe that the causes of gangsterism are many, and include young people being enticed by material goods, especially in impoverished areas, the need for protection, the forced removals that disrupted stable communities, lack of quality education, few recreational activities, poor police service, and dysfunctional families that model delinquent behaviour. Young people during their transition to adulthood and identity development are caught in a dilemma of avoiding gangs or desiring respect from certain relatively powerful community members and/or notorious gang members (Ward & Bakhuis, 2010:56). There is little attention given to interventions directed at preventing those who may potentially enter gangs, or interventions for those who want to exit gangs (Ward & Bakhuis, 2010:57).

In addition, research conducted by Burton et al. (2009:17-18) and France (2007:112) shows that the propensity to become involved in violent and criminal behaviour is gendered, and gender seems to be "a key factor in predicting violent and/or criminal behaviour, and males are more likely than females to engage in violent and/or criminal behaviour" (Burton et al., 2009:17-18). This argument is supported by statistics that show that males comprise 97.6% of the prison population (Institute for Criminal Policy Research, 2017) and is also supported by Hinsberger et al. (2016:2), who show that boys are at high risk

of polyvictimisation. Age and gender as the chief indicators of violent crime seem to be a global phenomenon as reported by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC, 2013:13): men comprise 95% of homicide perpetrators and 79% of homicide victims globally and the number of male victims is four times higher than that of female victims.

The South African Police Service (SAPS) released a report on the crime statistics in South Africa for 2017–2018. The report showed a 4.4% drop in reported crime since 2017. The types of crimes include the 17 community-reported serious crimes which are ‘contact crimes’ (e.g. murder, sexual assault), ‘contact-related crime’ (e.g. arson, property crimes), ‘other serious crimes’ (e.g. shoplifting, robbery), and ‘crimes detected as a result of police action’ (e.g. possession of fire arm, driving under the influence). Some individual crimes however were shown to have increased, such as bank robberies, which have increased by 333%, the robbery of cash in transit, which has increased by 56.6%, drug-related crimes by 10.5% and the number of murders by 7%, which is equal to 57 murders per day, or 35.7 people murdered per 100.000 of the population (Businesstech, 2018). The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) calculates 56 murders per day, and of these 56 murders, the ISS shows that 46 of them are of men, eight women, and two children (Institute for Security Studies, 2018).

The report shows violence and crime to be much more prevalent in certain cities, communities and suburbs in South Africa. The Western Cape had 10 of the 30 police stations which contributed to the statistics showing an increase in murder rates, with Nyanga Police Station reporting the highest rate of murder cases in the country. However, KwaZulu-Natal’s police stations reported the highest number of victims of the national total of 1260 victims. KwaZulu-Natal reported 556 victims, followed by the Western Cape which reported 241 victims. Most of the criminal behaviour motives seem to be gang related – this being a high occurrence in the Western Cape, where 808 of the 973 of gang-related murders occurred in the Western Cape. Drug-related crimes were also the highest in the Western Cape, where they increased from 292 689 arrests to 323 547 arrests in one year (Businesstech, 2018).

Cape Town was reported to have the highest murder rate in the country, with a rate of 61.5 homicides per 100 000 people in 2016. This is higher than the national murder rate (Businesstech, 2017). Also significant is the rate of female homicides in South Africa, the rate being 12.9 per 100 000 in 2009. That is five times greater than the global average of 2.6 per 100 000 people (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, 2014:54). The ISS (2018) reports that the black and poor are the most affected by crime and violence as young black men have a greater chance of being murdered; one in three children are hurt by

a caregiver and one in five children experience sexual abuse. The aftermath of the perpetrated crime and violence for the victims includes trauma, anxiety, and the inability to concentrate, fear, and depression. In addition, children who experience violence and/or abuse often use drugs, become depressed or become violent themselves (Institute for Security Studies, 2018). These dismal statistics describe the atmosphere of insecurity in which children and youth are raised.

To summarise, children and youth are faced with serious challenges in society in terms of enrolment in education, poverty, unemployment, crime, violence, gangs, and drugs. All of these are manifestations of structural and direct violence which damage the social fabric and stability of South Africa (Harber & Mncube, 2013:17). Youth therefore face major challenges which, as this research will suggest, could potentially be alleviated by the education system. The next section addresses the attempts of the institutional environment to meet the various needs and challenges faced by children and youth, particularly those who are of a school-going age.

2.4 An overview of institutions for children and youth at risk in South Africa

As discussed in the previous section, many children and youth of school-going age have to overcome significant challenges before being able to attend school and learn effectively. In addition to schools, there are specific institutions in place to cater for and meet the specific needs of children and youth (of school-going age). These institutions are found under the aegis of both the DBE and the Department of Social Development (DSD). The White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001), was at the time part of the shift in reducing segregation and creating a more integrated, inclusive education system that would promote social inclusion through inclusive schools and special schools for those children/youth who were seen to need greater support than those able to cope with the ordinary schooling context (Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development, 2008:261). The Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, describes child and youth care centres that address the specific needs of children and youth 'in need of care and protection'. These various institutions are described below, followed by a description and the structure of the child and youth care centre under study.

2.4.1 Overview of specialised institutions in South Africa

The White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001), described government's intention at the time, in an inclusive education system, to provide institutional support to

‘learners with disabilities’ according to a spectrum from low to high-intensive, depending on the degree of disability:

...in an inclusive education and training system, a wider spread of educational support services will be created in line with what learners with disabilities require. This means that learners who require low-intensive support will receive this in ordinary schools and those requiring moderate support will receive this in full-service schools. Learners who require high-intensive educational support will continue to receive such support in special schools (Department of Education, 2001:15).

Schools in South Africa are currently categorised according to levels of support and specialisation according to the nature and extent of the needs of the child/youth. In addition, support is given through a funding model according to the level of support supplied by government provincial departments. ‘Disabled’ children in ordinary schools (also referred to as mainstream schools in this study) receive funding according to the designated quintile of their school, whereas in special schools, children receive funding according to the nature of their learning barrier and need. Learners with emotional and behavioural barriers to learning receive the second highest funding allocation compared with learners with other barriers to learning. Institutions are also arranged according to these needs. Some of these institutions are called full-service/inclusive schools and these are schools, colleges and FET or Technical Vocation Education and Training (TVET) colleges that are equipped to provide quality education and address a broad array of learning needs for all children/youth in order to address their barriers to learning. Full-service schools are described as “ordinary schools which are specially resourced and orientated to address a full range of barriers to learning in an inclusive education setting” (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2010:49; Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2010:7). These schools are meant to get special support from the district support teams in order to be effective and have the capacity to respond appropriately to a diverse range of needs irrespective of learning style, pace and social difficulties (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2010:7). In addition, they provide extra support for teachers to create an awareness of diversity and assist them in adapting the curriculum if and where necessary (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2010:7).

Furthermore, children and youth with specific learning needs and in need of intense support could find these services at special schools that were intended to provide critical educational support (Republic of South Africa. Department of Education, 2001:21). Special schools are “schools equipped to deliver education to learners requiring high-intensive educational and other support, on a full-time or part-time basis” (Department of Basic Education, 2010:50). Special schools, according to the White Paper 6

(Department of Basic Education, 2001), were also intended to act as resource centres to provide expertise and support in their field as part of the district-based support team in service of full-service schools in the area. District Based Support Teams (DBSTs) are “groups of departmental professionals whose responsibility is to promote inclusive education through training, curriculum delivery, distribution of resources, identifying and addressing barriers to learning, leadership and general management” (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2010:49).

The DSD also provides institutions called child and youth care centres (CYCCs) for children and youth ‘in need of care and protection’. The Children’s Act, No. 38 of 2005 defines a child and youth care centre as “a facility that provides residential care to more than six children outside of the child’s family environment according to a residential programme suitable for the children in the facility” (Mahery et al., 2011:29). The Act specifies those institutions not designated as child and youth care centres. Thus, the care centres exclude

... a partial care facility; a drop-in centre; a boarding school; a school hostel or other residential facility attached to a school; a prison; or any other establishment which is maintained mainly for the tuition or training of children other than an establishment which is maintained for children ordered by a court to receive tuition or training (Mahery et al., 2011:29).

Children and youth may be sent to these specified categories of institutions if they are particularly vulnerable and/or unsafe and need particular care and protection, if:

... the child has been abandoned or orphaned and is without any visible means of support; displays behaviour which cannot be controlled by the parent or care-giver; lives or works on the streets or begs for a living; is addicted to a dependence-producing substance and is without any support to obtain treatment for such dependency; has been exploited or lives in circumstances that expose the child to exploitation; lives in or is exposed to circumstances which may seriously harm that child’s physical, mental or social well-being; may be at risk if returned to the custody of the parent, guardian or care-giver of the child as there is reason to believe that he or she will live in or be exposed to circumstances which may seriously harm the physical, mental or social well-being of the child; is in a state of physical or mental neglect; or is being maltreated, abused, deliberately neglected or degraded by a parent, a care-giver, a person who has parental responsibilities and rights or a family member of the child or by a person under whose control the child is (Children’s Act 38, 2005: 49).

The type of institution selected by the court is based on the programme offered, the developmental, therapeutic and education needs of the child/youth, the safety of the child, and the distance of the institution from the family (Children’s Act, No. 38 of 2005: 55). These child and youth care centres provide residential care, as well as therapeutic and development programmes to children and youth. The children and youth have access to education, therapy, recreational activities and sports. Education is one

of the tools used to rehabilitate, socialise and reintegrate marginalised children and youth into society. In addition, admission to these institutions is through a court order issued by the Children's Court in cooperation with the parents and their child who is assigned to the institution.

Furthermore, the DBE and DSD work in collaboration at some of these institutions, where the DSD oversees these institutions, while the DBE provides the education. The DSD is responsible for funding the CYCCs and for ensuring there is an even spread of CYCCs throughout the country. It is important that there is an even distribution of CYCCs throughout the country as children need to be in close proximity to their families for reunification. Overall inter-sectoral collaboration is encouraged in order to provide the support needed to help children and youth overcome the various challenges that prevent them from experiencing or managing inclusion in education and society. These institutions therefore provide the necessary support and meet the specific needs of each child/youth.

In addition, to these institutions, provision has recently been made (in Section 12 E) by the Western Cape Provincial School Education Amendment Act, No. 4 of 2018, for intervention facilities which serve a similar purpose to child and youth care centres but are under the aegis of the WCED. These intervention facilities are for learners who are guilty of misconduct and their purpose is to provide therapeutic care and education. Learners who are guilty of misconduct are referred to these facilities by the Head of Department (HOD) at their school once the parent(s)/guardian consents and return to their school once the intervention is complete. The nature of the facilities and interventions, and how they differ from existing facilities, is still unclear. However, children/youth who will be referred to child and youth care centres by their HODs for support will be different from the children referred to these institutions through the legal system via the Children's Court.

Problems, however, have been found in many of these institutions, as reported by Section27 (2016:7), a legal public interest law group who found that special schools in KwaZulu Natal such as "insufficient assessment support, inadequate co-curricular, and little to no access to transport to cope with children with disabilities." Since these institutions differ in nature and function, they experience different kinds of challenges however access to and standard of delivery of the curriculum, which is discussed further in the literature review, is a national concern as described by the Department of Basic Education where learners are not given equal access (Section27, 2016:9). The challenges regarding the curriculum for the institution under study is discussed in the findings chapters.

2.4.2 Description of the institution under study

Knorth et al. (2007:123) state that it is surprising that not many studies on residential care describe the residential care programme. For this reason, an in-depth description of the programmes and interventions provided at the child and youth care centre under study is provided. The institution in this study is located in Cape Town in the Western Cape. For the purpose of this study, it is called the Circle, owing to its philosophy described later. It is a special school for learners who experience emotional and behavioural barriers to learning as defined by the White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001). However, the Circle is also classified as a child and youth care centre (CYCC) as described earlier. The CYCC was established in 1948 when the National Party came to power and as a result the school developed within a racial paradigm. The Circle was formerly classified as a school of industries that catered for 'coloured' boys who were considered indigent and had welfare and social needs (Author, 2001:13).

Currently the Circle admits males between the ages of 8 and 18 who experience emotional and behavioural barriers to learning and who are also regarded as 'in need of care and protection' according to the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005. The Circle acts as an intervention for young males who display difficult behaviour and who have been referred to the institution by the Children's Court. The Circle is legally the responsibility of the DSD but is currently the responsibility of the WCED. Despite the link to the Children's Court for admission and the strong alignment with the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005, the school is under the aegis of the WCED, meaning that most of the funding and salaries (notably those of the teachers) come from the WCED. In addition to this funding, the Circle hosts a range of activities and partners with businesses and organisations to further fund its work.

Besides the males displaying behaviour that may border on criminality, based on the assessments conducted by probation officers, the judgement of the presiding officer on a case-by-case basis will have found these males to be 'in need of care and protection' rather than being child or youth offenders. There are also cases where children have never attended school or have dropped out at a very early age. The uncontrollable or antisocial behaviour may have led in some instances to criminal acts, which may range from petty to serious crimes. In each case, the circumstances surrounding the crime are considered before deciding where to place the child/youth. The children and their parents are also involved in this decision-making process. Thereafter, the child/youth could be placed in an institution, such as the Circle, or in similar and more restrictive institutions. Imprisonment in juvenile detention or secure care centres

is an option only in very serious cases. Admission to such institutions is based on court orders given by the Children's Court to the child/youth, rather than on the preference and the volition of the parents and child, or the catchment area, according to one of the criteria used for admission to mainstream schools. There are of course instances where children are placed in incorrect/unsuitable institutions, but it is assumed or hoped that these cases would be reviewed in time and corrected.

Other than this unique admission process and departmental arrangement, the Circle represents a deviation from mainstream, inclusive, and fully inclusive schools, and even special schools. It also deviates in many ways from secure care centres and other childcare centres. The Circle embodies characteristics from each of these different types of institutions. A maximum of only 70 children can be admitted to the institution at one time, owing to resource and financial constraints. The institution provides residential care, psychological support, and education to males only. At the age of 18 a youth is no longer legally considered a child and is then disengaged from the Circle. In exceptional cases, learners stay beyond the age of 18 if they need additional support or would like to complete their education. Owing to the Circle's holistic education and developmental model, called a model of care, which replaced the medical model used in the previous dispensation, care practices are therefore embedded in all the programmes of the institution. The learners are exposed to an academic curriculum, technical skills, and extra-curricular activities. In the next section, the structure of the Circle is discussed.

2.4.3 Structure of the Circle

The Circle has several components that allow it to function as a unique whole. These components include the school governing body, the senior management team (institutional management and governance), administration, laundry, kitchen, residential care, education support services, an academic department and the technical department. The learners are divided into two groups, namely group A and group B, which follow different routines and schedules on a rotational basis. The relevant sections described in this section are residential care, education support services, and the academic and technical departments.

The residential care comprises a head of department, childcare educator and childcare workers. At the time of writing this section of my study there were eight childcare workers in the first hostel, and six childcare workers in the second hostel. The total number of staff is 17, and there is also a general

assistant. Childcare educators work night shifts: either 08:00 to 16:00, 11:00 to 19:00, or 13:00 to 21:00. Childcare workers work 12-hour shifts within a seven-day period: from 07:00–19:00, 06:00–18:00, or 19:00–07:00.

The Circle currently has two hostels and is building a third. The first hostel is for males between the ages of 8 and 15. The hostel has a beautifully maintained backyard filled with various farm animals that form part of the therapeutic environment. The hostel offers a variety of programmes that support the males' development. At the time of data collection there was a unit manager, one care and support educator, eight childcare workers (at the time of writing this section), and a laundry department. The programme includes animal therapy, sport and recreation (soccer, hiking, surfing, rugby, arts and crafts), life skills, outreach (fibre separation programme, senior homes support, beach clean-up, food kitchen, etc.), school and vocational skills, pastoral care, karate, soil for life, surfing, Young in Prison (YiP) volunteers, (drama, arts, and counselling), Project Abroad volunteers (surfing, music, family tree), and Epilepsy Africa (skills and outreach).

The second hostel is for males between the ages of 16 and 18. The programmes are similar to those of the younger males in the first hostel, excluding animal therapy and sport and recreation, and including programmes to assist them to reintegrate into their families and society through placing the learners in college, providing work-skills placements, kickboxing, school and workshop attendance, family integration, and independent living (disengagement workshops).

In addition, the Education Support Services (ESS) has developed a High Care Therapeutic hostel and programme. The hostel is not running now owing to several changes. Its purpose had evolved over the years according to the needs of the learners. It initially began with a few boys who had displayed inappropriate sexual behaviour. What followed was a camp and support for learners with intensive therapeutic support. Later the programme changed to a placement centre for newcomers and young learners, and more recently it has been used as a placement facility for working boys and learners outside the school. The vision for this programme is to create a high-care therapeutic hostel. The ESS staff has been in the process of preparing the hostel for this service. The staff at this hostel consists of volunteers, a childcare worker, and a residential teacher, all of whom work in collaboration with the ESS and residential component. The facility included the following services:

- Screening and welcoming of prospective learners into the programme
- Identification and orientation of learners to their placement need(s)

- Assessment of their Individual Development Programme (IDP)
- Support at three levels of therapeutic and education levels (Board Report, 2016⁶)

The ESS also follows these principles:

- Consistent, calm adult behaviour
- Attention to good behaviours
- Routines, routines and routines
- Scripting difficult interventions
- Restorative follow-throughs (Board Report, June 2016)

The hostel also offers services to outside or mainstream schools through the Outreach Behavioural Support Team as those schools do not always have the capacity or resources to address certain behavioural issues and expelled learners. Their work includes locating learners who have absconded or whose lives are in danger. They drop off and pick up learners for house visits and follow up on learners who have been disengaged and those learners who reach out for help.

The ESS comprises a team of professionals and includes an educational psychologist, an occupational therapist, a social worker, nurses, and interns (temporary and intermittent). The team provides psychological and therapeutic care services in the form of psycho-educational assessments for children and adolescents. They provide support to children who have attention and concentration difficulties, intellectual difficulties, developmental difficulties, emotional difficulties, learning difficulties, and behavioural difficulties. They provide assistance, treatment and management to learners who have experienced abuse (sexual, physical, emotional/verbal), who have Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorders (ADHD, ADD), secondary intellectual disability, who have experienced bereavement and loss, conduct problems (anger outbursts and behavioural difficulties at home and school), depression, self-harming behaviours, and problems with peer groups, including shyness, bullying and assertiveness. This department provides a comprehensive list of support services to the learners at the institution which is of great help to the teachers in the academic and technical departments. The ESS team have a profile

⁶This is a document collected from the Circle.

of each child/youth which describes the reasons for the student being admitted to the Circle. This information is confidential and is not shared with anyone. Teachers however may gain access to these files under the supervision of an ESS member.

The academic department is the school section of the Circle. There is a physical school building built like a traditional school in the shape of a square, with a quadrangle in the middle, and with many classrooms. Because of the very small number of learners, many of the classrooms are empty and not in use. Most of the teachers in the academic department have been at the school for many years, one for up to 37 years if not longer and there were two new teachers appointed in 2017. There are 12 educators, including those working in the technical department. The school uses a Curriculum of Care, which is mostly an adaptation of CAPS, supplemented with Platinum textbooks. Some teachers however do not use the curriculum at all. The grades available at the school are grades 6–10. The subjects available are Afrikaans, English first additional language, Mathematics, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, Life Skills, Life Orientation, Computer Studies, Economic Management Sciences, Mathematics Literacy, Arts and Culture, and Tourism.

The technical department's stated vision is clearly one that sees the educational role of the department as one of integrating with, and providing a resource to, the community, as being "to work towards integrating our institution with the community so that the technical department can become a resource centre for learning and skills training". The department's stated intention is also "to effectively skill our learners so that when they exit our workshops, they can hold their own in industry, and be productive members of our society". The goals of the technical department are to develop soft trade skills which include woodwork, arts and crafts, bricklaying, motor mechanics, carpentry, plumbing, and welding.

2.5 Conclusion

This chapter described the complex socio-economic context within which children and youth grow up in South Africa, the challenges they face, and the institutional environment available for specific needs. The chapter provided a detailed description of the case study institution, the Circle.

CHAPTER THREE: The Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, various bodies of literature are surveyed; the selection of the literature reviewed is related to the main research question and sub-questions. In order to contextualise the conceptual framework of this study, the first part of the literature review discusses definitions of children and youth at risk, the conceptual concerns of risk which are tied to inclusion and exclusion, and the types of risks children and youth face. The second part of the review discusses institutions in relation to institutional theory as the purpose and culture of the institution under study greatly influences the experiences of inclusion and exclusion of the children and youth, as well as their overall development. This section therefore begins with definitions of the institution, a discussion of neo-institutional theory, residential institutions for children and youth at risk, and a critique thereof. The third part of the review discusses teaching approaches for children and youth at risk. It begins by discussing teaching and learning that re-engages children and youth at risk, inclusive institutional cultures, the roles of teachers, discipline for children and youth at risk, positive youth development models and a discussion of appropriate curricula for children and youth at risk. This review concludes by linking all these concepts through a conceptual framework designed specifically for this study.

3.2 Children and Youth at Risk

This section discusses literature dealing with children and youth at risk as a means towards understanding how it is defined, what is meant by risk and what types of risk children and youth face. This section ends with a definition for children and youth at risk.

3.2.1 Defining ‘children and youth at risk’

Definitions of children and youth at risk range from disempowering and deficit views due to the focus on psychopathology (Luthar, 2003: xix), to more complex and empathic views arising from an increasing understanding of the multiplicity of risk – both views attributing little to no voice and agency to those in question. The term ‘children and youth at risk’ is therefore a contested term among scholars as it may further stigmatise and exclude those who are marginalised through evoking a deficit view of children and youth (Te Riele, 2006). This is made evident by a study conducted by Bessant (2001:31-

40) where she investigated the ‘science of risk’ and its ability to inform us about young people and the risk they pose to themselves and others. She found that too many risk-based researchers, especially those working within a positivist paradigm, such as Chamberlain and Mackenzie (1998, cited in Bessant, 2001) and Hagan and McCarthy (1997, cited in Bessant 2001) reinforce discourses of ‘youth as dependent’ through their research. These types of discourses indirectly strip children and youth of their voices and represent them as having little to no agency.

Bessant (2001) and Kelly (2000:453, 473) also highlighted the power dynamics that exist between the researcher and the researched and how ‘experts’ construct narratives about ‘youth at risk’ that suggest dangerous possibilities for society, invoking the need for regulation and surveillance of this at-risk population. Researchers therefore become the experts – and advisers – on these issues without the voices of youth, and in the process, youth are silenced in the articulation of their own problems (Bessant, 2001:41). Bessant (2001:32) therefore critiques definitions such as those offered by Batten and Russell (1995, cited in Bessant, 2001), based on their review of Australian literature on this in the 1990s, which, she argues, is typical of positivist researchers.

Others view it as a term to describe those who are on the verge of serious negative life outcomes which could be prevented if those at risk could be identified. There are thus various definitions and usages for the term ‘children at risk’ and ‘youth at risk’ (Schonert-Reichl, 2000:5). The term, and variations thereof, is one that captures the high probability and chance of a negative future event (Moore, 2006:3).

In psychology ‘at-risk’ refers to children and youth who potentially have emotional and behavioural difficulties (Schonert-Reichl, 2000:5). Criminologists use the term ‘anti-social behaviour’ and ‘delinquency’ to describe deviation from acceptable social behaviour, even if this deviation is not considered to be child offending. Steyn (2008:209) defines such children and youth, and their behaviour, as ‘child offenders’ and ‘child deviant behaviour’ ... minors (those under the age of 18) who have trespassed the law, while ‘child problem behaviour’ or similar wording denotes troubled, disruptive misbehaviour without an officially recorded offence. There are thus different fields that define and use the term ‘children and youth at risk’ differently.

In education, ‘at-risk’ children and youth may be used to describe children and youth who are disadvantaged, have a poor academic record, and may drop out or be expelled from school. School dropout, also referred to as “withdrawal” and “attrition”, is defined as “leaving school without obtaining

a minimal credential” (De Witte et al., 2013:1) and is a form of educational exclusion which may be associated with poverty, criminal activity, absenteeism, the lack of parental involvement, the school environment and low academic achievement (Vicuña, 2009:16). In addition, school dropout could be caused by multiple factors stemming from the individual, family, community and neighbourhood (Fernández-Suárez et al., 2016:1). Educational exclusion could also be seen as possibly leading to unsuccessfully transitioning into the work force (Wotherspoon & Schissel, 2001; Watson, 2008; Organisation of Economic Co-operation and Development, 2012). This ‘at-risk’ definition in relation to education pertains to the children and youth in this study.

Abrams and Terry (2014:1) shift the discourse from those who are at risk to a risky environment or ‘social fields’, where daily decisions are about survival. In addition, variations of ‘at-risk’ terminology are used interchangeably to describe specific risks, such as dropping out of school, and general risks, such as poverty and low academic achievement (Lubeck & Garrett, 1990:327; Schonert-Reichl, 2000:4; O’Connor et al., 2009:2; Anlezark, 2011:2). As a result of this various interchangeable terminology, meanings and the various overlapping and intersecting problems children and youth face are lumped together. This, in turn, causes serious legislative and policy confusion, especially within education and other government departments and their corresponding institutions. For example, in education, the boundaries are blurred between children and youth with various disabilities, and those who are poor, as both groups may experience learning difficulties. This confusion causes ‘special education needs’ and ‘at-risk’ children and youth to be addressed similarly under one policy (Schonert-Reichl, 2000:5).

How risk is defined often has ethical and political implications as it will affect how the concept, the people involved, or the phenomenon is approached. Choosing one definition over the other also highlights whose and which interests are being served or excluded. Slovic (2000: xxxvi, cited in Boholm, 2018:2) states:

Whoever controls the definition of risk controls the rational solution to the problem at hand. If you define risk one way, then one option will rise to the top as the most cost effective, or the safest or the best. If you define it another way, perhaps incorporating qualitative characteristics and other contextual factors, you will likely get a different ordering of your action solutions ... Defining risk is thus an exercise in power.

The definition of risk therefore has socio-political significance (Boholm, 2018:2) and the definition applied should be considered carefully. What is considered to be a risk may also be a matter of perception as can be inferred from a definition of delinquency, provided by Gottfredson (2001, cited in Stephenson,

2007) which not only addresses risk-taking behaviour in the context of school, but also in society. He defines delinquency broadly:

Such behaviours as cussing at a teacher, biting a classmate, shirking homework, being late in class, writing on school walls, cheating on tests, bullying classmates, lying, fighting, stealing, joyriding, drinking alcohol, having sex, selling drugs, assaulting or robbing others, setting fire to property, raping and murdering (Gottfredson, 2001, cited in Stephenson, 2007:4).

This broad definition of delinquency conflates harmless actions such as being late for school with criminal behaviour, thus general youth behaviour is framed as a problem and unnecessarily enters the space of youth justice. Youthful behaviour therefore gets regulated and criminalised when much lighter consequences could have sufficed (Giroux, 2015). Sharland (2006:260, cited in Kemshall, 2008:31) states that “we need consistently to question the distinction between what is normal and abnormal, acceptable and unacceptable risk – between youth in transition, youth in trouble and youth as trouble”, while Schonert-Reichl (2000:4) argues that this will clarify the type of interventions needed for children and youth at risk.

In contrast to disempowering and agentless discourses on children and youth, Biaya (2005:215-216) attempts to give voice to children and youth by deviating from ‘colonial logics’ and by highlighting the phenomenon of street culture and ‘youth’ as political actors in Africa. This is a break from the epistemological confines created by the colonial orientation prevalent in research on children and youth. He found that research during the twentieth century on children and youth focused on the judicial, prophylactic and therapeutic issues linked to delinquency. This approach to research on children and youth, especially in African and colonial contexts, was, and may continue to be, influenced by a colonial orientation which constructs categories of children and youth, viewing children as fragile and youth as future consumers. He therefore foregrounds the evolving, developing, dynamic, complex and re-invented identities and lifestyles of youth in three vastly different cities in Africa: Dakar, Addis Ababa, and Kinshasa, and how these have generated “new urban logics and new modes of expression and action” (Biaya, 2005:227). These complexities are important to consider before criminalising youthful behaviour that may only be transitory, exploratory, and a form of creative expression.

Biaya (2005) advocates that other similar terms, such ‘juvenile offenders’, ‘delinquents’, ‘drop outs’, NEETs (those not in education, employment and training) (Kraak, 2013:77) could or should be substituted for more positive terms, such as ‘opportunity youth’, and ‘youth as political and social actors’

(Biaya, 2005:215) to broadly describe children and youth who may be at risk of various negative (and positive) outcomes but who have both agency and the potential to contribute to society.

There are also other small variations of the ‘at-risk’ terms, such as ‘students at risk’, ‘children at risk’ or ‘at-risk youth’. Consequently, the kind of terminology used to describe these young people has the potential to influence the views and practices that scholars and practitioners adopt to address their various needs, and it informs how interventions created to assist them are designed. Using the term as a political tool should also be treated with caution as it may attach certain values of power to it and prioritise certain actors at the expense of others (Brown, 2014:392). Loose application of the term ‘at risk’ may also prove to be of no value and ineffective in designing prevention and intervention programmes (Schonert-Reichl, 2000:4).

Despite concerns of the term’s being used to label and stigmatise children and youth, its usage has increased and become part of the discourse, despite it not attaining universal consensus (Lubeck, 1988, cited in Lubeck & Garrett, 1990:328; Moore, 2006:1; Etzion & Romi, 2015:184). Risk is used in this current study, not to describe or categorise negative characteristics of individuals, but rather as “an assessment of a relationship between individuals and groups within a social, economic, cultural, and community context” as was discussed at the Pan-Canadian Education Research Agenda (Crocker, 2000:24). The term ‘youth at risk’ (and children at risk) is used generally to describe young people whose current and future conditions are linked to a myriad of problems that produce harm and threaten their present and future livelihoods. These problems include learning difficulties, poverty, health issues, trouble in social relationships, and environmental problems (Crocker, 2000:7; Schonert-Reichl, 2000:3-4). This composite ‘at-risk’ definition might appear vague and ambiguous as it is defined broadly and includes all types of risk; however, it is also used narrowly by some to distinguish between specific and fatal types of risk that children and youth may pose to others and/or to themselves (Kemshall, 2008:21). These definitions, discussed previously, are however insufficient in describing both the risks and vulnerabilities, level of agency and structural violence hindering the children and youth in this study.

Despite the challenges that the term, ‘children and youth at risk’ poses, the term is useful for this study and should be reframed in such a way as not to accuse or remove agency from those who are found to be in risk-related conditions. It is difficult to define children and youth at risk since this may encapsulate too broad a group of young people. What one can learn, however, and for the purposes of research from these various definitions, is that for a definition of children and youth at risk to capture the phenomenon

described in this study, the persons in question need to be described in as comprehensive and sensitive a way as possible: what they are at risk of needs to be clear, and their level of agency should be included. A definition of 'children and youth at risk' is therefore developed and presented later in Section 3.2.3 in the literature review after the rest of the literature is evaluated. In the next section, the concept and nature of risk is discussed.

3.2.2 The concept and nature of risk

The purpose of interrogating the concept of risk is that all those researching and working with children and youth who may be at risk, need to understand the needs and background of the children and youth they engage with. These include teachers, child and youth care professionals and various categories of educational institutions.

Boholm (2018:11) states that risk has different meanings in different contexts, such as in risk assessment where "risk is used as the combination of the probability that a negative event will occur and [also] the accident's negative consequences". Boholm (2018:3) also quotes Graham and Wiener (1995:30) who define risk simply as "the probability of an adverse outcome". Other definitions include, "the possibility of injury or harm, and injuries are of many kinds and have many and diverse causes" (Sjöberg, 2006:602). Christoffersen (2018:11-13) also describes risk as relational, in which there is a threat towards a valuable or vulnerable object, and no possibility of intervention.

Aven and Renn (2009:1) found two predominant definitions of risk: "(1) risk is a situation or event where something of human value (including humans themselves) is at stake and where the outcome is uncertain; (2) risk is an uncertain consequence of an event or an activity with respect to something that humans value." Aven and Renn (2009:1) argue that these definitions are sufficient for risk research and management, but there are conceptual difficulties when applying these definitions in everyday use. In reality, it is difficult to determine whether the risk is high or low, which therefore led Aven and Renn to propose a new definition, which is that "risk refers to uncertainty about and severity of the consequences (or outcomes) of an activity with respect to something that humans value" (Aven and Renn, 2009:6). Their definition highlights the uncertainty some events may cause and the consequences of those events that are often immeasurable and affect something humans value (Aven and Renn, 2009:7-10). Risk taking influences one's position, and provides feelings of identity, worth and purpose and may be necessary to protect a valued identity and lifestyle (Zinn, 2019:10).

Schonert-Reichl (2000:2) explored the origins of the term ‘at risk’ in relation to children and youth and examined the nature and extent of knowledge of the conceptualisation of risk in relation to children and youth up to the year 2000 and which conceptually is still currently valuable. She found the term to be relative and argued that risk factors are multidimensional [multifaceted and systemic], interactive [dynamic and context dependent], and multiplicative [move from the individual to society] and should be viewed as steps along a continuum [from low risk to high risk]. Moreover, the nature and timing of risk factors affect outcomes, and risk propensity is heightened during periods of transition (Schonert-Reichl, 2000:2, 6). Schonert-Reichl (2000) and others discuss the concept of ‘transition’ in relation to the ‘at-risk’ concept and the process along this ‘continuum’. Transition refers to development transitions (usually between the ages of 15 and 24) which may cause stress in children and lead to feelings of vulnerability (Schonert-Reichl, 2000:8; Anlezark, 2011:2). These could include the transition between schools, post school and between jobs (Anlezark, 2011:1). It could also refer to periods of instability and change, such as war, personal crises, volatility in relationships, and emotional and mental health.

Schonert-Reichl (2000:6-7) uses the socio-ecological framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) (see Figure 1 overleaf) to understand how risk may interact and intersect in the various systems in which children and youth are located.

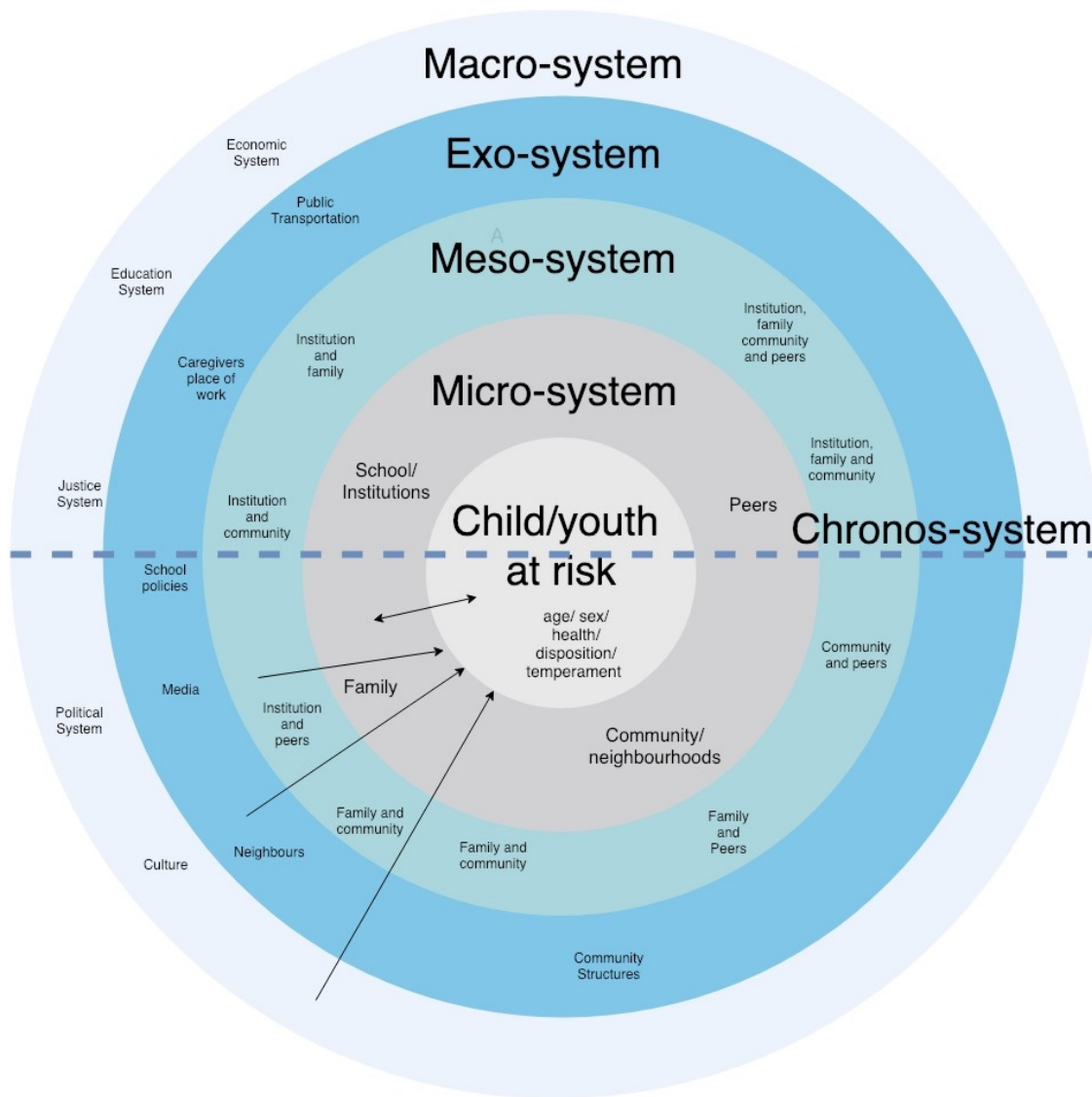


Figure 1: Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological framework and Schonert-Reichl's (2000) conceptual considerations of risk

The diagram above helps to broadly contextualise the children and youth in this study. First, the child or youth at risk lies at the centre of these concentric circles and is continuously affected by changes happening in his/her environment (Howard & Johnson, 2000). The child/youth possesses a certain disposition, age, sex, temperament, abilities, knowledge and health or what Nussbaum refers to as capabilities (Polat, 2011:52). Risk may exist at this first level if the child experiences barriers to learning, has some type of disability or has difficulty interacting socially. Sometimes the propensity to be at risk may be a characteristic of an individual such as those who seek sensation (Nicholsan et al., 2005:158;

Seno-Alday, 2018:1070). This also depends on the situation as some may be more inclined to risk in certain domains than in others. There are greater patterns of risk-taking behaviour at the individual level where some may consistently take risks, others are risk averse, and others display risk behaviour in certain domains. There are also the risk bearers who tolerate risk in order to live. They do not desire to take the risk but have to do so as a means to an end (Nicholsan et al., 2005:170). Others may be forced to take risks because of the pressure of a situation, or as a response to vulnerability, with minimal agency and control of the circumstances. These risks are “taken because there are no positive alternatives available to them and their choice is perceived as having an element of hope” (Zinn, 2019:4). Research in youth studies shows that risk may also form part of youth developing their identity, although this may continue until later on in life, that social conditions shape what is considered acceptable or unacceptable risk taking, or risks may be taken to protect a desired identity (Zinn, 2019:9). Thus children/youth may contribute towards their own adversity (Luthar, 2003:8)

Moving towards the edge of the diagram, the second concentric circle in the diagram illustrates the micro-system which surrounds the child. Every social field within this circle is in direct contact with the child. It describes the child’s immediate environment, or social fields, such as the home, family,⁷ peers, school, neighbourhood/community⁸ and a religious group – each possessing its own value systems. Risk

⁷The definition of family used in this study draws from the definition used in Canadian Statistics as it is comprehensive and relevant to the South African context. It describes an economic family as “a group of two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common law or adoption. A couple may be of opposite or same sex. Foster children are included ... all persons who are members of a census family are also members of an economic family ... two co-resident census families who are related to one another are considered one economic family ... co-resident siblings who are not members of a census family are considered as one economic family” (Statistics Canada, 2006). This definition encompasses the various family configurations found not only in the South African context, but in other contexts also.

⁸ The concepts of community and neighbourhood are sometimes used interchangeably. However, they have different definitions. Bradshaw (2008:6) argues “for a concept of post-place community in which the essential characteristics of community are the social relations (solidarity or bonds) between people. Community so defined has historically shared boundaries with one's geography of residence (town, neighbourhood, city), but today the loss of place identity does not imply the loss of community, since solidarity among people no longer needs to be tied to place.” In this study, community is used in terms of the social bonds the youth form within their neighbourhoods as the neighbourhoods determine the type of communities that they are exposed to and the kinds of communities that are formed. A neighbourhood could

may exist in this system within the social fields if there is little family cohesion and stability, or if there is inter-generational poverty, negative peer influence, exposure to dangerous groups or a mentally or physically ill parent. In addition, there may be forms of inclusion and exclusion at this level. For example, the child/youth may experience forms of belonging in a peer group or even a gang, but if included in a gang, the child/youth may end up dropping out of school and being excluded from learning opportunities which results in further economic exclusion later in life. Sayed et al. (2003:234) argue that it is too narrow to view inclusion and exclusion as being at opposite ends of the spectrum, but instead one should see them as related and not contradictory terms. They argue that these should be viewed as conjoined rather than as opposing terms. Using this understanding of inclusion and exclusion, inclusion in one aspect of a child or youth's life may mean exclusion from another. Within this circle there is an interaction between the child and his/her social fields as the child/youth may also exert an influence on these social fields positively or negatively and vice versa, affecting the child/youth's thoughts, attitudes and behaviours.

Third, the meso-system describes the interaction between two or more social fields. The child/youth may still have some influence on this level, and, in turn, this level may influence the child/youth positively or negatively. For example, the nature of the parents' interaction with the school or a religious group may have a negative or positive influence on the well-being of the child (Manzini, 2015:16).

Fourth, the exo-system is collectively those factors that influence the child, but with which the child has little contact. These factors include the place and type of work of a parent or caregiver, the school policies, the media, the community structures, neighbours, and even the transportation system. For example, the individual child/youth may have little influence on the school policies, but this directly affects how included or excluded the child may feel within the school culture.

also be described as a demarcated area, suburb or township in which the children and youth are raised, whereas the community constitutes the social bonds formed.

Fifth, the macro-system represents a combination of those factors that shape the child/youth's overall environment and it is the realm in which the child/youth has no influence at all. These factors indirectly influence the child/youth by shaping the conditions in which he/she lives, such as the economic system, cultural practices, education system, political ideologies, judicial system, and social conditions. Risk at this level may stem from larger societal institutions (Wong & Lockie, 2018:7-8). Examples of these are described in the context chapter (Chapter 2) and include the democratic nature of the state, inequality and lack of social cohesion in South Africa. These all shape the social conditions within which all the other systems operate, and in turn affect the life of the child/youth.

There is also a global system which the ecological framework does not address. This system includes factors such as the global economy, foreign policy, international relations, and international law such as the Convention of the Rights of the Child. The child/youth can have no individual influence at this level, but this level eventually impacts the macro-system of the country down to the micro-system within which the child/youth is situated (Manzini, 2015:17).

Finally, the ecological framework also includes a chrono-system which runs throughout the framework and throughout all the other systems. This is the socio-historical dimension which is the element of time that impacts when and how these systems are shaped, and in turn, how this impact is experienced under all these conditions (Johnson, 2008:2-3; Manzini, 2015:18). For example, in contemporary society, children/youth are exposed to social media and technology, and this massively shapes how children and youth think and interact in the world. If the child were a person of colour who lived in South Africa during the 1960s, technology would not yet be sophisticated and universal, and racial segregation legislation would have governed family location and access to resources. All these factors should be understood and taken into consideration when attempting to identify risk.

This ecological framework is helpful in understanding the complexity, systemic (Van Asselt & Renn, 2011:436), societal and relational nature of risk factors that influence the well-being of children and youth. It also highlights the kinds of risks children and youth may be exposed to, the stakeholders that influence their state of risk or the reasons why they may adopt risk-taking behaviours. In addition, the framework does not remove agency and responsibility from the individual, nor does it view the individual as solely responsible for his or her state of risk. It also points out how difficult it is to isolate and quantify risk factors when multiple factors interact (Seno-Alday, 2018:1074). The ecological framework is thus a useful framework to locate and understand how risk may interact and manifest in

the life of children and youth, and how risk can be viewed as multifaceted, societal, systemic, relational and even cumulative (Luthar, 2003:7), differing by context and time.

More recently, Anlezark (2011:8) argues that “being ‘at risk’ for extended periods is associated with a complex interaction of individual, institutional and economic factors” similar to the South African context in which there is a large percentage of youth NEET. Oloffson et al. (2014:425) argue that there are structural forces that create certain groups, or contribute to their intersectional identity, and that ‘at-risk’ groups are connected to gender, racial and class structures. They also argue that “risk objects are inter-categorised with gender, sexuality, ethnicity and other relations of power dependent on time and place and have to be analysed as such” (Oloffson et al., 2014:419), which is encapsulated by the diagram above. Furthermore, Zinn (2019:8) argues that consistent risk-taking behaviour is unlikely to change if the underlying social conditions which influence and shape them do not change, which this study argues as well. In addition, Chan and Rigakos (2002:743) argue that besides race and class, risk is gendered, and women negotiate different types of risk from those of men. Furthermore, these authors see risk as generally being viewed through a masculine lens and that women are more risk averse than men. Gender could thus be argued to influence the way risk is understood and experienced. The literature would thus suggest that risk is not equally or fairly distributed as mentioned by Wong and Lockie (2018:7-8).

In addition, and of direct relevance to the current study, the ecological framework also helps to identify and describe protective factors. Masten (2001:228) describes these as factors having a bipolar dimension, that is, positive and negative ends. Protective factors are embedded in those same social fields surrounding the child/youth and higher up in the system. Protective factors are those factors that ameliorate or reduce risk, such as better parenting, social support, and protecting children/youth from the full effects of the risk (Luthar, 2003:10). These same social fields surrounding the child/youth could be enhanced to act as protective factors and build resilience, which is defined as a dynamic developmental process with positive adaptation to adversity (Luthar, 2003: xx). Resilience, however, is not defined as an individual trait, but rather as a process (Luthar, 2003:513). Ways to improve protective factors are still being developed and these efforts have evolved into resilience research that attempts to explain why some children are more resilient to certain risks than others (Kemshall, 2008: 28). Nearly 20 years ago, Schonert-Reichl (2000:6, 8) recommended that future research should delimit and elucidate the concept of child and youth at risk, that attention should be given to how schools foster risk, and that there should be a shift from risk to ‘resiliency’ research which has a positive focus on overcoming difficulties despite risk factors. This is what this study also hopes to contribute towards.

3.2.3 The types of risks children and youth face

Evans (2002:265, cited in Kemshall, 2008:28) uses the metaphor of a journey fraught with danger to describe the risks young people face in the course of their development, with their safe progress dependent on both themselves and the support of others:

Young people are social actors in a social landscape. How they perceive their horizons depends on where they stand in the landscape and where their journey takes them. Where they go depends on the pathways they perceive, choose, stumble across or clear for themselves, the terrain and the elements they encounter. Their progress depends on how well they are equipped, the help they can call on when they need it, whether they go alone or together and who their fellow travellers are (Evans, 2002:265, cited in Kemshall, 2008:28).

Evans (2002 cited in Kemshall, 2008:28) describes how children/youth may navigate through the world and the possibilities of their doing it safely and successfully. Her metaphor highlights the existence of a social landscape and how she perceives this landscape in terms of its influence on young people's survival and development. In addition, it describes how their success depends on not only how well they are equipped, but who supports them. This means that it is not solely the responsibility of the child/youth to survive and to become successful and avoid risk, but that there are many contributing factors that create and sustain the platform to succeed and that may contribute to risk avoidance.

Moore (2006:1) points to different perceptions of whom or what may be at risk. Some see children, the family or the community as 'at risk' (Crocker, 2000:7). Some of those who view children as 'at risk' may argue that all children are at risk to some degree, or that some are at greater risk than others, such as those with disabilities or those who may have been abused and neglected. There are those that argue that it is not the children who are at risk, but the environments they are in, such as being part of a single-parent family, or those who are living in poverty. There are also those who view whole communities as being 'at risk', such as those communities with high crime rates and schools with low graduation rates.

What it is that children or youth are at risk of is vague among many practitioners, policy makers and scholars. The risk may generally include poor life outcomes, such as school failure and drop out, illness, incarceration, and possibly premature death. What is more useful to consider in categorising children is not simply identifying who is at risk of detachment from education, training or employment, but ascertaining whether this 'risk' is (likely to be) permanent or transitory, and to look for those young

people who remain disconnected or excluded from these meaningful activities and why this is so (Anlezark, 2011:1).

In the education system children and youth at risk are either viewed as themselves being responsible for their poor performance, or their poor academic performance is attributed to their family background (Schonert-Reichl, 2000:4). O'Connor et al. (2009:8) in their study on the risk of poor educational attainment among blacks, Latinos and Native Americans, concluded that risk is not a static characteristic but is transient and dependent on context, such as school and the background of the student, that it is only a construct created by researchers to disaggregate and interpret achievement data. O'Connor et al. (2009) argue that instead of being linked with race, risk is a dynamic social phenomenon, and in fact can be viewed as a structured social phenomenon. Therefore, they concluded that no racial group is 'at risk' per se, but rather individuals or groups are at risk depending on the interplay and exposure of various factors as depicted in the ecological framework described earlier in the current study.

However, as a result of children and youth being held responsible for their situations, particularly regarding their performance in school, campaign responses attempt to teach youth the consequences of their decisions and actions, on the assumption that, given this information and advocacy, youth would begin to correct their behaviour. These campaigns fail to take into consideration the socio-economic factors that shape decision making (Gray, 2005:939). This approach results in the "problematizing of youth" (Kemshall, 2008:2). Those young people who refuse to behave rationally are excluded and marginalised, and certain rights are removed from them and from their parents, including the right to refuse state care (Kemshall, 2008: 23, 26, 28). Social and penal responses can thus be perceived as forms of increased regulation and control over this population.

There has also been a blurring of social and penal policy, where social problems are seen as crime and therefore policed and punished in marginalised and excluded communities (Kemshall, 2008:23). Kemshall (2008:31) acknowledges that structural factors contribute to risk, and that more attention should be given to social factors and processes that could help move beyond the current discourse of risk. Swadener and Lubeck (1995, cited in Kelly, 2007:42) argued that these discourses are similar to those of both conservatives and left-liberals who frame youth in terms of cultural deficits, a discourse that attaches problems and pathologies to individuals, families and communities rather than "institutions that create and maintain inequalities".

The question of the types of risk that exist and where they may come from could be linked to the age-old dilemma of the relationship between structure and agency. It is the question of what level of agency a child or youth at risk possesses and how, or to what extent, their choices are constrained by structural factors and social context. Bottoms et al. (2004, cited in Kemshall, 2008:28) see the social structure as comprised the social structure and the habitus, as conceptualised by Bourdieu (1984), which together constitute the influence of the cultural norms and values of the institutions attended by young people, of the family and the wider community, which in turn shape choices (France, 2007:90).

Kemshall (2008:28) addresses the issues of power and ‘social capital’ that influence decision making and states how social structure constrains agency, which includes social class, gender, race, etc., and how habitus or the cultural rules and resources used influences decisions and the choices available to the agent. These concepts show similarities with Giddens’ (1984) structuration theory which argues that human action is performed through a framework of a social structure with its own rules and norms which are not permanent, but are reproduced through human action (Sauls, 2015:30). The forms of the structures are determined by human action, which means that the social structure and institutions could be formed and transformed by human actions. This means human agency can intervene in social structures and institutions for their benefit (Sauls, 2015:30-31). Furthermore, ‘tactical agency’, as conceptualised by Honwana (2005:49), describes agency in a context of confinement where there is little social space and the acts performed are more strategic and opportunistic, a concept which can be applied in communities and gangs in which children and youth feel immobile and find their options are limited (Sauls, 2015:30-31).

Owing to the difficulty of finding a suitable definition for children and youth at risk, the study has therefore developed its own definition of those who may be at risk and the type and the source of risk – one which is also suitable for the children and youth addressed in this study. Boholm, (2018:13-14) makes six recommendations for developing a definition of risk: 1) Acknowledge everyday language, 2) Acknowledge the polysemy of risk, 3) Carefully consider the choice of the defined term, 4) Acknowledge the reductive aspects of the definition and its consequences, 5) use the right level of precision, and 6) Once defined stick to it. Using this advice, children and youth at risk for the purpose of this study will therefore be defined and categorised through the lens of social conditions and the social context. In this context, the definition includes and addresses those structural issues contributing to risk that limit the agency of young people, which in turn contribute to their propensity to be at risk. The composite definition of children and youth at risk adopted for this study is therefore:

Those who are highly likely to disengage from school early, enter a state care institution or prison, experience violent victimisation and/or premature mortality due to their involvement in, and the effects of structural, psychological and/or physical violence. The likelihood of experiencing these kinds of risks is increased by systemic, societal and intrinsic factors, including age and gender. Risk is however relational and there is the possibility of preventing and reducing the increase in risk, depending on the will of the individual who is at risk, the enhancement of protective factors and addressing larger systemic and societal factors that contribute to long-term risk.

This definition includes the specific kinds of risk a certain population group is exposed to and the kinds of dangerous situations this group is highly likely to encounter and experience owing to structural violence, age, and gender. This definition also attributes agency to individuals, alluding that risk is not permanent and could be alleviated through enhancing protective factors.

In summary, the concept and nature of risk were discussed through the lens of the ecological framework. From this it is argued that risk is multifaceted and relational, which removes any direct cause and effect explanations. This means that single solutions and interventions will not suffice, without understanding the complexity and relational nature of risk as well as its source. The ecological model is useful in understanding risk and locating factors that may contribute to risk. Risk is essentially contextual, social, and structural; it is unequally and unfairly distributed and may not stem from a single source (Wong & Lockie, 2018:7-8). The definition developed for this study also includes human agency and the constraints thereof. In the next section of the literature review, neo-institutional theory is discussed in order to understand how institutions address and may create an environment that either contributes to risk or enhances protective factors.

3.3 Institutions and Neo-Institutional Theory

This section discusses literature addressing residential care institutions for children and youth at risk and neo-institutional theory as a means towards understanding how institutions may operate in perpetuating social structures. It also looks at the potential these institutions possess to enhance protective factors or create and/or exacerbate risk factors. The chapter begins by defining institutions, addressing some of the conceptual debates regarding institutions, a discussion of neo-institutional theory, a discussion of the residential care institutions for children and youth at risk and a critique of neo-institutional theory.

3.3.1 Defining institutions

The word ‘institution’ does not have a single, universally agreed-upon definition. Scott (1995; 2001) however, writes extensively about institutions and provides a comprehensive definition in terms of the structural and complex social and ‘cultural-cognitive’ nature, and on the purpose of institutions:

Institutions are social structures that have attained a high degree of resilience. [They] are composed of cultural-cognitive, normative, and regulative elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life. Institutions are transmitted by various types of carriers, including symbolic systems, relational systems, routines, and artefacts. Institutions operate at different levels of jurisdiction, from the world system to localized interpersonal relationships. Institutions by definition connote stability but are subject to change processes, both incremental and discontinuous (Scott, 1995:33; 2001:48).

With the adoption of Tilly’s (1984:81, cited in Scott, 2004:8) “encompassing framework”, Scott (2004:8) developed the three ‘pillars’ of the institutional order and argues that institutions comprise different variations of normative, regulative and/or cultural-cognitive elements (as mentioned in the definition), each offering a different rationale for an institution’s legitimacy. Normative elements depend on prescriptive habits, ethical codes, moral obligations and norms which are legitimated by morality; regulative elements depend on fear, coercion, rules and policies which are legitimated by law; and cultural-cognitive elements depend on cultural systems, beliefs and values which are legitimated by cultural support (Powell, 2007:2; Bolfíková et al., 2012:89; Palthe, 2014:61-62). Institutions comprise some or all of these three ‘pillars’, which each work at different degrees in different contexts to enforce a social order. These three ‘pillars’ are summarised and applied in this study as rules, norms and values which work together to form a particular institutional culture.

When applying institutional analysis, especially in relation to the case study of a child and youth care centre in this study, all these elements operating in different contexts and in varying degrees (Scott, 2004:10; Powell, 2007:2) should be considered. Scott (2004) argues that these elements, together with institutional activities and resources, create stability and give meaning to social life.

Scott (2004:8-9) highlights that social behaviours are influenced by the rule systems and cultural schema of an institution. Institutional systems therefore come in a variety of forms that guide social behaviour and marginalise deviant behaviour. Relations and social interactions are influenced by these rules and cultural systems that are reproduced; eventually they become normative (Scott, 2004:8-9). Despite the institution’s ability to construct actors and to influence beliefs and norms, it does not have the power to determine the behaviour or actions of its actors (Scott, 2004:12). Power differentials within institutions highlight the presence of agency within institutions. Actors possess different degrees of agency or power

within an institution and may use their power to enforce the institution's or their own beliefs and norms on others. Scott (2004) describes how these actors respond to and comply with these norms and influences in a variety of ways (Scott, 2004:12). Research has also shown that compliance with the institution's regulations is determined by the number of resources allocated to it by a government or authority to enforce those regulations (Scott, 2004:15).

This definition provided by Scott (2001:4) and other scholars assists in understanding how values and norms may be perpetuated in society, and the ways in which they may influence the beliefs, attitudes and behaviour, and – of particular relevance to the current study – may be the cause of processes of inclusion and exclusion of groups. In addition, institutions such as schools or child and youth care centres may initiate their own or reflect the value systems of society. These and other institutions reflect the combination of economic, political, judicial, and epistemological relations of power, and thus may reflect the exclusionary and inclusionary nature of their origin (Deacon, 2006:184).

Examples of rules, norms and values that operate within various kinds of institutions can be illustrated through the work of scholars such as Goffman (1961) and Foucault (1975), who defined and explored institutions and their power relations. Goffman developed the concept of total institutions:

A total institution may be defined as a place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time together lead an enclosed formally administered round of life (Goffman, 1961, cited in Davies, 1989:77).

Goffman's definition above describes a total institution as totalitarian in nature, a place where the institutionalised are under rigid constraints and routines, and under strict supervision within a confined space. Freedoms to choose how they wish to live life are taken from them. Institutions serve their own purposes, and the institutionalised are placed there for a particular reason. The institutionalised are separated from larger society for a certain period of time in order to achieve some goal.

Perry (1974:345) describes Goffman's total institution as a space in which a group of individuals live life (sleep, play, work) together, and where the boundaries between these different spheres of life are blurred and merged into one space rather than taking place, or being lived in, different spaces as would happen in a 'normal' society. There is one central authority that oversees all areas of the 'institutionalised' lives. "The various enforced activities are brought together into a single rational plan purportedly designed to fulfil the official aim of the institution"(Perry, 1974:345, cited in Davies, 1989).

Foucault (1975), in his work, grouped schools, hospitals, prisons and asylums together as institutions of surveillance and control. Foucault argued that the sole purpose of institutions such as schools was to provide surveillance (Young, 2007:11). In addition, Foucault argued that institutions are a means to freeze power relations in order to maintain those in power at an advantage. Foucault studied institutions as a means of understanding processes and power, and how the policies and rules of an institution give rise to power and regulate and control those subjected to it (Bevir, 1999:352).

Another scholar, Scott (2010), also contributed to the conceptualisation of institutions and introduced the concept of reinventive institutions. These institutions are a less restrictive form of Goffman's total institution. As opposed to total institutions that forcibly admit people to them, reinventive institutions are mostly voluntary, and people subject themselves to these kinds of institutions, such as drug rehabilitation centres or universities, in order to achieve a certain goal. The Circle has a combination of total and reinventive institutional elements as will be described in Chapter 6. In the next section, neo-institutional theory is discussed.

3.3.2 Neo-institutional theory

Meyer and Rowan (1977, cited in Colomy, 1998:266), define neo-institutional theory in terms of rule systems that become established bounded environments. This theory also looks at how social systems are constructed, how they influence social interaction and create order, and the consequences of these (Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:15). These social structures are characterised by norms, rules, routines or 'institutional logics', and have the potential to influence social behaviour.

Institutional logics refers to symbols and material objects significant to different institutional orders which serve to create homogeneity, give meaning to social life, and create general beliefs that guide social thought and action (Colomy, 1998:266; Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:12). Examples of these include the coat of arms which is an emblem of the South African state and the United Nations flag which represents the pursuit of global peace and unity. Models of 'rationality' as described by Scott (2001:4) have created cultural systems that are embodied in institutions. Modes of 'rationality' manifest through policies, programmes and positions. The power of institutions is displayed in the ways it affects and influences stakeholders of the institution. The adoption of these models by internal and external actors reflects their acceptance by various actors, making it legitimate (Scott, 2004:6). The many institutional

orders and logics could explain the potential for conflict between organisations (Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:12).

In addition, the neo-institutional theory looks at how institutions are created, established, persist, are dispersed, change, and adapt within their contexts, and how and why they disappear or lose power over time (Scott, 2004:2). The theory looks into institutions or social structures as those features of society which are resilient and how they not only create uniformity and consensus, but also how conflict creates variations and divergence within and among institutions (Scott, 2004:2). Institutions, Scott (2004:5) argues, seem to be a rational response to disorder and conflict, and this perception, held by governments and various authorities, has over the years led to an increase in the number of institutions. He argues that the modern world has embraced 'rationality' and that it accounts for the proliferation of organisations and/or institutions. Powell (2007:5) argues that "it also heightened recognition that institutionalization is a political process, and the success of the process and the form it takes depends on the relative power of the actors who strive to steer it, as DiMaggio argued in 1988".

Institutions such as the United Nations, in some cases, are created amid chaos to solve large-scale, often political problems. Institutions are described by Scott (2004) as social structures that have endured fragilities and instabilities in their respective societies. Institutions arise as a response to large-scale social problems in the form of an organised social structure that establishes new norms and standards to prevent an undesirable outcome, or to maintain the status quo. For example, various institutions, such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, were established after World War I and II to resolve, counter, and prevent the financial instability created by the wars in those economies involved in and affected by these wars (International Monetary Fund, 2019).

Lounsbury and Zhao (2013:7) describe how institutions are socially rewarded with legitimacy, survival and resources when accepting pressure coercively (by force), mimetically (through imitation) or normatively (through prescription). This process is known as isomorphism, which is the transference or adoption of norms, symbols, values, strategies and practices from one institution to another. Factors that sustain the life of the institution include symbols, such as emblems and logos, uniforms, codes of conduct, policies, schedules, rigid routines, and also material objects that carry symbolic or sentimental value. DiMaggio and Powell (1983:147) argue that institutions create structural change as their processes attempt to make actors and institutions similar (Scott, 2004:17).

Some institutions adopt, adapt and conform to the pressure of more powerful and influential institutions to gain legitimacy and approval from other stakeholders in order to survive (Fernandez-Alles & Valle-Cabrera, 2006:503; Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:4). Rowan and Meyer (1977), cited in Lounsbury and Zhao (2013:4), argue that the extent to which institutions conform to these pressures determines their legitimacy. Why the adoption of ideas and practices is not identical may be explained by ‘translation’, which refers to the process by which ideas are transferred and adapted as they move and become established in another context (Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:21). In addition, the concept of ‘de-coupling’ explains the phenomenon of an organisation that adopts regulations, policies and laws, but the structures, operations and execution of these policies are incongruent or inconsistent. This explains why many policies may not be translated into practice – in essence, policies are de-coupled from practice (Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:8-9).

3.3.3 Residential care institutions for children and youth at risk

A few studies (Knorth et al., 2007; Attar-Swartz, 2009) including meta-analysis studies (De Swart et al., 2012) have been conducted on residential care facilities for children and youth with emotional and behavioural difficulties (Knorth et al., 2007). These studies have focused on different combinations of factors such as academic and behavioural problems of children and youth in residential care (Attar-Swartz, 2009), and the outcomes and effectiveness of residential care (Knorth et al., 2007; De Swart et al., 2012; Salimani-Aidan, 2015; Dickens, 2018; Moodley et al., 2018). Studies on state care institutions in South Africa had focused on the history and establishment of schools of industry and reformatories within the political and economic context of 1882–1939 (Chisolm, 1989) and the establishment of the Ottery School of Industries during 1937 and 1968 and its rehabilitative, correctional and vocational training programmes (Badroodien, 2001).

A study with a similar aim to this current study is that conducted by Attar-Schwartz (2009), who used an ecological approach to examine the relationship between academic performance and behavioural problems of children and youth in residential care. However, the study was conducted in 54 residential care facilities in Israel, using structured questionnaires. The findings reveal that boys perform and adjust worse than girls in residential care, and children from single-parent homes have more academic and psychosocial problems than those from two-parent households. Successful academic performance is negatively affected by group structured residential care, high levels of peer violence, not many opportunities for recreational activities and short stays. This study recommends that future studies look

at such issues as the number of transfers between institutions, the cause and process of referral to residential care, and contextual factors (Attar-Schwartz, 2009:437). These factors are discussed in the findings (see Chapter 5) of this study. In addition, the physical structure, décor, amenities and food portion allocations at the residential care institutions also have an influence on the well-being of their residents (Bailey, 2002; Barter et al., 2004).

A meta-analysis study (Knorth et al., 2007) on the outcomes and effectiveness of residential care in the Global North shows that residential care programmes that use behaviour-therapeutic methods and family involvement demonstrate positive short-term outcomes. These outcomes include a 14% improvement in emotional problems compared with those in comparative groups; behavioural modification, psychodynamic therapy and family treatment as the best interventions for positive improvement in youth; while short-term effects show more positive results than long-term effects (Knorth et al., 2007:126). In the study it was found that residential care improved psychosocial functioning; however, it is unclear how this may work. This current study looks at how the interventions and programmes at the Circle work. In addition, there is little evidence of the long-term outcomes of residential care. Another meta-analysis by De Swart et al. (2012) on the effectiveness of institutional youth care over three decades showed evidence-based treatment is more effective.

Overall, none of these studies use neo-institutional theory as a tool of analysis to explain how the institutional culture affects social behaviour, nor do these studies address issues of educational and social inclusion at the relational and structural level. For these reasons, this current study attempts to use neo-institutional theory to address these issues.

3.3.4 A Critique of neo-institutional theory

A critique of neo-institutional theory, offered by Colomy (1998), describes how theory fails to examine and conceptualise the role of human agency and human interest in institutional change, defined as the ability to act/enactment, and does not address conflicting interests that create variations within and between institutions (Colomy, 1998:267-268). Neo-institutional theory either denies the presence of actors, or the actors are explicitly absent (Colomy 1998:267). Instead, agency and social action could be viewed as inventive, innovative, creative, constructive, and contributing to institution building (Colomy, 1998:268). Owing to the lack of attention paid to human agency, DiMaggio (1988, cited in Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:16), introduced the concept of ‘institutional entrepreneurship’ and ‘embedded

agency', concepts which address how actors foster innovation and transformation within an institution while their beliefs and values are shaped by the institution. This has led to new research and theorisations of agency in institutional entrepreneurship and social movements. Similarly, Lounsbury and Zhao (2013:23) argue that this research ignores the 'power' of larger institutions such as large corporations. Despite this lack of attention to human agency, the theory is useful to explain the social phenomena of institutions and their influence on human behaviour.

In summary, it is important to consider agency in the context in which this study is located in order to understand why and how the behaviours of children and youth at risk are influenced not only by the institutions they attend, but also by external influences and how the institutions they attend and have attended have influenced and shaped their lives. Institutions in this study are understood as bounded social structures that possess their own rules, norms and values. This is looked at in greater detail in Chapter 5 and 6. In addition, the various institutional definitions and neo-institutional theory help us to understand the nature of institutions, how they evolve, develop and are established, the forms they take, and how they may create inclusive and exclusive cultures, conform and transform both themselves and the people participating or living in them. The next section discusses education and its potential to empower children and youth at risk through appropriate teaching methods.

3.4 Approaches to Teaching Children and Youth at Risk

This study looks at how a child and youth care centre attempts to include children and youth at risk into education and society. These children and youth may be at risk of school disengagement, violent victimisation, or institutionalisation, which are all forms of educational and social exclusion. These children and youth are also at risk of premature mortality which may occur as a result of social exclusion. This section looks specifically at approaches to re-engage and include children and youth at risk in learning and education. In order to re-engage children and youth at risk in learning and institutions of learning, teachers and the institutions they attend need to be aware of who their learners are, what their learning needs are, their backgrounds and the best teaching and learning approaches to re-engage them in formal education. This section therefore looks at how to re-engage children and youth at risk in learning, inclusive institutional cultures, the role of the teacher, discipline, and positive youth development models. It also considers the curriculum and how it can be adapted to support children and youth at risk.

3.4.1 Teaching and learning that re-engages children and youth at risk

Education is important in empowering marginalised people, and inclusive education is one way to counter the unequal distribution of this important resource. According to Nussbaum (2006), education is the key to all other human capabilities, which is the reason for children and youth who are at risk of school disengagement to receive the best education with the most appropriate teaching and learning methods, and to also have a fair chance of participating in society (Polat, 2011:57).

The children and youth at risk in this study are referred to as learners who experience emotional and behavioural barriers to learning or who have emotional and behavioural disorders (EBDs) according to White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001). Prinsloo and Gasa (Landsberg, Krüger & Swart, 2016:544) refer to this behaviour as challenging behaviour. They reference Emerson (2001), Powell, Dunlap and Fox (2006) who defines challenging behaviour as “culturally abnormal behaviour(s) of such an intensity, frequency or duration that is likely to interfere with optimal learning, limits participation with peers or adults, places the physical safety of the person or others in serious jeopardy, and is likely to restrict access to ordinary community facilities such as schools.” Babedi (2013:79) reveals that there may have been unmet developmental needs in the “physiological, moral, social, and emotional domains” which later led to the behavioural and emotional problems which the learner, his/her family, peers and teachers experience and witness in the home and at school. These behavioural and emotional problems include aggression, stubbornness, lack of respect and other social faux pas (Babedi, 2013:79).

Alongside these behavioural and emotional problems, are the simultaneous academic difficulties these learners experience (Attar-Swartz, 2009:430). These academic problems include high rates of truancy, disciplinary problems, low academic performance (they often achieve lower academically than their peers), and grade repetition. This may eventually lead to academic failure, school disengagement which entails dropping out of school, delinquency, getting involved with anti-social peers such as gangs and even adult incarceration (Attar-Swartz, 2009:430; Prinsloo and Gasa, 2016:544). Studies show (Kauffman & Landrum, 2013; Aron & Loprest, 2012) that learners with EBDs have a 50% chance of dropping out of high school compared with their peers. Harcombe (Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:225) argues that learners that have never done well at school are the most vulnerable. For these reasons, it is important to understand why these learners may drop out of school, and what support to offer them (Pereira & Lavoie, 2016:383), especially for the context in which they are. Many of the risk factors that

contribute to problems at school include parental abuse affecting a child's intellectual ability, poverty, socio-economic difficulties, emotional difficulties, and the age at which they enter the care system (Attar-Swartz, 2009:430).

Furthermore, the problems regarding educational provision in residential care may differ in schools, as the children and youth in these institutions have experienced several transfers between institutions, interrupting their academic progress and resulting in a lack of consistent educational support (Attar-Swartz, 2009:430). Social workers may also place more emphasis on emotional and behavioural problems than on academic achievement, placing low expectations on these children and youth (Attar-Swartz, 2009:430). Furthermore, low performance in academia is only one of the many disadvantages these children and youth experience, leading to very serious consequences in their future adult life (Attar-Swartz, 2009:429). They are also at risk of having fewer educational qualifications than those not in residential care institutions (Attar-Swartz, 2009:430).

There are a few approaches to teaching and learning for children and youth who experience EBD. Inclusive education is one such approach and shifts thinking from seeing the curriculum, limited resources, and infrastructure and teaching methods as potentially problematic, rather than solely the learner (Polat, 2011:53). Swart and Pettipher (Landsberg, Krüger & Swart, 2016:4) states that Inclusive Education celebrates differences arising from the complex interplay of gender, nationality, race, age, language, religion, socioeconomic background, cultural origin, level of educational achievement and (dis)ability. It is about ensuring the access, active participation and success of everyone; children and their families, teachers, principals, education support staff and members of the community". Inclusive Education is relevant to children and youth at risk in terms of access to education through an accessible and effective curriculum as opposed to a rigid curriculum, active participation as opposed to school disengagement and dropout, and success as opposed to disengaging from society through unhealthy ways. In addition, barriers to learning may include infrastructural barriers such as poor sanitation and school buildings; the classroom environment, such as large class sizes and the lack of teaching materials; policy and human resources, such as lack of qualified and trained teachers and inclusive policies; and community barriers such as the lack of parental involvement and support (Smink & Reimer, 2005:9; Polat, 2011:54). Lack of resources has been a major barrier to implementing inclusive education practices. However, inclusive education is still relevant, even though resources are limited, as attitudes, values and cultures also play a major role in including all learners in the teaching and learning process. This was proved possible in South Africa, where a school with few resources, managed to gather

sufficient resources to create a health-promoting school (Polat, 2011:56). However, to teach children and youth at risk teachers it may require some innovation with a consideration of “democratic, inclusive and participative relationship, reflective practice, experimenting and risk-taking” (Swart & Oswald, 2008:93) which is best applied once the teacher has developed a positive relationship with the learner.

3.4.2 Inclusive institutional cultures

Inclusive institutional cultures in schools and residential care institutions are important for children and youth who are at risk and for their academic development, as they contribute in helping them to re-engage in learning. Blum (2005, cited in Weeks, 2012:337-8) provides evidence that shows that an increased connection to the school leads to better school engagement, and the less likelihood of school disengagement such as drop out. Increased connection with a school is facilitated through a caring school. Booth and Ainscow (2002:7-8) propose an inclusive index which looks at three interconnected dimensions to school improvement and change: a) inclusive cultures, which produce, b) inclusive policies, and in turn, c) inclusive practices. All these three criteria should be met to develop inclusion within the school context. Polat (2011:53) concurs with these three elements and states that inclusive education redefines school culture, policies and practices that accommodate all learning needs.

Weeks (2012:335) identifies several characteristics that make schools effective and that promote a culture of learning. These include caring teachers, a welfare system within the school that is sensitive to learners’ needs, parent and community involvement, an environment that promotes learning, and effective disciplinary policies. It is, however, the primary responsibility of the school to improve the learning outcomes of their students as well as their social skills and personal development. Booth and Ainscow (2002:7-8) argue that school culture can undermine the efforts of teaching and learning, therefore it is important that there is consistency between the school culture and teaching practices. Furthermore, changes in school policies and practices are carried out and sustained by staff and teachers; it is therefore also important that staff and teachers work collaboratively to achieve an inclusive culture (Booth & Ainscow, 2002:7-8; Smink and Reimer, 2005:5).

3.4.3 The role of teachers

Teachers are the most important role players in determining whether learners receive the best educational experience. Teachers’ primary role is to deliver the curricular content through appropriate

teaching methods and learning support material. Part of their role as teachers, especially for learners struggling with EBD, is to also provide psychosocial support, by identifying behavioural problems, possible causes and potential interventions to address the problem (Babedi, 2013:82-83; Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:227). Babedi (2013:82-83) found that “teachers are able to offer psychosocial support by following the eco-systemic approach”. This includes caring teachers who listen to what the learners’ needs are (Visser, 2000, cited in Weeks, 2012:337-338). What this means is that a holistic approach should be taken to support learners as there are various elements in the system, such as community members, parents, the school culture, policies and teacher practices that affect learners and their academic achievement. There is therefore a need for teachers to collaborate with care professionals in order to provide psychosocial and learning support for learners, especially those struggling with EBD (Babedi 2013:82-83).

In addition, educational resilience, defined by Wang et al. (1997:2), cited in Downey (2008:56) is “the heightened likelihood of educational success despite personal vulnerabilities and adversities brought about by environmental conditions and experiences”. Downey shows that educational resilience is strongly connected to the relationship learners have with their teachers: “at-risk students need teachers to (a) build healthy interpersonal relationships with them, (b) focus on their strengths to increase positive self-esteem, and (c) maintain high, realistic expectations for academic performance, as well as have a positive attitude, emphasise the value of effort to reach success and provide adequate support” (Downey, 2008:57-58). Teachers therefore play a pivotal role in influencing academic success. Teachers therefore need to believe in their students, and learners need to have at least one adult who supports them and acts as a role model. This idea is supported by research (Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:227). These kinds of bonds lead to academic success. Educational resilience therefore results from multiple integrative and interacting factors and resources that prevent negative academic trajectories (Downey, 2008:56).

Besides an inclusive school culture, inclusive policies, practices, and a culture of learning and care, high expectations of learners from teachers also influence their level of academic success. One study has shown that caregivers at a residential care institution had low expectations of the youth, even lower than the youth had of themselves. The youth, however, see the value of having higher educational expectations placed on them (O’Brien, 2012:1151). Downey (2008:56) listed factors that contribute to positive academic outcomes: “(a) high academic standards, (b) incentives and rewards, (c) appropriate feedback and praise, (d) teachers’ modelling of positive behaviour, and (e) offering opportunities for students to experience responsibility, success, and the development of social and problem-solving

skills.” Teachers’ academic expectations and the way they relate to and support their learners therefore have a major impact on their academic performance. The culture of learning provides the opportunity for learners to fulfil their emotional needs through caring relationships. It therefore has the potential to address both behavioural problems and academic performance (Weeks, 2012:339).

Downey (2008:60) also argues that learners who are at risk could become successful if they are involved in group activities involving cooperative learning and cross-age tutoring, because learners at risk have the opportunity to work with others and build a supportive system within the learning context. In this context learners who are at risk can develop life, interpersonal and transferrable skills, including communication skills, stress and conflict management skills. When these learners realise that all these skills will eventually affect their occupations, it will instil a sense of hope for the future (Downey, 2008:61). All teachers working with learners at risk should be provided with support and training. Teachers who are highly effective have a major impact on the academic achievement of learners at risk, but they also need the necessary support and training (Smink & Reimer, 2005:17).

3.4.4 Discipline for children and youth at risk

Discipline is also an important aspect of teaching children and youth who are at risk, or those with EBD. The DBE and Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention (CJCP) (2012) developed a manual on positive discipline methods. These methods entailed a positive approach to discipline and included mutual respect, understanding the underlying causes of behaviour, effective communication, and encouragement for positive behaviour (DBE & CJCP, 2012:6). This approach is also based on several educational principles: using a holistic approach, focus on learners’ strengths, being constructive, inclusive, proactive and participatory (DBE & CJCP, 2012:12-13). This approach takes a lot of time and effort but there is a long-term benefit as it helps children to become self-disciplined; they pay more attention in class, and learners become more cooperative because if the discipline is fair, corrective, and even therapeutic, it will prevent future problems (DBE & CJCP 2012:15-16; Du Plessis, 2015:388). Furthermore, there are several research-based approaches to addressing behavioural issues in the classroom such as Positive Behaviour Support (PBS) and violence prevention programmes (Du Plessis, 2015:388) such as the Circle of Courage.

3.4.5 Positive youth development models

The Circle of Courage, developed by Brendtro et al. (2005:131) is a child-rearing resilience philosophy (Brokenleg & Van Bockern, 2003:22) based on a culture that deeply respects children. It is a resilience model which presents universal and essential human needs that transcend time and place. These needs are mastery, independence, generosity, and belonging, and the model can therefore be applied to any context and persons as its values are relevant across time and culture (Brokenleg & Van Bockern, 2003:22). The Circle of Courage was based on the values of the Native American community and resonates with the African *Ubuntu* philosophy. The Circle of Courage was first implemented at a special school in New Zealand called Mt Richmond Special School. Learners faced all sorts of learning needs from serious disabilities to expulsion from mainstream schools owing to bad behaviour. After training teachers in the Response Ability Pathway (RAP), teachers reported that the school's atmosphere became positive and happier and it had a positive effect on student behaviour. One teacher changed his view on his children's ability to solve problems after the training (Espiner & Guild, 2010:21-25). There is a consilience of evidence with other positive youth development theories such as Self-Worth, Maslow's Hierarchy, and Positive Peer Cultures, showing that what is most needed for human beings to flourish coincides with the four principles advocated by the Circle of Courage (Brentro et al., 2014:13). The evidence suggested that secure attachment helps to develop autonomy and eventually altruism toward others; children who have someone who believes in them are more likely to overcome adversity; if the need for belonging is not met, it has both physical and mental health consequences (prominent among youth of colour); social exclusion disturbs intelligent thought, self-control and empathy; excluded groups do not perform well academically, display antisocial behaviours and are further excluded as a result.

A critique of the using the Circle of Courage, however, is that it focuses on the individual and their needs, and not the socio-economic and environmental factors that contribute to troublesome behaviour. It is therefore a very narrow intervention and may only provide temporary solutions and may only work within the context of an institution. Furthermore, there is a need to move away from a neoliberal understanding of independence, to interdependence (Moodley et al., 2018:1), as it is difficult for children and youth at risk to become fully independent adults, especially after leaving residential care. In the next section, a discussion of what a curriculum is and how it could be adapted for children or youth at risk is discussed.

3.4.6 An appropriate curriculum for children and youth at risk

Curriculum is defined in different ways, and its definition determines the educational programme provided to learners. Su (2012) points to the etymology of ‘curriculum’: it is derived from the Latin verb *currere*, ‘to run’. It is also used in the phrase, ‘curriculum vitae’, ‘the course of one’s life’, and ‘curriculum mentis’, ‘the course of one’s mind’ (Su, 2012:153). There are various definitions of curriculum such as that of Torres (2014:126), who defines curriculum as both an educational plan and social construction, “a political education project constituted by a synthesis and articulation of cultural elements from fights, impositions and negotiations [that] embrace a range of social political projects and [determine] how society is to be educated” (Torres, 2014:126). Stanciu (2017:163), on the other hand, views the goal of a curriculum as being able to prepare students for the future and produce a certain type of citizen. Decisions on what kind of curriculum to offer learners are often contested, depending on the context and agendas of those involved in its design (Su, 2012:153). Both these definitions are relevant to the study, as like Torres, there is the interplay of power that determines what education programme will be provided and emphasised, and as Stanciu (2017) describes, determines the kind of citizen developed.

In the education field, a curriculum contains various elements. It can include objectives and goals, courses of study or content, plans, documents and/or experiences. ‘Curriculum as a course of study’ is the process of collecting the content, whereas ‘curriculum as objectives and goals’ emphasises the desired learning objectives to be achieved. ‘Curriculum as plans’ focuses on combining content with instructional methods to “systematically implement educational activities” (Su, 2012:154). Curriculum could also be viewed as a physical document that explains the outline of the course/programme, which includes a statement of the objectives, content, methods, and means of assessment. Finally, ‘curriculum as experiences’ more broadly focuses on programmes for experiences, based on the assumption that learning extends beyond the classroom. Curriculum as experiences could also be a combination of plans and experiences, where experiences make room for unplanned events. The experiences may include extra-curricular activities, assemblies, excursions, and school competitions, all of which make teaching and learning an all-encompassing experience. Burrow and Milburn (1990, cited in Su, 2012), viewed it in terms of the totality of children’s experiences at school (Su, 2012:154). This broad, all-encompassing curriculum relates to the curriculum implemented at the child and youth care centre under study which is described in depth in Section 7.3. Prinsloo and Gasa (Landsberg, Krüger & Swart, 2016:548) argues that a curriculum for children and youth at risk “must be embedded in the context of the children’s culture and life-world in order to be meaningful to them.” If the curriculum seems meaningless to the learner, not aimed effectively at their needs, or seems irrelevant to the future work needs, and even

boring, learners may disengage from the learning process altogether and display unacceptable behaviour (Weybright et al., 2017:3; (Landsberg, Krüger & Swart, 2016:548).

There is also the hidden curriculum, described as the “unwritten rules and expectations of behaviour that are often not taught directly but assumed to be known” (Su, 2012:155); it is the school leaders such as the principals, teachers and administrators that create this hidden curriculum. Su argues that curriculum could be defined narrowly as only having objectives, or broadly as including the dimensions described above, which include experiences outside of the classroom.

A study conducted by Hallam et al. (2007:61) found that implementing what they saw as an ‘appropriate’ (for what is needed by the learner) curriculum in terms of one that meets the needs of learners, and using motivational assessment procedures that encourage learning, led to learners re-engaging in learning and reduced discipline issues. They found that this curriculum improved attendance and reduced dropout rates. Cullen et al. (2000) identified three main types of alternative curricula (to the national curricula) which would be adapted and could be adopted to suit the needs of the learners: Satellite programmes, where separate provision is made for a group of identified pupils with problems. This has little relationship to, or impact on, the mainstream curriculum. Extension programmes, where individualised approaches are adopted to compensate for perceived weaknesses, or lack of appropriateness in the content or style of delivery of the national curriculum. Complementary programmes, which provide an opportunity for all learners to follow externally provided vocationally oriented options not offered as part of the normal school curriculum.

The White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001) makes provision for a differentiated curriculum which was intended to accommodate learners of varying abilities, with learning barriers and diverse learning styles. The institution which is the focus of this study has adapted the Curriculum Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS) to suit the needs of the child and youth at risk. This curriculum is discussed in detail in the findings chapter (Chapter 7). CAPS, designed and prescribed by the DBE, has received much criticism, including what Fataar (2012:58) calls its tight regulation of pedagogies used in schools. Fataar argues that it creates a narrow school code, regulative routines with which teachers are bound to comply, and ultimately produces ‘pedagogies of same’ previously described by Lingard (2007) and Hayes (2003), as those pedagogies which prevent teachers from addressing the context, life experience, and knowledge of learners in the classroom.

In addition to what the CAPS curriculum explicitly presents, there are also unintentional outcomes and messages transmitted which can be described as its 'hidden curriculum'. A hidden curriculum is not only what is not made explicit in the curriculum, but also what is being taught through schooling and through teacher–learner interactions. Giroux (2001) described the hidden curriculum as “those unstated norms, values, and beliefs embedded in, and transmitted to, students through the underlying rules that structure the routines and social relationships in school and classroom life” (Giroux, 2001: 47). This implies that schools transfer more – in an inexplicit and uncritical way – to learners than formal teaching and instruction, subject content, and stated objectives: learners are also learning the values, beliefs, and ways of behaving through the school experience (Giroux, 2001:45). This insight provided by Giroux in 2001 led other education researchers to the realisation that schools are political institutions as they are linked to issues of power and control.

From the observations of Giroux and others, and for purposes of the current study, to thoroughly understand the schooling process, three conclusions are derived. The first is that schools cannot be analysed separately from the socio-economic context in which they are located. Second, schools are political in nature as they construct and control discourse, meaning and subjectivities. Third, the values and beliefs that are transmitted uncritically in the classroom and school are not universal, but are social constructs based on normative and political assumptions (Giroux, 2001:46). The hidden curriculum can function as an agency of social control and may even provide different forms of schooling to different groups of learners (Giroux, 2001:47).

In summary, the way a curriculum is defined by educational authorities and the way in which it is presented to learners by teachers influence their experiences of inclusion and exclusion in the learning process and in institutions of learning. This study therefore argues in favour of teaching approaches that re-engage children and youth at risk in learning, inclusive educational cultures, caring and adequately trained teachers, developmental forms of discipline, positive youth development models and an appropriate curriculum for learners based on their social contexts and circumstances, and one that will also equip them to become contributing citizens outside of institutions of learning. It is also important to be aware of the unspoken or hidden curriculum learners conform to without realising or being able to articulate it. These are the values and unspoken rules of interactions which in turn influence their beliefs and behaviours.

The next section describes the relationship between risk (as well as inclusion/exclusion and protective factors) experienced by children and youth at risk, the institutions they attend and the teaching approaches, through a conceptual framework designed for this study.

3.5 The Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework for this study therefore is illustrated in Figure 2. The conceptual framework for this study illustrates the relationship between the background of the child or youth and their experience of risk and exclusion (section 2.3 and 3.2) and its relationship with their social fields, the institution (section 2.4 and 3.3) (the child and youth care centre) and the teaching approaches (section 3.4) as described in the context of the study and the literature review.

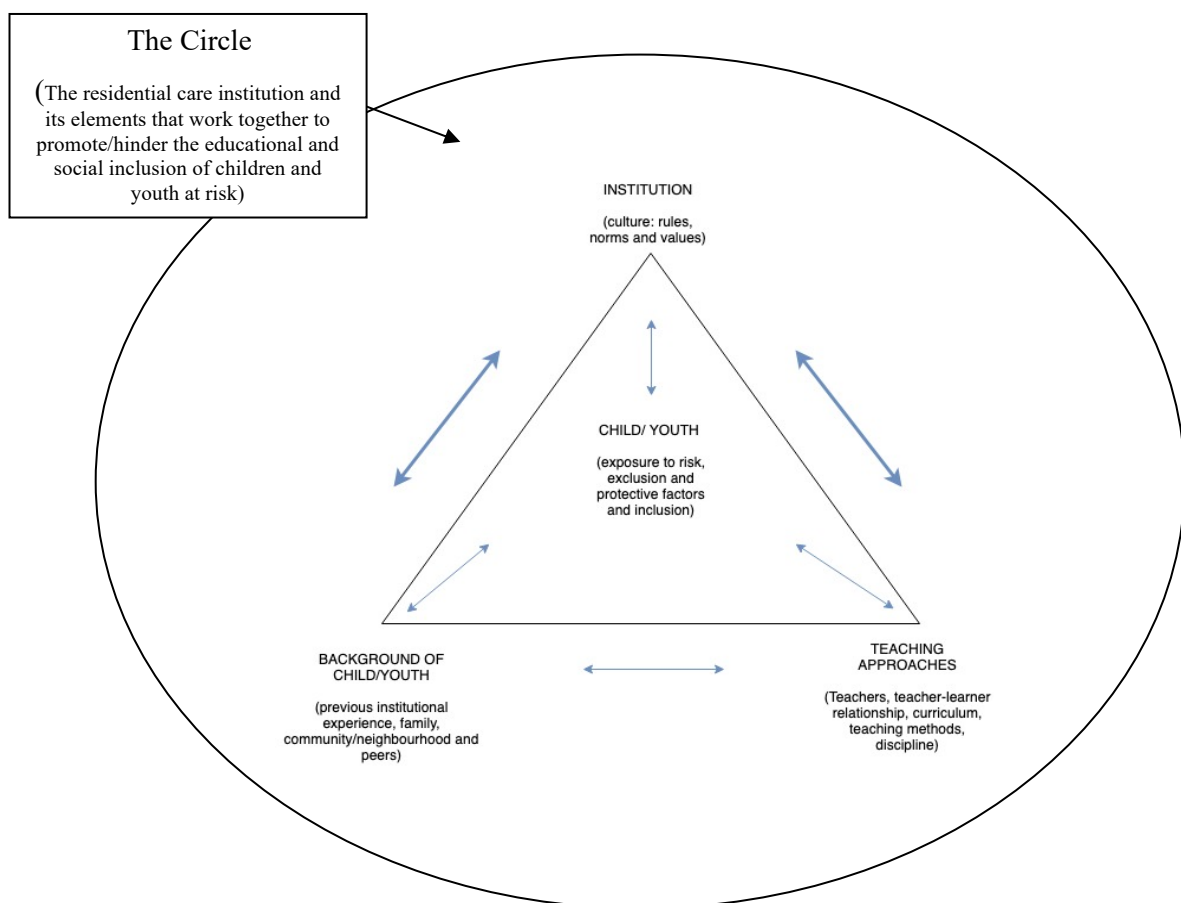


Figure 2: The conceptual framework of the study

The diagram shows and explains how the three different elements are linked and their relationship. These three elements include the background of the child or youth at risk, the institution(s) they attend and its normative (norms), regulative (rules) and cultural-cognitive (values) functions; and the role of education, through the teachers, the teaching approach and the curriculum etc.

The conceptual framework for this study (Figure 2) could be explained in the following way: the individual, or in the case of the current study, the child/youth, is located in the centre of the framework (Figure 2). The individual possesses certain characteristics, dispositions, beliefs, values, worldviews, and constraints (person factors) (Donald, Lazarus & Lolwana, 2010:44) which influence their decision-making process and their actions.

Considering the background of the individual, it has a direct effect on and is affected by his or her immediate social fields which are the family, community and peers (context). These social fields embody various kinds and degrees of risks. The background of the individual should therefore be understood as best as possible before attempting to develop interventions.

The next point on the triangle describes the rules, norms and values of the institution the individual is currently attending. Considering the background of the individual (and group) and the effects the risks have had on the individual, the institution in which individuals are placed could consider how their institutional culture through its rules, norms and values could create an inclusionary environment catering for the individual's (and group's) needs.

Considering the teaching approaches in the triangle, it entails the teaching methods used, the teachers' roles, the institution's culture of education, discipline, and the curriculum followed. The culture of an institution determines the nature of the teaching approaches at an institution. The teaching approaches should also consider the background and learning needs of the individual (or group).

This conceptual framework depicts the relationship between the background of the individual, the institution, and the teaching approaches used. All these points in the triangle contribute towards the degree to which individuals at the institution experience educational and social inclusion or exclusion, and their exposure to risk or protective factors as is depicted by the centre of the triangle in Figure 2.

This conceptual framework is applied and used to analyse a child and youth care centre in the Western Cape and how it attempts to include children and youth at risk in education and society.

All these conceptual elements determine and influence the child or youth's experiences of inclusion and exclusion which are understood as conjoined terms, and the beliefs and the behaviours of all the actors involved at the institution. The conceptual relationships are embedded within a larger system as is depicted by the ecological framework illustrated in Figure 3.

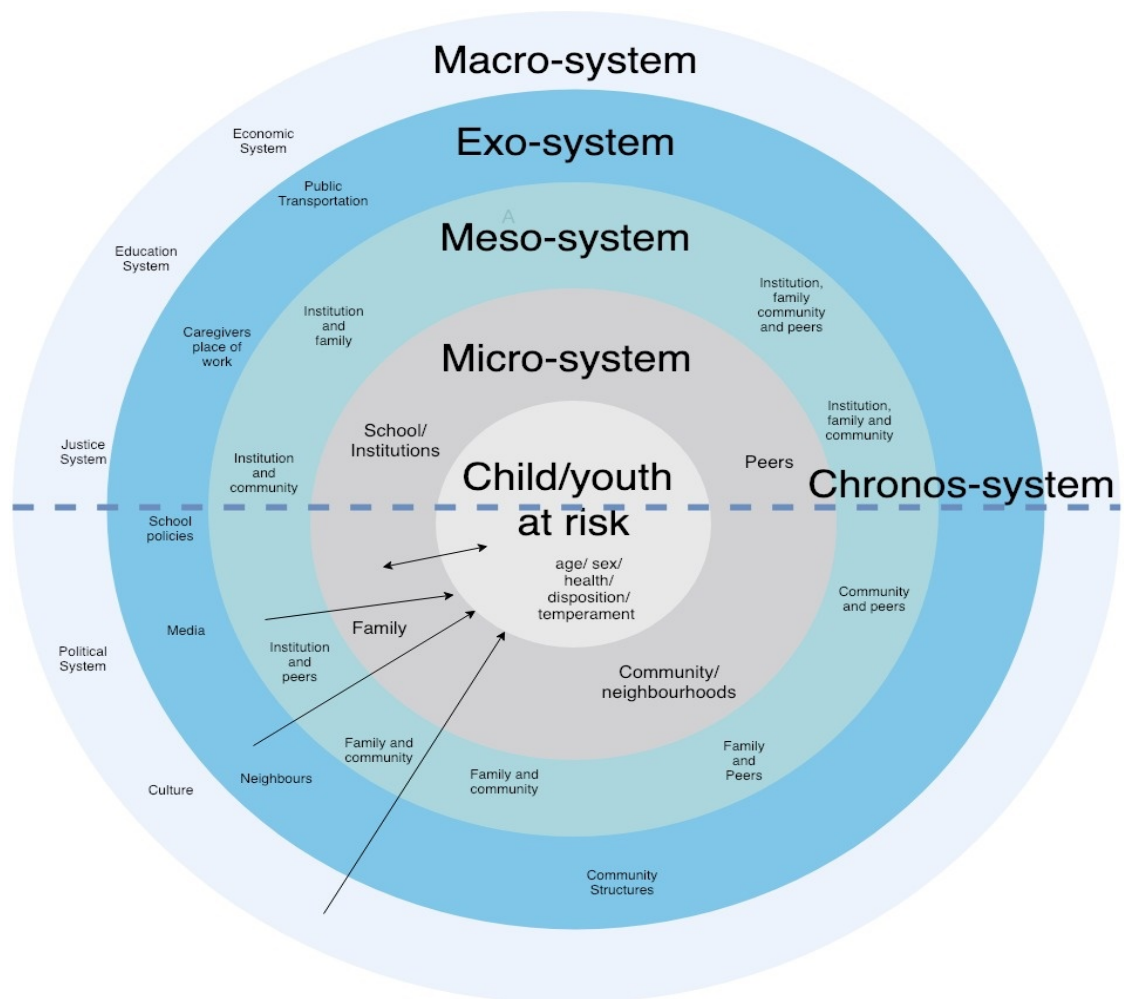


Figure 3: Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework (1979) and Schonert-Reichl's (2000) conceptual considerations of risk

The framework for this study draws from Schonert-Reichl's (2000) conceptual considerations on risk which furthermore draws on Bronfenbrenner's ecological framework (1979). This ecological framework (Figure 3) is useful in understanding the larger context in which children/youth and institutions are located, but it needed to be adapted to the specific concerns of this study: the background of the child/youth, the institution and the teaching approach. The three elements in the conceptual framework of the study are influenced by larger factors highlighted out by the Bronfenbrenner framework above which in turn shapes a child's development (Donal et al., 2010:40).

3.6 Conclusion

To summarise, the literature review discussed and linked several concepts, definitions, and insights on risk, inclusion and exclusion, and concerns about the term 'children and youth at risk'. These included the nature of risk and who is at risk, institutions and neo-institutional theory, and educational provision through various teaching approaches. The relationship between these concepts was brought together through a conceptual framework designed for this study and which is also used to analyse the data as shown in Chapters 5, 6 and 7. The next chapter describes and discusses the methodology used for the study.

CHAPTER FOUR: The Methodology

4.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological approach used to answer the main research question, which is: In what ways are care and education for children and youth at risk provided for by a child and youth care centre in order to promote their educational and social inclusion? This chapter begins by describing the research paradigm which consists of the ontological and epistemological approach, followed by the positionality of the researcher. What follows is a discussion of the research design, which is a case study, and the type of case study used. Thereafter the kind of sampling used, the ethical considerations, the data-collection methods and process, and a summary of the data collected are provided. How the data was managed and analysed, the trustworthiness of the study, and the limitations of the study are also outlined.

4.2 Research Paradigm

In order to understand how children and youth at risk are included in education and society, the most appropriate research paradigm needs to be chosen. A paradigm is “a set of basic beliefs that deals with ultimate or first principles” (Lincoln & Guba, 1994:107) or as Schwant (2001) states, “a paradigm is a shared world view that represents the beliefs and values in a discipline and that guides how problems are solved”. It encapsulates one’s understanding of the nature of the world, one’s place in it and one’s relationship to its parts and the whole. It is a worldview (Lincoln & Guba, 1994:107; Arthur et al., 2012:17; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:26; Cohen et al., 2018:8).

The specific paradigm used for this study is interpretive, suggesting that the world is constructed through ideas by individuals and groups, including researchers, and recognising that such ideas are constructed and shaped by the context (Cohen et al., 2018:9). Thus, this study seeks to understand the “subjective world of experience” (Cohen et al., 2018:19) of the research participants who are children and youth at risk, as well as the people who work with them and how they work, especially in terms of understanding effective approaches for including children and youth at risk into education and society. Within this framework, this research is aligned with a critical theory perspective seeking to contribute towards a society which is equal, equitable and socially cohesive (Cohen et al., 2018:51).

This research is idiographic as the data is contextualised, and universal laws are not sought. It investigates the interpretations made by participants, and attempts to understand their attitudes, behaviours and interactions (Cohen et al., 2018:20). Theory in this instance is emergent and is generated from the data (the experience and understanding that emerges), such as with “grounded theory”, as opposed to having a theory precede the research. The purpose would then be to understand the phenomenon or reality occurring at one time and in one place and compare it with what occurs at different times and in different places. This theory therefore helps to arrive at some insights into and understanding of people’s behaviour and is as diverse as the realities it seeks to explain (Cohen et al., 2018:20).

As an interpretive paradigm, this research uses a qualitative methodology described by Denzin and Lincoln (2000:3):

Qualitative research is a situated activity that locates the observer in the world. It consists of a set of interpretive, material practices that makes the world visible. These practices ... turn the world into a series of representations including field notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to the self. At this level, qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.

In Denzin and Lincoln’s (2000:3) definition of qualitative research, the observer plays a significant role in how the object/subject being observed is perceived. For this reason, the observer’s assumptions about the phenomenon being observed, together with the methodological process, have to be made explicit. In this approach a variety of methods may be used to “gain insight into people’s attitudes, behaviours, value systems, concerns, motivations, aspirations, culture or lifestyle” (Joubish et al., 2011:2082). For this study I look at the research participants’ behaviours, values and the institutional culture that fosters inclusion. Joubish et al. (2011:2082) describe qualitative research as being “concerned with developing explanations of these social phenomena”. That is to say, it aims to help us understand the world in which we live and why things are the way they are” (Joubish et al., 2011:2082). Qualitative research is also used with data that is difficult to quantify, such as beliefs, attitudes, and meanings (Joubish et al., 2011:2083).

The founders of qualitative research emphasised this methodology as ‘understanding’ and studying people’s lived experience in their historical and social contexts. They emphasise the role of human agency and creativity as guiding people’s actions, advocating that social research “should explore 'lived

experiences' in order to reveal the connections between the social, cultural and historical aspects of people's lives and to see the context in which particular actions take place" (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:7). The context chapter (Chapter 2) of this study therefore describes in detail the economy, history, politics and education system of South Africa to provide the particular socio-economic and cultural context in which the institution under study and the children and youth are situated in South Africa. The findings (Chapters 5–7) also examine their agency, constraints and experiences, especially in overcoming and navigating risk factors found within their context.

Weber, one of the founders of social theory and social research in the nineteenth century, argued that one needs to understand the meaning of social actions within the context of their material conditions. He saw the aim of such research as being able to "understand subjectively meaningful experiences", as opposed to natural science that creates "law-like propositions". Qualitative research thus focuses on the interrelatedness of psychological, social, historical and cultural experiences, in other words, a holistic understanding of the person, or group of people, and their actions within their context and structural limitations (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:7). The backgrounds of the youth are referenced in the discussion of the findings of the current study (Chapter 5) to contextualise their circumstances and actions. Thus, this research attempts to unpack the specific social and educational issues emerging from the data to gain an in-depth understanding of the institution and the youth (who represent the experiences of the children and youth at the institution), and how these issues are understood by the participants themselves and by those connected to them, both within and outside the institution (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:27).

The study also has an explanatory and evaluative element to it as it attempts to examine the reasons for a certain phenomenon, such as risk, and what influences this process. It does this by looking at the processes of inclusion and exclusion which the youth in this study experience. Thus, the qualitative approach used complements the interpretivist paradigm as it looks at "what lies behind, or underpins, a decision, attitude, behaviour or other phenomena" (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:28). An example of this is looking at why the youth are at risk and what the reasons behind their risk-taking behaviour are. It does this by firstly explaining the connections and associations of people's actions and thoughts, and how they understand their thoughts and actions (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:28). For example, it explores the ways in which inclusion is understood and enacted by teachers at the institution under study. Secondly, this study is evaluative as it attempts to understand the degree to which inclusion is shaped by the institution and how, and to what extent, those it attempts to include are in fact included. In essence, how well does inclusion work in this context and how does it operate? (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:29). Using

these approaches, it is hoped that the study can contribute to both social theory and the refinement of relevant policies and practice.

The elements of a research paradigm consist of the ontology, the epistemology, the methodology (which in this chapter starts at the research design section – and ends at the limitations of the study) and the axiology (or ethical considerations) (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:26-28). These elements are discussed in the following sections.

4.2.1 Ontology

There are many definitions of ontology. Ritchie and Lewis (2003) describe ontology as being about,

...whether or not social reality exists independently of human conceptions and interpretations; whether there is a common, shared, social reality or just multiple context-specific realities; and whether or not social behaviour is governed by 'laws' that can be seen as immutable or generalizable (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:12).

According to Ritchie and Lewis's (2003:12) description of ontology above, there is a continuum for viewing reality which flows between two extremes. The first extreme is a reality that is independent of human perception (positivist), and the other extreme, in which the reality represents only constructs of meaning, is therefore not independent of human perception (interpretivist/constructivist) (Arthur et al., 2012:5). In effect, it means, 'what constitutes reality?', and this constitution may be perceived differently by different people (Scotland, 2012:9; Ormston et al., 2014:4-5; Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:26). The ontological stance of the study views reality as socially constructed by human perception within particular contexts (Arthur et al., 2012: 5-11, 16). As such, this study seeks to understand the lived experience (of the participants in the research) from the vantage point of those who live it and within their particular context. Using this lens, the current study aims to understand how education and care for children and youth at risk are provided by an institution, by incorporating the views of mainly the youth, teachers and staff, in order to understand how this is done. Drawing on critical research principles, it seeks to understand how inequalities for children and youth at risk in education could be addressed.

4.2.2 Epistemology

According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003:13), epistemology "is concerned with ways of knowing and learning about the social world and focuses on questions such as: How can we know about reality and

what is the basis of our knowledge?” Arthur et al. (2012:5 -11) phrases this question as: “How can what is assumed to exist be known?” Put simply by Scotland (2012:9): “Epistemological assumptions are concerned with how knowledge can be created, acquired and communicated.” The epistemological stance of this study is that knowledge is not a given, through direct observation or measurement, but it is the collection of “accounts and observations of the world that give us indirect indications of phenomena, and thus knowledge is developed through a process of interpretation” (Arthur et al., 2012:16).

As such, it seeks to understand how humans create meaning in respect of a particular object or of the world, constructed through the interaction between the world and consciousness; therefore, different people would construct meaning differently. For this reason, knowledge becomes contextually and historically situated. The data collected from the research participants is therefore understood from their perspective within particular contexts (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:33).

4.3 Positionality

Interpretivism and qualitative research require the researcher to be critical and reflexive, and to discuss their positionality in order to make their assumptions and values explicit. Positionality includes the professional role, theoretical and political positions, and physical location of the researcher (Rizvi & Lingard, 2011:273). It also includes the background, qualifications and experience of the researcher (Shenton, 2004:68). The reason for disclosing this information is because the nature of qualitative research is not entirely objective and value free. The findings, as discussed earlier regarding interpretivism, are mediated through the researcher and influenced by the researcher’s worldview and life experiences (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:13-14, 17). Thus, the researcher is a participant in the research process and should analyse him/herself and his/her possible biases in the context of the study. The researcher’s identity should be interrogated in terms of how it influences the data-gathering and analysis process and whether and how the research process may impact the participants (Krefting, 1991:218; Bourke, 2014:2). All of this affects the trustworthiness and validity of the research (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:13-14). Thus, in this section I therefore make my positionality as the researcher explicit.

I am a young, female, classified as ‘coloured’ South African. My qualifications include a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science, Philosophy and Economics, and a Master of Arts in Peace and Conflict Studies. I consider my educational background to have been substantially influenced by an orientation towards

an inter-disciplinary approach to my research topic as it not only looks at the educational aspect, but also at institutions, institutional theory and the sociological aspect of risk.

My personal interest lies in peace and conflict studies, which led to the topic in the current study. It is also the reason I find South Africa particularly interesting and important to study, not only as its future affects my future, but also because there are many intersecting issues, forms of violence and conflict in close proximity to one another that I find interesting to explore, with the ultimate aim of promoting peace and stability in the country consistent with my commitment to the principles of critical educational research.

South Africa has been declining in many sectors, especially in the area of safety (in relation to crime and violence), education and youth development. As a young person I was therefore interested in finding what works, and what could work, in solving some of these issues in the South African context and how lives and livelihoods could be improved through education. My overall intention is to contribute knowledge and improve existing practices.

My initial interest in undertaking a project such as this was to understand the causes and nature of violence and justice in South Africa in order to reduce violence and improve justice by means of education. In addition, I became a proponent of restorative justice and view it one of the best methods of addressing violence and conflict. As I began to understand the problems facing South Africa, I came to realise that those participating in violence and committing criminal offences were mainly young boys and men. My interest therefore shifted to trying to understand why children and youth would commit serious offences at such a young age and how this could be prevented or reduced through existing policies and practices advocating for alternative approaches to punitive measures.

It is also important to note that I am not directly related to the research participants. One of my supervisors had conducted his PhD research at the same institution I have chosen as the site of my study. I did, however, attend a primary school located in the same community as the institution. Having been removed from this community for just over 15 years and returning to it later has many implications. At times, the children and youth who at the Circle were predominantly 'coloured' did not view me as a 'coloured' South African at first, until I spoke to them in Afrikaans. When I spoke Afrikaans, they were pleasantly surprised, and continued to speak to me in Afrikaans. One of the consequences of being removed from this environment is my gaining some social and cultural capital by being exposed to, and

educated in, various middle- and upper middle-class institutions, travelling and working in various capacities, and being exposed to various people, cultures and places. These experiences have both changed my views of the world and the way in which I am portrayed by the community in which I lived and attended primary school. I foresaw the possibility of these things creating an unintentional divide and power dynamic between me and the participants, who may view these attributes as making me more important than, or superior in some way, to them. However, my ability to speak Afrikaans and having emotional intelligence helped me to gain the favour and trust of the research participants, thereby navigating the terrain successfully.

In addition, owing to the nature of the institution, outsiders are welcomed, and it seems that individuals are judged on their character rather than on their physical appearance and status. Owing to my many interactions with the participants, I was able to build good relationships and even friendships with them over time, which allowed me to see and understand aspects of the institution I would not have had privy to, had I remained in a solely research capacity.

In addition, being a young woman in a male-dominated space has both a positive and negative side, as the men would be extremely accommodating and friendly, which would sometimes border on flirtatious behaviour. It was important as a young woman to set boundaries and keep relationships purely professional and platonic, removing myself from potentially misconstrued situations when necessary. I see emotional intelligence, interpersonal skills and discretion as being vitally important when conducting research as a woman in a male-dominated space. What also helped was having a fellow female researcher at the institution that, although she had her own project, made it possible to bounce ideas off each other and discuss the content of the interviews. This helped with accountability and ensuring that the research process was conducted in as ethical a manner as possible.

In summary, my assumptions, biases and values (Ormston et al., 2014:8) include that all children/youth, despite their life traumas and setbacks, are (if not immediately, then eventually) able to learn if the correct attitudes and teaching approaches are used, and they are thereafter more likely to fulfil their potential; and that education is a major contributing factor towards social inclusion. My biases initially were in total favour of institutions, such as the one under study, but after conducting research and analysing the data, I understood the gaps and weaknesses of such institutions and where they could be strengthened. Such institutions' practices should be duplicated and implemented cautiously as this case study is highly contextualised. My values include the intrinsic value of human life, even of those who

have made grave mistakes, equal access to education and other opportunities, restoration and hope. This study may therefore implicitly and explicitly reflect these values.

4.4 Research Design

A research design is the design, plan, implementation or execution of the research (Cohen et al., 2018:173-174). It describes in detail the data-gathering process and provides reflections of the effectiveness of the process (Shenton, 2004:71-72). It also guides the researcher in the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting data (Yin, 2002:20). The various types of research designs include action research, naturalistic research, ethnographic research, and grounded theory. The research design used for this study, however, is the case study research design. The case study research design was selected on the basis of the highly social contextual nature of the risk the children and youth experience, as well as the institution to which they are admitted in this study, as it aims to understand both the research population and how they are being included and excluded within a particular South African social context.

4.4.1 Case study as a research design

There are various views on what a case study is and what it entails. Firstly, the definition of a case study by Stake (1995, cited in Yazan, 2015:137, 139) (who takes a more constructivist approach), sees it as “holistic”, “empirical”, “interpretive” and “emphatic” (Yazan, 2015:139). Merriam (cited in Yazan, 2015:137, 139) (who also leans towards constructivism) views a case study as “particularistic”, meaning that “it focuses on a particular situation, event, program, or phenomenon”. She also views it as “descriptive (it yields a rich, thick description of the phenomenon under study)” and it is “heuristic (it illuminates the reader’s understanding of the phenomenon under study)” (Yazan, 2015:137, 139). All these definitions and views contribute to an understanding of the nature and value of a case study in research, particularly in qualitative social research. There are many definitions of a case study, as there are different views, but for this study the definition used by Thomas (2011:10) is used. A case study is defined by Thomas (2011:10) as,

...an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, programme or system in a ‘real life’ context. It is research-based inclusive of difference methods and is evidence-led. The primary purpose is to generate in-depth understanding of a specific topic (as in a thesis), programme, policy, institution or system to generate knowledge and/or inform policy development, professional practice and civil or community action.

This study adopts multiple perspectives by including various participants in order to understand the complexity of this particular case study and provide an in-depth understanding of the educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk.

Furthermore, as there are many and various definitions of a case study, there are also as many types of case studies. A case study investigates or examines one case or a small number of cases in depth (Cohen et al., 2018:375). The data collected and analysed consists of a large number of features for this case study. The study is of an organically occurring case or phenomenon where the aim is not to control variables or to look at specific variables. It instead looks at the case. Quantifying the data is not always necessary in case studies. Many methods and sources of data may be called upon as the aim is to look for relationships and processes rather than to quantify the data. Thus, this approach, and the data collection instruments used, differ significantly from an experiment or survey (Thomas, 2011:10; Cohen et al., 2018:375).

A case study consists of a subject (the children and youth in this study) and an analytical frame (which is how they are included in education and society). In addition, case studies are not generalizable, and inferences cannot be made and transferred from this one case to another. Wiewiorka (1992:160) cautions against assuming the generalisability of a case as it is highly contextualised (Bhattacharjee, 2012:93); however, the value in studying it is being able to learn new facts and concepts which could be widely used.

The case study I have developed looks at the phenomenon of how a child and youth care centre, through its understanding of the backgrounds of its children/youth, its institutional culture and teaching approaches, attempts to include children and youth at risk into education and society. The youth at this institution (which are used as a sample) have experienced various forms of risk, life adversities and exclusion, and the case looks specifically at their life experiences before being admitted to the institution and their experience at this institution (Thomas, 2011:3). In this case it also examines what that inclusion looks like in terms of the institution's rules, norms and values, and teaching approaches and how it may be experienced by the youth. This study also attempts to understand why, or whether and to what extent, this attempt on the part of the institution may work or may not work. I examine in depth the subjects of enquiry or cases from a multi-perspective approach, involving different actors at and connected with the institution, and different sources of data as prescribed by Bhattacharjee (2012:93). This is described in

the sampling section (Section 4.5) Michel Foucault (1981, cited in Thomas, 2011:4) describes this as “a polyhedron of intelligibility”, which describes how “in looking in several directions, a more rounded, richer, a more balanced picture of our subject is developed”.

A case study is also called an “idiographic study since the ideas are all based on and rooted in a single picture – the picture drawn by the inquirer” (Thomas, 2011:5). Flyvberg (2001:132, cited in Thomas, 2011:6) uses the phrase “getting close to reality”, which implies that one gets as close as possible to the subject(s) of the study but the study is still influenced by the researcher’s own experience and ideas, which allow for a critical and creative approach to problem solving. This, according to Flyvberg (cited in Thomas, 2011), should lead to a “thick description”. By adhering to the concrete and specific, and by providing clarification, one can remove abstraction, ambiguity and obfuscation. Therefore, any methods that help to satisfy the enquiry are acceptable in answering the research question. These methods chosen depend on the nature of the enquiry (Thomas, 2011:9).

As was mentioned earlier, the case study research design was selected as the most relevant and appropriate research design for answering the research question and encapsulating the findings. A case study approach is the best strategy to apply when it comes to questions of how and why, if the events are out of the researcher’s control, and if the focus is “contemporary phenomena (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world contexts” (Yin, 2018:15). It attempts to highlight a decision, or a set of decisions or processes taken, how these were implemented and the outcomes thereof (Schramm, 1971, cited in Yin, 2018:14). In addition, a case study investigates a contemporary phenomenon within a bounded system or the boundaries between the context and phenomenon may not be clear (Yin, 2018:15). In this study, a social phenomenon, how an institution attempts to include children and youth at risk in education and society, is explored and analysed.

4.4.2 The type of case study

There are different kinds of case studies, which include instrumental, explanatory, and interpretive; each has certain features. The features of the case study type used in this study are explained in this section.

First, the attempts at educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk by a rare kind of institution in South Africa are unique. This institution is unique as it is a hybrid of a child and youth

care centre and a school. There are few institutions like this in South Africa, and this makes the children's and youths' experiences therein unique.

This study uses a single case study as it focuses on an unusual case since it deviates from traditional and mainstream educational institutions such as schools (Yin, 2018:50). This case study is about the institution and its culture and approaches used to include children and youth at risk. It collects data on the viewpoints of not only the youth, but of the institutional staff. These views are presented in Chapters 5–7. This is also an instrumental case study (Thomas, 2011:141), which means it is merely a tool to understand a larger issue or phenomenon, which is youth at risk and their educational and social inclusion (Cohen et al., 2018:378). The case in this study is the institution (or child and youth care centre) and how it attempts to reduce and alleviate the risks the youth face and their educational and social exclusion, through their institutional culture and education. This case was chosen with a purpose in mind, which was to understand how children and youth at risk, specifically those who have emotional and behavioural barriers to learning, could be included – and experience inclusion – within an institution, in the broader education system, and in society. This case also serves to provide an understanding of a larger issue which is the increasing social problem, prevalent in mainstream schools, of learners with emotional and behavioural barriers to learning, and who are at risk of school disengagement, institutionalisation, violent victimisation and premature mortality. It looks at how schools and teachers are or are not able to deal with these problems, and how they could potentially address these issues (Thomas, 2011:98; Cohen et al., 2018:378). The critical case study approach is employed which is strong awareness of context and comparison, as part of the meaning-making activity (Hamilton & Ravenscroft, 2018:101-102).

The second purpose of the case study is to describe and explain rather than to explore how at-risk children and youths' educational and other needs are or are not being addressed in schools and the broader education system, and how these could potentially be addressed at an institution. This is a feature of an explanatory case study which Thomas (2011:101) writes about. It is a case whose, “explanations may be tentative or context-specific, but it is in the multi-faceted nature of a case study that you get the opportunity to relate one bit to another and offer explanations based on the interrelationships between these bits” (Thomas, 2011:101). Thus, a case study is a tool used to create explanations. Although the explanations might be limited by the case study's context and boundaries, the possibility exists that broader generalisations could be made conceptually and theoretically. Explanatory case studies examine the data for a deeper understanding and to explain the phenomena revealed by the data (Ashworth,

2000:3). As part of the explanation one could infer from the data whether inclusion operates in this context and how it works, which also adds an evaluative aspect to the case study.

Finally, this case study is a form of “interpretive inquiry” that employs a particular approach to answering questions – an approach that assumes an in-depth understanding of and deep immersion in the environment of the subject and looking at the whole and not at separate parts (Thomas, 2011:124 - 125; Cohen et al., 2018:376). Thomas (2011:124) also refers to this immersive research as ethnographic research; however, the case studies in this study are not ethnographic. I did, however, attempt to immerse myself within the institutional environment through building rapport and relationships. I conducted formal and informal observations and developed good relationships with various staff members and children and youth (see Section 4.7). I looked at various aspects of the institution in which the youth are placed such as the residential department, the education support services, and the education and technical department to understand how the whole institution functions. The next sections describe the kind of sampling used to select research participants.

4.5 Sampling

In this study, a qualitative research approach is employed, and one case study is developed, which implies that there are unique, idiographic features of this case that cannot be transferred to a wider population. This means that the institution and the participants selected only represent themselves and/or that particular group (Cohen et al., 2018:223). However, within the Circle, it was necessary to target and select certain participants who were relevant to the study and able to provide the necessary data. For this reason, purposive sampling was utilised which is often employed in qualitative research (Cohen et al., 2018:223).

Purposive sampling was the technique used to select the research participants for this study, which entails the researcher’s hand-picking the respondents to be involved in the study. This is based on the researcher’s judgement of the particular characteristics each respondent may possess that would help to answer the research questions. In most cases purposive sampling is used to access people who have knowledge about a certain issue or who are in a position of power and influence, as the purpose is to gain in-depth knowledge about a particular topic (Cohen et al., 2007:115). Furthermore, “when field studies are undertaken in practical life, considerations of time and cost almost invariably lead to a selection of respondents i.e., selection of only a few items. The respondents selected should be as representative of the total population as possible in order to produce a miniature cross-section. The

selected respondents constitute what is technically called a ‘sample’ and the selection process is called ‘sampling technique’” (Kothari, 2004:55). A variety of participants was selected for different reasons. The participants and the reasons for their selection are discussed in this section.

The school management team, which included the principal/centre manager, the two deputy principals (one of whom also fulfils the role of an educational psychologist, and the other, a teacher): three people in total (although I conducted three different interviews with the principal) were selected because they were able to provide helpful insights into the purpose, background and overall culture of the institution. They also described the importance of their unique role and gave insight into the background of the children and youth at the institution. From the principal’s interview I was able to obtain an overview of the institution, what various people’s roles are, the institution’s philosophy and approach to working with the children and youth, who the children and youth are, where the children and youth are from, and why they are at the institution. The first deputy principal gave me insight into his role especially with regard to the educational aspect of the institution which he oversees. He also spoke of the extramural activity he runs which provides therapy for the children and youth. The second deputy principal who also has the role of educational psychologist and oversees the care and therapeutic aspect of the institution, gave insight into how the education support services operate, the different roles players and what their work with the children and youth entails.

I selected as many teachers as were available and willing from various subject areas, spread between the academic and technical departments. By the end of the data-collection process I had interviewed thirteen teachers (three from the technical department, six from the academic department, some of which participated in the focus group consisting of five teachers) who provided insight into their respective subjects, their application of the adapted curriculum, and their approach to teaching and discipline. I observed some of their classes in order to supplement these interviews. Furthermore, the teachers expressed their challenges of teaching, delivering the content of the curriculum, the barriers to learning the children and youth face, and how they attempt to support the children and youth through their learning process.

The residential care staff interviewed included the head of residential care (both newly appointed and former) and three childcare workers, who provided me with insight into the residential aspect of the institutions. This included their roles and duties, the kinds of staff at the department, the problems and challenges they face working in the life space of children and youth at risk, and how discipline is

managed. They also shared their own backgrounds which gave insight into why they had chosen this career path.

The ESS staff was selected because I was interested to know how they support the academic department and the children and youth therapeutically. The participants included the social worker and the occupational therapist (three people including the deputy principal who is also the educational psychologist) who also who gave insight into their respective roles and duties, the background of the children and youth and the personal and family challenges faced by the children/youth. They also shared information on how they work with the children and youth in order to improve learning.

To fully understand and answer the research questions about the children and youth, the study hinged on interviewing youths. I therefore interviewed seven youths, out of a population of around seventy youths at the institution, who were willing to share their life stories and experiences at the current institution (at the time of the interview) and at previous institutions. They shared details about their families, their communities, their adverse experiences in the past, and the experiences that led them to be referred to the Circle and their experiences therein.

To gain more information and conceptual clarity on certain topics I interviewed experts and academics (three in total) based on their area of expertise. Owing to the emerging theme of gangs among the youth, a gang specialist was interviewed to understand what gangs are, how they operate, why children and youth are drawn into and recruited by them, and how to prevent the escalation of gangs. I also interviewed an academic who had specialised and worked extensively in inclusive education in order to understand the landscape, background and current status of inclusive education in South Africa. Finally, I interviewed a researcher who conducted research at the Circle, specialising in teacher wellness.

Three government officials from the WCED were also interviewed in order to gain insight into the government's perspective on specific topics such as inclusive education, children and youth at risk, gangs, and the overall landscape of institutions in the Western Cape such as the Circle. In the next section, the ethical considerations are discussed.

4.6 Ethical Considerations

As mentioned earlier, the research design includes the axiology, that is, the ethical considerations of the research (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:28-29). There are many aspects to consider when addressing ethical issues in research; however, this study used informed consent, privacy, anonymity, accuracy, and the protection of property as means to uphold ethical practices while conducting research.

Ethics in research is much broader than a distinction between right and wrong. Ethical consideration needs to be included in the initial planning of the research. It includes aspects such as informed consent, access to an institution, and responsibility to the research community. Kivunja and Kuyini (2017:28-29) discusses four criteria for ethical research. These include privacy, accuracy, property, and accessibility. Privacy, an essential human need, entails the safeguards that protect the data that is collected and analysed. Accuracy entails cross-checking the data through various means such as triangulation or confirming what was said was accurately captured. Property entails who will own the data, which in this study, is the researcher. Accessibility entails who will have access to the data and how it will be stored safely (see Section 4.8) (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:28-29; Cohen et al, 2018:128-129).

In order to conduct ethical research, I therefore applied for and received ethical clearance from the WCED, which regulates and gives permission to researchers to enter schools), and from the Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT) (see Appendices B and C) that approves research proposals and ethical applications from students and ensures that those applications do not contravene any ethical or legal boundaries. I also received permission to conduct research at the institution from the principal/centre manager. My application form made my intentions, research questions, methods and instruments explicit (the title was adjusted over time as access to some participants was challenging). This also helped me gain trustworthiness as a researcher. In addition, before interviewing any person, I made sure they were willing to be interviewed (see the consent form in Appendix D) and avoided questions that would potentially make them feel uncomfortable.

Ethical issues raise questions on who benefits from the research. In my case, the research was intended to benefit the staff and teachers at the institution by helping them to reflect on their practices. I foresaw that my research would also benefit teachers at ‘ordinary’ schools, ‘inclusive schools’, and other institutions which work with children or youth at risk, or learners who experience emotional or behavioural difficulties. In addition, the research could help teacher training programmes at universities to adjust their training in order to train teachers to work effectively and more sensitively with children and youth at risk. Overall the aim was to include children and youth in education and society who

experience emotional or behavioural barriers to learning or who are at risk of dropping out of school, are in the NEET category, or entering a life of criminality.

Furthermore, participation in the research was purely voluntary and research participants were recruited based on informed consent which concerned their freedom and self-determination. It thus protects and respects the rights of the participants and also gives the participants some level of responsibility (Cohen et al., 2018:122). Research participants were asked for their permission/consent to be interviewed. I did not infringe upon their schedules or available time. Most participants were always willing to speak to me. Those who were not willing were not interviewed.

I had received permission from the principal to interview the youths at the school. I made sure the youths who were interviewed participated based on their own volition and were not coerced by any staff members since I personally asked each of them for an interview. In addition, I made every effort to ensure that there was no discomfort during the research process. If the young person felt uncomfortable talking about anything in their past, I allowed them to skip over this and share with me only what they felt comfortable with. In fact, all participants were free to not disclose any information they felt uncomfortable with. I skipped over questions participants were hesitant to answer and gave them the freedom to decline to answer questions. Participants were safe at all times and had the freedom to refuse to be interviewed and observed (Cohen et al., 2018:122).

I ensured that my observations were never invasive or awkward. I made every effort to blend in, sit at the back of classes and not to disturb the lesson or workflow.

Regarding informed consent and confidentiality, all participants read and signed two consent forms which explained the details of the research project (Appendix D). One form they kept for their personal records, while the other I kept for my own record. The principal with his legal position as *in loco parentis* gave me permission to speak to the staff and to the children and youth. All participants were asked for permission to be interviewed, and if they declined, I would not force the matter as I worked only with willing participants. I was careful to explain the purpose and procedures of the research to those under 18, as they may have not understood the content of the forms. They were also given two consent forms to sign. I also explained in detail, prior to the interview, the nature and purpose of the study, what it expected to achieve, the expected benefits and possible harm that may be done, information about confidentiality, anonymity, privacy, my name and surname, and the option to withdraw from the study

if necessary or desired. All participants were guaranteed anonymity (Cohen et al., 2018:129) as per agreement in the consent forms. The name of the institution was not revealed. All participants' names were changed and anonymised in the study.

4.7 Data-collection methods and process

The formal data-collection process for this project started in 2016 and ended in early 2018. The research took a total of three years as it entailed an exploratory phase beginning towards the end of 2015, building rapport, trust and relationships, and the actual data-collection process. For the research questions to be answered successfully, various research methods were employed. As has been mentioned, in a case study, various methods can be used in order to understand the whole case. Thus, the variety of research methods used included a focus group, interviews, observations, and document reviews. Each research method is discussed in turn.

4.7.1 Focus group

A focus group is a group discussion involving four to ten participants on a topic facilitated by the researcher. This interview style provides a social context in which the topic is discussed and the platform to engage with others' ideas and explore how people think about a topic and how their ideas are shaped by others. It helps them to reflect and refine or clarify their responses and may provide them with insights into their own behaviours and attitudes (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:37).

I conducted one focus-group discussion with a group of five teachers. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:37) describe the role of participants in such a discussion: "They do provide a social context for research, and thus an opportunity to explore how people think and talk about a topic, how their ideas are shaped, generated or moderated through conversation with others." Reliance is placed on the discussion rather than on the individual in order to ascertain a collective rather than an individual view (Cohen et al., 2018:532). During the focus group interview, some participants hardly spoke as there were two dominant voices, which made it difficult to determine the collective view. This led me to conduct individual interviews with the teachers, but it helped me to develop themes for subsequent interviews (Cohen et al., 2018:532) as each teacher taught a different subject and grade and had different ways of addressing discipline, adapting their lessons, and including learners in the learning process. Important points were made in this focus group which, through my subsequent semi-structured interviews and data

analysis, I was able to explore further. This also assisted in triangulating the data with the interviews and observations (Cohen et al., 2018:533). It was important to garner those details rather than eliciting broad overviews of what was being done. This interview gave me some direction on what to look for in the future, the best research methods to apply and whom to interview (see Section 4.5 on sampling).

4.7.2 Interviews

Ritchie and Lewis (2003:36-37) describe various forms of interviews in qualitative research. The key purpose of all of these is to provide “undiluted focus” on individual participants as well as being a means of exploring in detail the participants’ own perspectives and experiences within the context of the participants and of the research (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:36-37). Faced with the choice of a range of interview types for my qualitative research, I therefore chose to conduct semi-structured interviews.

Semi-structured interviews are organised around a prepared list of questions, or an interview schedule, and allow room to depart from the guide, as new information may emerge leading to further probing. This type of interview allows the researcher the freedom depart from the guide in order to probe more deeply and work with the information that emerges by following up on necessary and important points, and even skipping over questions the researcher judges not directly relevant. Semi-structured interviews are also oral, and some non-verbal cues are accepted, such as nods, pauses and smiles, etc. (Thomas, 2011:163).

My choice of semi-structured interviews was based on the nature of the research method and how it would provide me with the opportunity to gain an in-depth focus and understanding of each individual respondent, his or her perspectives, views, and experience. In addition, I could understand the individual’s perspective within the context of the institution, and of broader systems and society. I therefore developed personalised semi-structured interview guides for the various participants who included the teachers, childcare workers, the centre manager, deputy principals, the educational psychologist, social workers, the occupational therapist and the youth (see Appendices E to H). As mentioned previously, I also interviewed government officials and experts or informants. I designed individual interview guides for groups of participants such as the teachers and government officials and personalised the questions for their particular work and roles within or outside of the institution.

During the interviewing process, I took notes and noted points made by the participants then returned to them later in order not to disturb their thought processes or narratives. I would also rephrase questions that were unclear to the participants, or which did not elicit the information I desired. I conducted some interviews in Afrikaans, especially with some children whose mother tongue is Afrikaans. This made them feel more comfortable and freer to express themselves fully. If there were discrepancies found in the information they shared, I would then clarify these with the participants. In some cases, discrepancies between participants were picked up in the analysis and therefore triangulation was used to resolve this (Krefting, 1991:220; Shenton, 2004:67). The strength of this approach is that the data is comprehensive and somewhat systematic. Gaps could be anticipated and closed. The weaknesses of this method are that the flexibility and wording of questions can result in very different/subjective responses, making comparability challenging (Cohen et al., 2007:352).

Key features of semi-structured interviewing are: first, it allows for a combination of structure and flexibility during the questioning process. In semi-structured interviews, a guideline steers the exploratory and investigative process. Second, there is the flexibility for the researcher to cover areas in the topic that the interviewee raises, and to spontaneously probe and adapt the questions to the knowledge and position of the interviewee. Interviews are also interactive in nature which is important in building trust and rapport and facilitating the interviewee to open up and share information that would otherwise have been missed. This also allows for further questioning at a later stage if considered necessary. Third, during the interview, the researcher has at her disposal a range of methods to probe, explore and gain a deeper understanding of the topic and the participant's meaning/experience. Fourth, interviews are also generative, meaning that new knowledge and insights may be created during the process. This may occur when the researcher or the interviewee goes down avenues of thought they may not have explored before, such as thinking of solutions to problems. Fifth, interviews emphasise depth and nuances and thus an interview needs to be captured in its natural form which means interviews are generally video or voice recorded to not change the way in which the conversation took place. This is applied during transcription and the presentation of the data in the findings chapters (Chapters 5–7) in which the data is presented as close as possible to the original words uttered. Finally, interviews are mostly conducted face to face, although sometimes they may be conducted telephonically or through video calling, but in such cases many of the nuances and human interactions may be lost (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:141-142). In this study, all interviews were conducted face to face and voice recorded.

4.7.3 Observations

Observation is a research method that enables the researcher to collect data in a physical setting (e.g. an environment, building or location), a human setting (e.g. organisation, gender, class), an interactional setting (e.g. interaction such as informal, formal, planned, unplanned) or a programme setting (e.g. pedagogic styles, curricula, workshop) (Cohen et al., 2018:543). Observational data is useful for recording non-verbal behaviour in a natural setting. The difficulties arising from this data- collection method, however, derive from the measurement of such data, problems of samples, gaining entry, and maintaining anonymity (Cohen et al., 2018: 543). The various forms of observation may range from structured or semi-structured to unstructured, planned and unplanned observation sessions (Cohen et al., 2007:397; Cohen et al., 2018:543) or as Driscoll (2011:160) classifies them, as participant observations or unobtrusive observations.

A structured observation will have the specific areas and categories to be observed worked out in advance. A semi-structured observation will have a range of issues to be observed but would collect the data observed in an unsystematic and flexible manner. In unstructured observations, the observer or researcher would go into a setting without any pre-determined agenda and observe what takes place and decide thereafter about the significance of the observation(s) for the research (Cohen et al., 2007:397; Cohen et al., 2018:543). Research roles may also differ during observations: they may range from complete participation to complete observation; in other words, the researcher may be a complete participant, participant-as-observer, observer-as-participant, or complete observer (Cohen et al., 2007:397; Cohen et al., 2018:543). Participant observations are mainly used in sociology and anthropology where the research becomes part of the community. This unusually requires an extended period of time. On the other hand, unobtrusive observations do not require interaction with the research participants under study, and only seek to record their behaviour (Driscoll, 2011:160).

For this study I used semi-structured observations (or unobtrusive observations) in the classroom and unstructured observations as a complete observer at the institution and at events. In my semi-structured observations, I looked at certain types of behaviours, attitudes, events and interactions. Ritchie and Lewis (2003:39) describe the advantages of observation:

Observation offers the opportunity to record and analyse behaviour and interactions as they occur, although not as a member of the study population. This allows events, actions and experiences and so on, to be 'seen' through the eyes of the researcher, often without any construction on the part of those involved. It is a particularly useful approach when a study is concerned with investigating a 'process' involving several players, where an understanding of non-verbal communication is likely

to be important or where the behavioural consequences of events form a focal point of study (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:39).

As I conducted these semi-structured observations, I sought a fuller picture of what the research participants were describing or attempted to describe during their interviews. In the case of the teachers, I observed their classes. This included three classes of three teachers – the Motor Mechanics teacher, the Mathematics teacher, and the Afrikaans and Tourism teacher. I also observed the metal work/welding teacher twice and the English teacher once. Observing these teachers' classes was supplementary to their interviews and supported the process of triangulation. During the semi-structured observations, I looked for particular kinds of behaviour on the part of their learners, such as difficult and uncontrollable behaviour, the teachers' responses to difficult behaviour, how learners were or were not included in the learning process, interactions between learners and teachers in the classroom, how the curriculum was or was not adapted, and learning barriers and teaching styles. While observing the classes, I wrote down key words relating to what I had observed, I also described activities, interactions and behaviours occurring during the lesson. These observations were not meant to be quantified, but only described (Thomas, 2011:165). This exercise gave me greater clarity and insight into the interviews and the broader research question on how inclusion operates in practice.

I also conducted unstructured observations through spending time at the school, interacting with various staff members and learners, attending fun days, going on excursions, and observing extra- mural activities with the learners and staff. All these observations helped me gain a deeper understanding of what was mentioned in the interviews and documents (Thomas, 2011:165).

Another form of collecting information is through informal conversations, an informal interviewing process characterised by questions that naturally emerge from the immediate context, and which are usually unprepared and spontaneous. As part of the unstructured observations, I engaged in informal conversations and interacted with many of the research participants, and recorded these using field notes (Mack et al., 2011:13). The strength of this data-collection method resides in the conversation emerging from observations by the researcher of the environment. The weakness is that it is less systematic and organising such data is difficult. In addition, recording the information during the interview may be difficult, especially if the conversation is organic and spontaneous (Cohen et al., 2007:352). During the data-collection process, I engaged in a range of informal conversations termed unstructured interviews. For this kind of interview there are no prepared questions or fixed method. There is no real agenda, except for some general, clarification questions. This information can be considered useful as it helps to

make connections, see patterns and can lead to further questioning in the future. For example, one participant willingly shared information about the “dark” side of the institution so that I would not paint a rosy picture of the institution. Although this was done privately and off the record, it was useful as it helped me to look at the participants and the phenomenon more critically than I would have if I were to believe every word said and action observed. It also clarified and helped me to make connections with information previously shared by participants, information that initially did not make sense or was confusing. The triangulation provided by this was also important, as discussed later in Section 4.10 (Thomas, 2011:163).

4.7.4 Document Review

Documents were collected in order to “elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge” and “the analytic procedure entails finding, selecting, appraising (making sense of), and synthesising data contained in documents” (Bowen, 2009:27). Document sources are used if data cannot be collected using interviews or observations (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:39). The documents collected at the Circle were primary data sources and included school policy documents, minutes of meetings, emails, and centre manager reports, documents, brochures, and the 2017 annual year planner (which had some incorrect information). The school documents were unpublished, formal, not meant for circulation, and provided a description of the institution and its purpose, function and staff. These documents were authored by the school management team, mainly the principal/centre manager. I did not conduct an in-depth analysis of the documents as I used these as part of information gathering about the institution, its policies, formal structures, and for a general overview of the institution. These documents were not examined intensely, but used to clarify and gain information (Thomas, 2011:164).

4.7.5 Summary of the data collected

Table 1 below shows the research participants with the corresponding method used to collect the data, each instrument used and the number of times that method was applied. The instruments also indicate the corresponding appendix which can be viewed in the appendices section.

Table 1: A summary of the data collected

Participant(s)/ Subject/ Data source	Number of people	Method(s)	Instrument	Comment(s)
Interviews				
Youth at risk/Learners	7	Semi-structured interview	Semi-Structured Interview Guide (See Appendix E)	
Teachers	12	Semi-structured interview Focus group	Semi-Structured Interview Guide (See Appendix F)	Semi-structured interviews with 9 teachers and 1 focus group consisting of 5 teachers were conducted. 2 teachers who were part of the focus group were interviewed individually.
Centre Manager/ Principal	1	Semi-structured interview	Generic Semi-Structured Interview Guide which is personalised during the interview (See Appendix G)	3 interviews were conducted with the centre manager
Deputy Principal	1	Semi-structured interview	Generic Semi-Structured Interview Guide which is personalised during the interview (See Appendix G)	
Educational Psychologist/ Deputy Principal	1	Semi-structured interview	Generic Semi-Structured Interview Guide which is personalised during the interview (See Appendix G)	The educational psychologist also forms part of the ESS staff
Head of Residential Care (former and current)	2	Semi-structured interview	Generic Semi-Structured Interview Guide which is personalised during the interview (See Appendix H)	2 different people were interviewed
Social Worker	1	Semi-structured interview	Generic Semi-Structured Interview Guide which is personalised during the interview (See Appendix H)	
Occupational Therapist	1	Semi-structured interview	Generic Semi-Structured Interview Guide which is personalised during the interview (See Appendix H)	
Childcare workers	3	Semi-structured interview	Generic Semi-Structured Interview Guide which is personalised during the interview (See Appendix H)	
Government Officials	3	Semi-structured interview	Semi-Structured Interview Guide (See Appendix J, K and L)	
Informants/Experts	3	Semi-structured interview	Semi-Structured Interview Guide (See Appendix M, N and O)	
Total:	35			
Observations				
Classroom		Semi-structured observations	Classroom Observations (See Appendix I)	12
Sports day, fun day excursions, day-to-day running of institution		Unstructured observations		several
Other				
All participants at the institution				several

		Informal conversations		
Documents (quarterly board meeting minutes, annual reports, emails)				several

4.8 Data management

Data management is important for the safety, storage and organisation of data. All interviews (semi-structured and focus group) were recorded on my phone and transferred to my computer. This recording method is useful as the recording application on my phone automatically keeps track of the dates and length of recordings. Once transferred, the audio files were organised and stored on a folder on my computer. Each interview was labelled and archived according to a code I created. Only I am able to recognise the participant interviewed by the label I created. The final interviews selected were either transcribed by students whom I had paid to do so, or by me. Audio files that were not transcribed remained in an audio format. The sections of the audio files that were considered useful were then transcribed. Most audio files that were considered useful for analysis were transcribed. These transcriptions were stored safely on my computer. I then uploaded the transcriptions and transcribed audio files onto ATLAS.ti, a data-analysis software for qualitative data. In addition, I kept the consent forms neatly organised in a folder, which helped track the full names and dates of each interview. Each participant also received a copy of their signed consent form as mentioned earlier. Observations of the institution and classes were also written in three different notebooks, and some notes I had typed up and stored on my computer. All work related to my PhD was stored in the iCloud and on an external hard drive so that backed-up data were saved on different locations.

4.9 Data analysis

I analysed transcripts and audio formats of the interviews by uploading them onto ATLAS.ti – qualitative data-analysis software for which I acquired a licence through my university. As part of the analysis, I went through selected transcripts and audio files, renamed each file or data source and coded the data source. One part of the analytical process or coding strategy of this research leans on a grounded theory approach (the coding strategy for this research, however, includes a priori codes which are discussed later), and uses methods such as open coding, axial coding and selective coding (Bhattacharjee, 2012:97).

I created constructs (or first-order constructs or open coding) that allowed me to label a piece of data or quote that I found useful, interesting and which related to the research question. These codes were temporary and were subject to change as I went through the rest of the data. The codes emerged organically as I read and listened to the data sources. I made notes of gaps I found, interesting points, reflections, observations, and follow-up questions.

Code formation was an emerging process, as I allowed the data to guide the code formation. There were, however, some a priori codes created as I anticipated certain themes, such as children and youth at risk, violence, pedagogy, discipline, etc., owing to the prepared interview questions. There were many codes by the time I had finished the first coding process, which led me to merge similar codes, rename them if necessary, form new themes and sub-themes by adding pieces of data, and do away with codes with very few participant quotes attached to them, or that were irrelevant in answering the research questions. This was the axial coding process.

Eventually I could see larger themes emerging and move these smaller codes into the larger codes that I had created. These formed the second-order codes. Larger codes were determined by the frequency of the themes that emerged from the participants' quotes. I ranked the importance of codes by frequency, and from there determined which were useful in answering the research questions and helping me to contrast and compare data. Through this process codes were further refined, by removing quotes that mentioned a certain theme but did not provide useful, sensible or reliable evidence. By this time data saturation had occurred, which confirmed which data was most valuable. This was the selective coding process.

ATLAS.ti, qualitative analysis software, helped me to organise my data, extract quotes and themes, identify trends, patterns, and frequency. In addition, as a case enquirer, I studied the case as a whole, rather than fragmented parts or fractured variables thereof (Thomas, 2011:171). Thomas (2011:171) remarks on this process of interpreting data: "We have to study the meaning the people are constructing of the situations in which they find themselves and process from these meanings in order to understand the social world." I used the method of interpretative enquiry, or constant comparative method, which means "the simple principle of going through data again and again, comparing each element – phrase, sentence or paragraph – with all of the other elements" (Thomas, 2011:171) in order to develop themes, or allow themes to emerge that "capture or summarise the essence or essences of your data" (Thomas,

2011:171). What this process entails is reading through transcripts, listening to audio recordings, and reading through field notes and recorded observations.

Moving beyond the grouping of data, I undertook different levels of analysing the data. The first level of analysis merely describes the data and sees what concepts emerge. This level of analysis is where the researcher may use her own insights, experience and observations in order to make sense of the problem. The second and third level of analysis compares the data with existing literature and theories for the interpretations to be supported or to refute existing studies, and to provide alternative explanations or divergences to existing studies (Bhattacharjee, 2012:96-97; Ormston et al., 2014:22).

Furthermore, interpretive research is inductive, meaning it uses a bottom-up approach, starting from the particular and moving to the more general. As described earlier (see Section 4.3 on positionality), this process is not value free on the part of the researcher, as my beliefs and values influence the choice of data and how that data is interpreted. This results in insights and understandings that attempt to explain the participants' actions and their understanding thereof (Scotland, 2012:12). In this light the participants have very little say in how the researcher interprets the data, as researchers produce theorised accounts, and the participants may not be aware of the larger structural issues influencing their ideologies and behaviours. The researcher ultimately decides in which direction the research goes and the final interpretation, which is eventually made public (Scotland, 2012:13).

4.10 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness relates to the 'truth value' of the research, especially if the findings are trustworthy by the research participants in the context of the study. Lincoln and Guba (1985, cited in Thomas, 2011: 62-63) proposed the idea of trustworthiness in qualitative research, referred to as 'validity' and 'reliability' in quantitative research. To confirm trustworthiness as far as possible, concepts such as credibility, consistency or dependability, neutrality or confirmability, and applicability or transferability are relevant and important in qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003:602). In summary, these criteria are used in this study to test whether the findings are credible (Krefting, 1990: 215).

As mentioned above, interpretive research may use the four criteria, which are "credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability" (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:34-35). Since interpretive research is subjective, there are other ways to prove legitimacy and trustworthiness without claiming

that the findings are uncontested. First, credibility means that data is believable, trustworthy and authentic. In this study, the data is presented as close as possible to the original statements, the process of analysis and interpretation is made explicit, and readers can test whether the findings are trustworthy. Second, dependability refers to the findings aligning with the reality constructed by the researcher and the research participants, which in practice means that others could find the same outcomes in similar circumstances/conditions. However, owing to variability in human behaviour, context, and possibility of various interpretations, it is impossible to reproduce the exact same results. In this study, the research participants' views were not altered and arriving at the findings was an inductive process, meaning that it aligned with the reality of the research participants. Third, the criteria of confirmability mean that others in the field are able to confirm these findings. This ensures that bias is reduced. The findings need to reflect the experiences and ideas of the research participants, rather than the preferences and personality of the researcher (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:34-35). One can also examine and check the findings of previous studies to establish if the findings relate to an existing body of knowledge, if there are comparable issues, similar cases, or sources of information (Shenton, 2004:69). In this study, similar studies are reviewed and presented in order to confirm that this study can be trusted, and it has arrived at trustworthy conclusions. Finally, transferability entails that the researcher provides as much contextual detail as possible for readers to relate it to their context (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017:34-35). Chapter 2 of this study provides an in-depth description of the context of the whole study. In addition, Chapter 5 provides the specific contexts in which the youths are located. Research is considered good if it provides a substantial amount of evidence, the accounts are credible, it is useful to someone else in another situation, and the findings could be repeated and are dependable (Scotland 2012:12).

There are also other ways to test trustworthiness, such as member checks and reviewing previous research findings. Member checks entail checking the accuracy of the data through asking research participants to read transcripts and check if their words match what they intended to say at the time. Checks can be done by verifying theories and inferences made during the interviews and establishing whether the participants had other reasons for patterns observed by the researcher (Shenton, 2004:68). This, however, was not applied to this study, owing to the number of research participants involved in the study, their availability and the time it would take to complete a process such as this.

Another way to ensure that the research is trustworthy is through triangulation. Despite triangulation not being a requirement for interpretivist research, triangulation is essential for case study research (Bowen 2009:28; Thomas 2011:68). What this means is that the research needs to be viewed and verified from

several angles. Other viewpoints help us to see flaws and gaps in our explanations that may dismiss initial explanations and add to the researcher's confidence (Cohen et al., 2018:265). In line with Foucault's 'polyhedron of intelligibility', Stake (cited in Yazan, 2015:147) lists four ways to triangulate a study: through data sources, researchers, theory (or conceptual frameworks), and methodology. In this study various methods and data sources were used to triangulate the study, such as interviews with teachers and other staff members, interviews with youth, structured and unstructured observations, interviews with government officials, with experts in their respective fields, and document reviews. However, Ritchie and Lewis (2003:43-44) argue that triangulation is only useful when it extends one's understanding by adding depth and breadth to the analysis. Triangulation therefore "gives a fuller picture of a phenomenon, not necessarily a more certain one" (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003:43-44). Triangulation was applied to this study by using various data-collection methods (described earlier), data sources, and by including various participants.

4.11 Limitations of the study

The study encountered four main limitations. These limitations are discussed below.

The first is the uneven number of semi-structured observations collected from different classes. These limitations were caused by timetable changes, sick leave and other unforeseen circumstances. I was therefore unable to observe three classes per teacher as was planned. To overcome this limitation, I attempted to observe as many classes as I could, which were enough to analyse and draw conclusions from.

The second limitation was the nature of the case study method. While the information regarding participants' experiences of exclusion and risk was useful and could possibly be generalised by identifying trends and patterns, conceptually and theoretically, their experiences of educational and social inclusion at this specific institution are unique and cannot be applied to inclusive and/or mainstream schools as human and other resources available to this institution are not easily available to other institutions. Under these circumstances the findings cannot be generalised, as the data (research participants and institutions) is highly contextualised (Bhattacharjee, 2012:93; Scotland, 2012:12-13). For this reason, Chapter 8 provides the conceptual findings which may be useful to others and transferrable to other contexts.

The third limitation was being unable to track the progress of alumni of the Circle. The Circle does not have a formal system to keep track of their alumni and therefore measuring the impact and effectiveness of the work of the Circle beyond its gates is difficult or impossible. I therefore only focused on the impact the institution had on the children and youth at the institution at the time.

The final limitation was in interviewing youth, who may not be able articulate their experiences and views very clearly. For example, the ways in which many youths expressed their ideas were sometimes unclear; for example, how some youths described their families was not clear as I could not ascertain who in their family had also been at risk. In addition, their knowledge of their family may be limited owing to various factors such as being adopted or fostered. Nevertheless, I used and analysed the data that was clear and made every effort to clarify answers.

4.12 Conclusion

This chapter described the methodology of the study, which included the ontology, epistemology and positionality of the researcher. It followed by describing the research design, the case study as a research design (which includes a description of the case studies), the kind of sampling used, the ethical considerations and the data-collection methods and process. These included a focus group, interviews, semi-structured and unstructured observations, and document reviews. The data management and data-analysis process were then described, followed by a discussion of the trustworthiness of the study, ending with the limitations. In the next few chapters, the findings of the study are presented and discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE: Risk Factors Experienced by Youth at Risk

5.1 Introduction

This chapter answers the research subsidiary question: What are the risk factors experienced by the youth found in the previous institution(s), the family, the communities/neighbourhoods and among their peers that contribute to their being referred to the child and youth care centre?

A careful response to this question is important as it helps to understand the experiences that the youth who are ‘at risk’ have had, and the nature of the contributors to their emotional and behavioural difficulties, which eventually led to their institutionalisation at the Circle. This chapter draws mainly on the data of seven semi-structured interviews with male youths between the ages of 16 and 18 years and who attended, or who had recently been disengaged from, the Circle at the time of the interview. These interviews are supplemented with interviews with nine teachers who work in the academic and technical departments of the institution: three different semi-structured interviews with the principal; semi-structured interviews with the education support services staff, which include the educational psychologist, the social worker, and the occupational therapist; and three childcare workers; and semi-structured interviews with the residential head at the time, as well as with the newly appointed residential head. Three major themes from the conceptual framework are developed in this chapter.

This chapter begins by discussing the first theme which is ‘institutional experiences’ and is further divided into two sub-themes: ‘reasons for dropping out of school’ and ‘transferring between multiple institutions’. The second theme presents the risk factors that come from the family and have contributed to the youths’ admission to the Circle. The third and final theme examines the risk factors found in the community and neighbourhood that have contributed to the youths’ admission to the Circle. Furthermore, the risk factors found in peer groups and associations are common to all these themes and are therefore not discussed separately. This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings. Before discussing these themes, a synopsis of the background of each youth is presented in order to contextualise and understand how these themes interplay in these youths’ lives.

5.2 Synopsis of the Background of the Youths

This section provides a synopsis of the background of the seven youths, each synopsis providing a description of their age, their families, where they are from, the schools and institutions they have attended, their peers, and the events that led to their referral to the Circle. These synopses are useful in answering the research question in several ways. First, each provides a summary and overview of the main events in the life of the youth that contributed to his referral to the Circle. Second, the synopsis shows the sequential flow of these events as opposed to thematic categories as presented in the rest of the chapter. Third, risk is conceptualised in this study as complex, interconnected, and relational, a process which is demonstrated through these synopses.

The first youth is named Grant,⁹ for the purpose of this study. Grant was 18 years old at the time of this interview. He was admitted to the Circle in August 2014, which means he had spent about two years at the institution before being disengaged¹⁰ (a term used at the Circle for the termination of the court order and in terms of which the youth has to leave the institution). His family configuration (specifically those with whom he has close relationships) is unique as he has adoptive parents who live in Durbanville, Cape Town, biological parents who live in Brooklyn, Cape Town, and grandparents who live in Gansbaai, which is 163 km outside Cape Town on the south coast of South Africa. From what can be ascertained from the interview, the child's main caregivers are his adoptive parents and he has a relationship with his biological parents and grandparents (with whom he had lived with for a period of time). By the time he turned 18, he had attended eight different institutions for different periods and for different reasons. These included three primary schools, one rehabilitation centre, one secure care centre, two high schools and finally the Circle. He was sent to a rehabilitation centre for using and selling marijuana. He was also in trouble at school, which led to his placement in a secure care centre. At the time of the interview, he had already been disengaged and was studying information technology at a TVET college.

⁹All interviewees and the institutions they have attended were given pseudonyms in order to maintain anonymity and protect their identity and privacy.

¹⁰Disengagement occurs when the child or youth is released from the institution after the court order has been completed or at the age of 18.

The second youth, Jeremy, was 18 years at the time of the interview. He was at the Circle for 3–4 years. He grew up with his parents in Retreat, Cape Town (prior to this he and his family lived in Ravensmead, Cape Town) and initially had three sisters, one of whom had passed away. Jeremy also helped to take care of his grandfather towards the end of his grandfather's life. This relationship and experience made a significant impact on his life as it influenced his decision to consider frail care as a future career. Jeremy attended school but dropped out because of selling drugs and caring for his grandfather. His exposure to selling drugs started with his spending lots of time with a friend who had been released from prison in 2012, and who had already been deeply involved in drug dealing. Eventually, the two of them opened a fruit stall as a cover for drug dealing. He had also had many interactions with gangsters as gangs were quite prevalent in his neighbourhood. It seems his actions had led to his attending different institutions which included a place of safety, a secure care centre, and a rehabilitation centre. From what could be ascertained from the interview, it seems that he had attended a total of five educational institutions, including a primary school and the Circle. The drug dealing took a dark downward turn when his friend was shot dead, right next to him, by gangsters. The gangsters threatened him with an ultimatum to either continue selling drugs and die, or to stop selling drugs and live. It was unclear when this incident occurred. Eventually he was caught and arrested by the police for drug dealing, which started the process for his admission to the Circle. At the time of the interview Jeremy was being prepared to disengage. The Circle had also paid for him to attend a course on frail care.

The third youth, Leonard, was 16 years old at the time of the interview. His younger brother also attended the Circle. He was admitted to the Circle at the age of 16 and had only been at the institution for four months at the time of this interview. He is originally from Atlantis, 45 km from Cape Town on the West Coast, north of Cape Town, and he attended two different primary schools in the area. The last grade he attended was Grade 7 and he then stayed out of school for three years. His family comprises his mother, father, one brother and two sisters. He also mentions that he has aunts and uncles. His parents now live separately, and his younger sister is at a place of safety for smoking marijuana. The reason for his dropping out of school was due to his involvement in a gang and his use of 'tik' (methamphetamine) and 'buttons' (Mandrax). He also admits to stabbing people with a knife and robbing them while part of the gang. It eventually became too dangerous for him to attend school as rival gangs would threaten to shoot him. His exposure to the gangs came through his friends who had first joined. He spent time drinking with them at weekends and eventually he and two of his cousins also joined the gang. He said his decision to join the gang was based on the domestic violence he experienced at home. His parents fought physically and verbally, and he regularly witnessed his father hit his mother. What had led to his

admission to his first secure care centre was when he took 'tik', broke all the windows of his mother's house [for a second time], and she filed a case against him. His mother eventually dropped the case, but his drug addiction did not stop, and he was then admitted to a drug rehabilitation centre. His father could also not address his behavioural issues any longer and Leonard eventually appeared in a Children's Court where it was decided that he would attend the Circle. In total he had attended five different institutions by the time he was 18. Leonard disengaged from the Circle in 2018.

The fourth youth, Cameron, was 16 years old at the time of the interview. He had recently been admitted to the Circle. He grew up with his grandmother in Manenberg and later moved in with his mother and stepfather in Kensington. He does not know his biological father and he has four stepsisters. Cameron was involved in gangs and was initially exposed to gangsterism through his step-grandfather. When his step-grandfather's friends would visit his house, they would share knowledge about gang life and instructed him on how to clean guns. He was later recruited to sell drugs (Mandrax, 'tik' and 'unga' [a heroine-based drug]) and joined the gang thereafter. He attended a high school in Salt River, Cape Town, which he did not enjoy. He smoked marijuana, sold drugs, and even started his own gang at the school as he was instructed to do by the gang leader. Cameron instructed his gang members to rob and steal, which was part of the practice of the main gang. The drug dealing influenced his school attendance because he collected drug shipments during school hours. At the age of 14 his mother decided to place him in a place of safety as Cameron's life was becoming increasingly threatened. However, he continued selling drugs while he was at these places of safety. He had stayed at two different homes for three years prior to entering the Circle. None of his friends or gang members knew that he was at the Circle, an arrangement agreed upon between him and the social worker for the sake of his protection. At one point he absconded from the Circle in order to meet with his friends. He then regretted it and called a childcare worker to fetch him. In total Cameron had attended five institutions (assuming he had only attended one primary school) by the age of 16. Cameron hopes to become a qualified plumber once he leaves the Circle.

The fifth youth is called Jade and was 16 years old at the time of this interview. He had lived in several places, including Elsie's River, Delft, Mitchells Plain, Saron, and Gouda. He has a mom, and a stepfather who passed away not long after the interview. His stepfather was assassinated because of Jade's involvement in gangs. He also has two stepbrothers and three stepsisters that do not live together. He is very close to his grandfather. He had attended five different primary schools, depending on the areas where he lived at various times. The last time he attended school was in Grade 8. He was then admitted

to the Circle. In total, he attended seven different educational institutions. He had been at the Circle for 11 months at the time of the interview. He first got involved in gangs while he lived in Elsie's River. He sat on street corners, smoked marijuana, and was propositioned to sell drugs. Things got worse when he broke into homes, fired (guns) at people, and sold drugs. The police caught him with a gun, and he and his parents then went to a social worker. He was eventually sent to court where it was decided by the presiding officer to send him to the Circle to improve his behaviour. At the Circle he did not cooperate at first, but eventually learned to cooperate after realising that the staff really wanted to help. Jade hoped to become a diesel mechanic. The last I heard of Jade was that he had left the Circle and continued with gang activities.

The sixth youth named James was 16 years old at the time of the interview. He is originally from Kraaifontein. He has a mother and father, one brother and two sisters. He also has a grandfather, grandmother, and an aunt. He attended two schools before getting into trouble. He got involved with a gang, and as a result, rival gang members threatened his mother by saying that if she did not get him off the streets, they would take his life. His mother was afraid, yet he continued with his gang activities until shots were fired at him. He feared walking the streets and, in order to find safety, his mother filed a case against him for theft and break-ins. He was then sent to a juvenile prison where he stayed for three months. Later, the social worker realised that the prison was not suitable for him, and he was then transferred to the Circle. In total he attended four different educational institutions. His behaviour improved a lot at the Circle, and he intends to become a traffic officer.

The seventh and last youth is called Xola. He was 17 years old at the time of the interview. He is originally from the Eastern Cape, but his mother moved to Khayelitsha. He is quite fond of and close to his mother. He has a stepfather, and his biological father left when he was 14 years old. He has a younger brother and sister. He is isiXhosa speaking, but speaks English and Afrikaans as well. He acquired Afrikaans while staying at the Circle. When he was younger, he was sexually abused by a stranger and felt a lot of anger in response to that incident. He had lots of outbursts of anger and got into many fights with many boys while growing up. He also committed a sexual offence against someone he was close to which was the reason for his being sent to an institution such as the Circle. Before he was admitted to the Circle, he was at a juvenile prison for two days. His mother did not like the institution and therefore convinced the social worker to relocate him. While he was at the Circle, he joined the martial arts classes and became very good at it to the point where he aspired to start his own *dojo*. Martial arts helped him tremendously to release and control his anger. It is unclear what schools he attended before attending

the Circle, but assuming he had only attended one primary school, he would have attended three institutions in total. He disengaged from the Circle at the end of 2017 and was given the opportunity develop his martial arts abilities.

The table below shows the information provided by the seven youths and allows for easy comparisons between these youths.

Table 2: The demographic details, length of time spent at the Circle, and the risk factors experienced by the youth participants of the study

Youth's names	Length of time at the Circle	Age	Race	Home area	No. of institutions attended	Major risk factors		
						Institution (s)	Family	Community
Grant	2 years (recently disengaged)	18	White	Durbanville (Cape Town), Gansbaai	8	Stayed out of school since going to rehab	Instability	Access to drugs (sold and used)
Jeremy	4 years (close to disengagement)	18	Coloured	Retreat (Cape Town)	5	Dropped out of school	Lack of support and supervision, ill family member	Access to drugs (sold and used), exposure to gangs
Leonard	4 months	16	Coloured	Atlantis	5	Dropped out of school	Domestic violence	Access to drugs (used), joining a gang
Cameron	uncertain	16	Coloured	Manenberg	5	Stayed out of school since moving to the place of safety	Lack of support and supervision	Access to drugs (sold and used), joining and starting a gang
Jade	11 months	16	Coloured	Elsie's River, Delft, Mitchells Plain (Cape Town), Saron and Gouda	7	Taken to police and eventually the Children's Court	Gang members, instability	Access to drugs (sold and used), joining a gang
James	uncertain	16	White	Kraaifontein (Cape Town)	4	Taken to police and eventually the Children's Court	-	Joining a gang
Xola	uncertain	17	Black	Eastern Cape, Khayelitsha (Cape Town)	3	Taken to police and eventually the Children's Court	No visible father figure	Sexual abuse (from stranger)

The table above shows the similarities and differences between the youths in terms of their past experiences. These youths were between the ages of 16 and 18 and had been at the Circle for various lengths of time. In terms of racial groupings, these youths are mainly coloured,¹¹ whereas two youths are

¹¹'Coloured' is a race category used in South Africa, based on the Population Registration Act, No. 30, 1950 (Union of South Africa, 1950), still widely used in South Africa. 'Coloured' describes those of mixed-race ancestry. This term is used in the context of this study to historically and presently locate the participants of this

white, and one is black. The demographic ratio of this group is reflective of the institution's demographic ratio, as there are predominantly coloured children and youth at the Circle and varying and fluctuating numbers of white and black children and youth, who are usually in the minority. The areas in which the youths had resided before coming to the Circle, are also historically racialised, meaning that the racial grouping of the youth is associated with the predominant racial groupings in that area, except in the case of Kraaifontein, where the dominant racial grouping is coloured. Most of these areas are considered historically and currently marginalised. The youths had also attended several institutions; the highest number attended being eight by the age of 18, and the lowest being three by the age of 17. The average number of institutions attended by the group is five. There are many risk factors contributing to the youths' admission to the Circle. Only the major known risks are listed. The risks found in their past institutional experience include dropping out of school, moving to an institution other than a school, not returning to school, and eventually being taken to a Children's Court. It seems that the removal from school for various reasons is a major risk factor (these risks are discussed later in this chapter). The risks in the youth's family life involve instability, lack of supervision and support, domestic violence, and gang membership. The family risks differ from youth to youth, as some youths did not report any problems in this area of their life. Risk factors found in the community include having access to drugs, where some youths sold and used them, being exposed to and joining a gang, and a single case of sexual abuse. The common risks in the community seem to be access to and use of drugs, and joining a gang, whereas sexual violence was not prevalent among this group, but is a larger societal problem. All these risk factors contribute in varying degrees to the lack of emotional well-being of the youths, leading to their difficult behaviour. This difficult behaviour eventually led to their referral to the Circle.

In addition, these narratives reflect the complex, interconnected, cumulative and relational nature of risk and its accompanying protective factors (Schonert-Reichl, 2000:2). Many of these youths experienced multiple childhood adversities, not all of which were reported during the interviews. This was due to

study and the effect of the legacy of apartheid on their current living conditions. This terminology, however, is not subscribed to by the researcher, as it perpetuates categories of race.

ethical obligations not to make the participants feel uncomfortable before entering the Circle (or state care) as well as the developmental challenges of adolescence (generally the age between 13 and 19), which include significant pressure stemming from the environment and personal development where some may experience behavioural and psychological difficulties, as suggested by Petersen (2013:13). It is also important to highlight that these risks are not deterministic (Luthar, 2003:131), as not all children/youth exposed to these adversities end up in state care institutions for various reasons, which are not addressed in this study.

Furthermore, all of these youths have at some stage come into contact either with the police or with social workers, which exemplifies the gravity of their actions and life experiences, as police and social workers only intervene in children's lives if their life circumstances and actions are unsafe or may place them in serious danger. These dangers include being neglected, abused, exposed to domestic violence, or difficult or criminal behaviour on their part and/or those around them. These childhood adversities are similar to those found in a study on Irish children and the factors that led to their homelessness and placement into state care (Mayock et al., 2014:69-70). Now that a synopsis of the backgrounds of these youths has been provided, the next section will discuss the first theme of the findings: 'risks found in previous institutional experiences'. This discussion elaborates on the circumstances that led to these youths ending up at the Circle.

5.3 Risks Found in Previous Institutional Experiences

In this section, a discussion of the various kinds of risk factors related to the institutions that the youths had attended in the past is presented. Given the backgrounds of the youths, and their volatile, short, and temporary engagements with different institutions, it can be argued that institutions play a significant role in not only contributing to risk factors, but also in potentially mitigating risk factors, and enhancing the protective factors which the different role-players involved in the decision-making process hoped (this is assumed) to achieve by transferring them from one institution to the next. While it is argued that these experiences contributed to shaping their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours and form part of their journey to the Circle, the focus of this section is on the risk factors from these different institutional experiences that contributed to these youths' admission to the Circle. This section looks at the two major sub-themes that emerged from the data: 'reasons for dropping out of school', and 'transferring between multiple institutions'.

5.3.1 Reasons for dropping out of schools

There are many reasons, as can be observed from the interviews with the youths, for children and youth dropping out of school. The reasons for some of the youths doing so are discussed in this section.

In the following extract from an interview with Leonard, one such reason, peer influence, is described.

Interviewer: Oh, OK so you weren't at school at that time?
Interviewee: No.
Interviewer: Did you spend most of your time at home?
Interviewee: No, with my friends.
Interviewer: Let me quickly understand. What grade was the last grade that you –
Interviewee: Grade 7.
Interviewer: And so, did you stay out of school?
Interviewee: For three years.
Interviewer: Oh, now I understand – because you arrived here when you were 16?
Interviewee: Yes.
Interviewer: OK, so why did you not go to school?
Interviewee: Because I was involved in gangs. Say I go to school then they'll shoot you – the enemy.
Interviewer: OK, so it was a risk?
Interviewee: [shakes head to agree] (Leonard, Youth: 44).¹²

Leonard describes how he was at risk of being shot at by rival gang members while attending school. For Leonard, the fear and reality of potentially being shot at and killed by rival gang members led him to drop out of school at a very young age. His school was no longer a safe space as gangsters could easily enter the premises or may have attended the same primary school as he did. He was forced to drop out and then stayed out of school for three years before coming to the Circle. It is unclear if attempts were made by his parents and teachers to readmit him to school during that three-year period, but what is clear is that for him, attending school was too much of a risk.

Leonard's story is representative of the story of many children and youth, not only of those who are part of the study, but those at the Circle and who have been in similar situations, who have joined, or who

¹² The language spoken by the research participants were, as far as possible, recorded and transcribed verbatim. The English used by the research participants are influenced by and mixed with the Afrikaans language which is commonly spoken by people living in the Western Cape.

have been harassed by gangs and are forced to leave school early because of the fear and risk of being violently victimised and/or even killed. It seems that his school was unable to provide enough protection for its learners from the conflict between learners, or to resist dangerous forces from outside the school. The boundaries of certain schools and their communities seem to be porous, and instead of resisting violence and the negative factors stemming from the community, instead the school becomes an extension of that community (Petersen, 2013:23). Children and youth in turn, are forced to protect themselves by detaching from the risky school environment, leading to feelings of alienation, and also to lengthy if not permanent educational exclusion.

The Western Cape Government (2014:59-60) found similar issues in their study on youth in the Western Cape. They found that schools in marginalised communities are not always conducive to academic development as they often become spaces where violence regularly occurs; there is the presence of youth gangs that distracts from academic development, and there is no clear or effective supervision from adults. Gang activities are fluid and amorphous, and may therefore contaminate school premises (Papachristos et al., 2015:624), causing major disruptions to school routines as was the case with schools in Lavender Hill in 2017 (Evans, 2017). There were also instances of gang members entering school premises to shoot rival gang members (as Leonard nearly experienced or was under threat of experiencing). These social ills in communities enter the school premises and endanger the lives of both teachers and learners.

Cameron, who had also dropped out of school, got into trouble repeatedly. He describes his experience:

So, my mother, she – they used to call her in every day ... because of my problems. Then she decided, she told me – she used to threaten me. She's gonna send me to a[n] other place on Guy Fawkes. This guy threatened me. He said he's gonna stab me on Guy Fawkes. Then I ran home, I came back with a knife. We started to fight, but I never took out my knife to stab him. Then they blamed it on me. Then my mother took me out of school (Cameron, Youth: 34).

Cameron talks about how he was summoned to the principal's office every day because of problems due to his behaviour. One of the turning points that influenced his mother's decision to remove him from his school was the incident which he describes above. In response to the threat made by the boy, Cameron's reaction was not to de-escalate the problem, or call on an adult for help, but to run home to fetch a knife, which he then used to fight the boy. This type of response shows a reactive aggression which has "an affective, defensive and retaliatory nature" as Hinsberger et al. (2016:2) describe.

This incident also highlights certain disturbing personal traits which have developed in such youths, such as bad decisions and risk-taking behaviour – in Cameron’s case, placing his own life and the lives of others in danger. Cameron’s response increased his (and the other boy’s) exposure to risk of violent victimisation and/or premature mortality resulting from injury. As a result of this incident, his mother thought it would be best to remove him from school and place him in a safer place, such as a place of safety. Therefore, his own risk-taking behaviour, and the threats made by other learners, led to school disengagement or dropout. In addition, the direct consequence of removing Cameron from school into a place of safety meant that he would not be able to access the regular curriculum and would lag behind his peers academically.

As can be inferred from Leonard’s and Cameron’s incidences of violence and dropping out of school, there seems to be a strong correlation between those who are involved in gangs and those who leave school at a young age. A study conducted on the adverse effects of gangs on schooling by Magidi et al. (2016:74) reports that gang members in certain areas wait at school gates to engage with learners after school. It also reported a study that showed that learners attending a school exposed to gangs and drugs are likely to miss three days of school at a time (Magidi et al., 2016:77). Some children stayed out of school during gang shootings, while schooling was interrupted by gang fights. Children and youth leave school for various reasons, but gang involvement in this case seems to contribute substantially to the possibility of truancy and school dropout, both of which eventually led these two youths to the Circle. Gang involvement therefore can be seen to have an adverse effect on the learning environment and school engagement, which potentially may lead to school dropout.

In the extract from the interview with Daniel, the current head of residential care, he attributes the problem of school dropouts to a larger societal problem of those of the youth not in education, employment and training (NEET):

And I think the problem is ... I think, you know, it goes for me; it goes back to the two kinds of exclusions that you need to unpack... And the one is getting children into the system, and that has to remain a priority. So, you have to create the conditions for the children to stay in school and get the best that they can. And children are dropping out... I'm not an expert at this... I think they're dropping out for financial reasons, because it obviously – however much we think the education is for free... And I think they are dropping out because their needs are not being met – their learning needs are not being met. So, they either are frustrated, or they don't feel there is a future for them to carry on... The first is getting – creating the opportunities for children to get into the system but also to participate [in it] effectively... But we don't know how many children are not in the system at all or who are dropping out, etc. So – and we don't know to what extent they are dropping out of the so-called mainstream system etc. (Daniel, Current Head of Residential Care: 35).

Daniel, in the extract above, describes NEETs who do not attend basic, further or higher education institutions, are not employed, and do participate in some form of training (Western Cape Government, 2014:23). He describes how children and youth may drop out for various reasons other than gang involvement. These include the lack of finances, and their learning needs not being met. The issues around NEETs are a major systemic and social problem affecting youths such as those in the study, as this group of people may find it increasingly difficult to improve or escape from their economic and social conditions, which may in turn lead to social exclusion (Dixon, 2007:19). Daniel attributes some of the problems NEETs face to an inflexible education system where children and youth in need of protection, support and encouragement are not accommodated in their schools and communities. There are thus various factors that have led these youths to drop out of school, which eventually led to their referral to the Circle. Youths who leave state care may become part of the NEET population because of their difficulty in finding jobs as reported by a study on youth not in education, employment and training in the UK (Dixon, 2007:21, 23). If they do find jobs, they often occupy insecure, low-paid and low-skilled jobs and struggle to maintain consistent participation, especially in current economic conditions (Dixon, 2007:21, 24). Thus, youth leaving care have a high risk of non-participation as argued by Dixon (2007:25).

This sub-theme shows that the youths interviewed disengaged from school or dropped out for two main reasons. The first is the schools' inability to provide sufficient protection for their learners from the dangers within and outside the school owing to the porous boundaries between school and community, especially in marginalised communities. Schools are potential sites of protection for children and youth from adversities stemming from the community and family life, as well as sites of empowerment. Schooling and schools can therefore act as protective agents against dropout, adverse family conditions, social exclusion, and child and youth offending. However, not all schools provide that protection for various reasons, such as the culture of the school, the code of conduct, the lack of human and other resources, and the school's being an extension of the community, especially if it is located in a disadvantaged area (Petersen, 2013:23).

In these areas, both the symbolic and physical boundaries between the school and community are often porous, with gangsters who behave and perform their roles as gang members within the boundaries of the school (Western Cape Government, 2014:30). In addition, violence within the community sometimes spills over into the school, making a school vulnerable, and thereby enhancing risk unintentionally because of the school's geographical and social location in addition to the actions of

learners and staff (Souverein et al., 2015:14). In fact, when the boundaries between the school, family, and community are porous and these social fields embody negative characteristics, the school's ability to mitigate the likelihood of children and youth engaging in criminal activities may be hindered. Some learners in these schools may also respond to these negative factors by not forming an attachment to the school, or by behaving disruptively, performing poorly academically, and failing or even dropping out (Burton et al., 2009:59). According to institutional theory (Scott 2004:8), these schools possess very weak regulative, normative and cultural cognitive elements independent of the communities in which they are located. They are unable to implement the kinds of rules, norms and values that oppose, or substantially influence, the negative influences pervading the surrounding communities to a substantial degree.

The second reason learners may drop out of school is the inflexibility/rigidity of the schools these youths attend, and of the education system as a whole, to accommodate the particular learning needs of their learners. These schools are not able to address the life challenges, including the financial barriers, that children and youths face, and they also seem to be unable to prevent school detachment. There are thus social, school, and systemic risks that together may lead to school dropout. From this data it can be inferred that it is therefore the combination of relationships with teachers, the curriculum, and the school culture that contributes to weak attachments to schools. This combination has the potential to lead to the risk of school disengagement, which, in the case of the youths in this study, eventually led them to drop out of school. In the next section, the risks involved in transferring between multiple institutions are discussed.

5.3.2 Transferring between multiple institutions

A common pattern that is also observed from the backgrounds of the youth interviewed in this study is that they had experienced several institutional transfers during a short period of their lives after leaving school. On average, the youths interviewed in this study had attended five different institutions by the time they reached the age of 18. The highest number of institutions attended by one of the youths was eight by the age of 18. In this section, the youths describe the reasons behind the transfers between institutions within a short period of time, and the effects on them. These many shifts resulted in the risks of school and institutional disengagement, which eventually contributed to their referral to the Circle.

In the first interview extract below, Grant mentions the names of all the institutions he attended prior to attending the Circle. Grant is the youth who attended the highest number of institutions of those in the group. The names of the institutions have been changed to maintain the anonymity of Grant and of the institutions.

Yes, I attended schools in a few different, a few different areas. I was in a few different schools, um. Started off at Panorama when I was small – that was up until Grade 2. [In] Grade 2, I went over to Sunnyhill Primary School, um, where I was in Grade 3 and 4, where I completed Grade 4. Then I went to Durbanville, um, how can I say – also primary school but it's from Grade 4 to Grade 7, so I was there up until Grade 7. And then Grade 8 I went to Hopeville High School. When I was in Hopeville High School there was a time I went to rehab, um, for three weeks at Lily Home, I think it's, I'm not sure where it's based. Um, after that I went back to Durbanville, then I went to Jackson High School and I didn't complete it, now I failed it, so I stayed the next year to complete it. In 2014 I came in trouble in early February; the 27th of February I went to Life Secure Care Centre – that's a "juvie", also, a youth care centre almost, but where you're locked away. You're locked up every day in a cell or so on with like two kids, sometimes with 14 kids. Depending on the size of the cell and from there on when I came out there, I was there only for seven weeks. So, I came out, so I went to, um, Gansbaai to my grandparents to live on a farm where I went to Gordon High School. Um, that was the school where I completed my, where I was busy doing my Grade 9 again, so I came here because I caused again trouble. So, I came here, and I completed Grade 9 and I went to college last year – 2015. And now I'm still in college 2016 (Grant, Youth: 3).

There were various reasons for Grant's transferral between these many institutions. These included a change in living arrangements with his foster and biological parents, as well as his difficult behaviour. From Grant's recollection of his previous institutional experience, it can be inferred that these shifts contributed to instability in his life. Furthermore, because of these many interruptions and transitions, there was not enough time for Grant to complete grades and stay on a par with his peers. He finished Grade 9 by the age of 16, which is a two-year delay in comparison with his peers. Langenkamp (2016:1-2) explains this by stating that life transitions contribute towards inequality across a lifetime. How the transition is navigated determines how that inequality is intensified or reduced. In Grant's case, these transitions resulted in academic gaps and delays which could have further implications (and risks) for his future if he did not manage to make a conscious effort to close these gaps, or the institutions he attended did not provide the appropriate support. If he does not now manage to close these gaps, he may not be able to study further and acquire employable skills. Furthermore, without any qualifications, it would be difficult for Grant to find gainful employment that may contribute towards social inclusion. Grant's story, unfortunately reflects so many other young men's stories. Poor quality education, exclusionary curriculums and teaching practices has not adequately prepared marginalised children which then become youth, such as Grant. They are therefore not able to actively take their place as active and engaged citizens (CSTL, 2018). His education programme has not been able to prepare him to become economically active. The data from this study are further supported by Langenkamp's (2016:1-

2) study that argues that life transitions, or crucial turning points such as transferring between institutions in an individuals' educational trajectory, may put that learner at risk of disengaging from school and dropping out (Langenkamp, 2016:1-2). These transitions obviously negatively affected Grant as seen from his disengagement from learning and applying himself in the classroom even though he attended various institutions to continue his education.

In the next interview extract Cameron explains the reasons for his shifting from one institution to the next.

Interviewee: I was involved with gangsters, so my mommy said it's not safe for me to be there. So, she sent me there.

Interviewer: How old were you when she sent you there?

Interviewee: I was 13. I was there for three years.

Interviewer: So, you first went to a place in Woodstock for how long? Then you went to Salt River, then you came to the Circle.

Interviewee: Yes.

Interviewer: Um and then how was it different? Can you describe the first home? Maybe describe the first home then we'll go to the next.

Interviewee: The first home, um, I started knowing the people there, so I made myself comfortable. [Over] there, you wear your own clothes and they send you to outside schools and the second home is, I was kicked out of school – Mountain High. And I just, I just went to, everything went wrong there. So, they said, my social worker said, I have to come to a more secure place. That's when I came here. And I know most of these boys here from the previous house I've been [to].

Interviewer: OK, so what's the name of the previous home, the one in Woodstock?

Interviewee: Fred Garrison [Home].

Interviewer: And [in] Salt River?

Interviewee: Dream Centre (Cameron, Youth: 5)

Cameron was transferred from his school to a place of safety for safety reasons, as his life was threatened by the gang, he was involved in. One can observe two social fields directly affecting one another, namely the peers and institutions, which together are the reason for Cameron's transfer from institution to institution. Both social fields had a negative and positive effect on Cameron. The peers, who were his gang members, were a danger to him by engaging him in dangerous criminal activities, and the institutions were places of safety providing physical protection and assisting in continuing his education.

Cameron mentioned in his interview that he was still in contact with his gang members and continued to sell drugs while moving between different places of safety, where he continued selling drugs. He stopped these gang activities once his social worker convinced him that cutting ties with his gang was for his own protection. Sampson and Laub (2005, cited in Carson et al., 2017:3), argue that turning points, such as institutional transfers, facilitate 'knifing-off' negative past associations, as they open up new social networks and support structures and offer a change in routine, all of which facilitate identity

transformation. Institutional transfers, or school mobility, can therefore support desistance from gangs, facilitate personal growth, and offer a fresh start. Youths like Cameron also begin to become more self-reflective, integrate into a new peer structure, and create a new identity (Carson et al., 2017:3). The process of breaking away from gang peers following a school transition is commonly associated with building new friendships, but in this study by Carson et al. (2017) it is assumed that there are more pro-social peers at the new institutions than the older ones. However, the study of Carson et al. (2017:10, 14), which looks at the effect of social mobility on gang membership, did not consider the types of schools and institutions children/youth transfer to, such as specialised institutions in this case, where there are usually similar types of youth (gang members, drug addicts) who come together. The youth in the current study had experienced multiple school and institutional transitions, and some institutions may have specialised in working with youth at risk, which means that many of the youth may continue to be members of gangs and not detach from them. This implies there might not be many pro-social peers at these institutions, as assumed by the Carson et al. (2017:10, 14) study. However, youths such as Cameron are able to detach from previous negative associations. By the time Cameron moved to the Circle, none of his gang members were aware of his placement which is how Cameron ‘knifed off’ old ties and started working on his new identity.

What can be observed and deduced from this data is that children and youth who are at risk of entering the juvenile justice system have usually experienced several institutional transfers in order to find physical safety and to seek help for their emotional and educational needs. It is also clear that owing to these shifts, children and youth at risk form weak attachments to their schools, teachers, and even to their families. The research by Carson et al. (2017:15) shows that “school transitions do not produce systematic negative consequences on youth, and actually appear to produce a positive impact on factors associated with crime, deviance, and gang membership”. However, their study does not consider multiple transitions, as it only took into account normative and non-normative transitions, and not the number of transitions. Is therefore unclear from that study what effects multiple transitions have on young people. Dixon (2007:26), however, found that children and youth in care experience several moves similar to the findings in this study.

It is also important to highlight that institutional shifts and detachment constitute an outcome of the high-risk factors rather than acting as the cause of the youths’ state of risk. In other words, these youths were at risk before they moved to a new institution. Transfer students usually have behavioural issues and are at high risk of dropping out according to Langenkamp (2016:5). The change from institution to

institution may have been a means to resolve immediate and urgent problems faced by the youths (Free, 2008:6-7), but may have intentionally contributed to school and educational disengagement.

In addition, each institution serves its own purpose, has its own rules, norms and values, school climate, expectations, and informal school culture (Langenkamp, 2014:4). It may therefore be disorientating and unsettling for children and youths to adapt to these new settings over and over again, each transfer entailing forging new friendships and learning new rules. These transitions may therefore be a stressful experience due to facing an unfamiliar environment each time, and may lead to anxiety, feelings of insecurity, uncertainty, and a decline in school and academic involvement (Carson et al., 2017:5). Further negative outcomes of transfers include disruptions of family structure and established relationships, disruption of education and overall development, and shrinking social networks (Mayock et al., 2014:78; Carson et al., 2017:1-2). There is also the likelihood of less attachment and commitment to the school, criminal offences, and a higher chance of dropout (Carson et al., 2017:1-2).

In addition, Mayock et al. (2014:78) found in their study that the youths' schooling was disrupted by successive moves, resulting in interruptions in their relationships with family members and peers, creating feelings of insecurity (Mayock et al., 2014:79, 95). In addition, multiple placements may exacerbate existing behavioural problems or lead to behavioural problems for those children and youths who did not originally express or exhibit them. In the study done by Mayock et al. (2014), multiple placements had a negative effect on children and youths' ability to maintain a routine, which in turn affected their education and extra-curricular activities (Mayock et al., 2014:69-72).

Furthermore, Carson et al. (2017:4) argue that social mobility, such as school transfers, negatively affects social capital, that is, the social relationships that provide various benefits to a youth, such as information resources and a good social status. Youths tend to rely on them to a large extent as part of their social status and identity. Social mobility, in the study of Carson et al. (2017), refers to non-normative transition (the type of transfers demonstrated in the current study) and normative transition (expected and inevitable transition, such as primary to high school), both of which disrupt established relationships. Gangs are one such example of social relationships that are disrupted and school transfers can contribute to desistance and disengagement from gangs. Depending on the school or institution, the new social network changes the nature and landscape of social capital available to the youth. They may have access to a wider peer group, extramural activities, and Carson et al. (2017:4) also point out that several studies show that school transitions lead to less negative peer association and more support.

Langenkamp (2016:20) argues that transferring between institutions, or mobility, involves interacting with society's larger institutions, and may mean the loss of social solidarity and increased isolation, although this can be alleviated by institutional gatekeepers who can help the newcomer to adjust.

What can be ascertained from all the interviews with the youth and staff members of the Circle, is that the past institutional experiences of youths at the Circle were mostly negative. Children and youth who do not form a strong attachment to their school or teachers may place very little value on school, education, and a future career (Tiet et al., 2010:370, 373). For this reason, children and youths may become disengaged from school by playing truant, lagging behind academically, showing little cooperation and interest in the classroom, and eventually dropping out of school (Hancock & Zubrick, 2015:4-5). These were the risk factors that could be said to contribute towards their referral to the Circle.

To summarise this section on the risks found in previous institutional experiences, it seems that many mainstream schools and teachers are ill-equipped to address the various serious challenges which face children and youth, and which occur in their families and communities. Schools and teachers who are ill-equipped to address these challenges may not be able to prevent children and youth from dropping out of school, which, in the cases of the youths interviewed for the current study, led to their placement at many private and public specialised institutions, such as the Circle. The school, however, is not entirely to blame or responsible for children and youth entering a life of crime, as the theory of social learning states that family and communities do not in themselves lead youth to crime. Instead, it is the exposure to, and socialisation process children and youth engage in, in the course of which they observe the anti-social values and norms of those with whom they interact (Free, 2008:13-14), as well as their own decisions.

Furthermore, these multiple institutional transfers can have positive as well as negative outcomes for youths, such as the 'knifing off' of negative peer association, integrating into new peer groups, potentially gaining new social capital, and transforming their identities. Life transitions may negatively affect their academic trajectory as found by Langenkamp (2016:3). These transitions may cause many stresses and anxieties, and shrink their social network, and may also lead to disengagement from school and to dropping out. Strong attachment to the school and to friends, together with support and mentorship, may however, reduce school transfers by a large percentage (Langenkamp, 2016:15). In the next sub-theme, risks found in the family are discussed.

5.4 Risks Found in the Family

This section describes risk factors that stem from the family and which contributed to the interviewed youths being referred to the Circle. In this section the family relationships of some of the youths are described, focusing on risk factors within the family and how family relationships may have contributed to their risk-taking behaviour and eventual referral to the Circle. A few examples are presented.

In the first interview extract below, Jeremy describes the impact his grandfather's illness had on him. This is a unique case among the group of youth interviewed, and can be seen to have had both positive and negative outcomes:

Like the time my grandpa was sick, and no one actually could have looked after him, so I like, I saw something wasn't right then. I asked him, "Are you fine?" when I come out of school sometimes during the day and I wasn't actually going to school that time. Then I came home, and I asked him if he's fine and I see he just lays in bed. Then I see here something is not clicking, then, so I dropped out of school, also I stayed, stayed at home, looked after him a while. Then I go fetch his medication at the hospital, I dress him, I put him in his wheelchair then we take a walk; or I wash him or if there's any wounds on him clean it or so. You see, I was always helped him until he passed away [*sic*] (Jeremy, Youth: 50).

Jeremy describes how he took care of his grandfather before his grandfather passed away. There had been no one else to look after his grandfather so Jeremy dropped out of school in order to do so. Despite his own initiative in taking care of his grandfather, it could be argued that circumstances forced Jeremy to make this kind of decision. He may have felt obliged to take care of his grandfather even though it should not have been his responsibility. This is a huge burden for a child or youth to carry. This decision had a direct impact on his school attendance and eventually led to his dropping out of school at an early age. Despite his good intentions to take care of his grandfather, he was forced to terminate his schooling early, similar to other youths who do so to support their families financially (Western Cape Government, 2014:33). Interestingly, in his interview, Jeremy revealed that this experience sparked an interest in frail care, and in considering frail care as a possible career choice. He therefore applied and was accepted to do a course in home-based care, which the Circle had sponsored. He says,

You see, what I did now is I'm doing a course of home-based caring, like, the care I do is like nursing, seeing for the rights of the old people; see if somebody can't wash themselves, I would wash them. Or I'll clean them or clean around them for old people or for people who can't do anything for themselves. Because like, you get few young people in South Africa that still care about old people, you see? Cause you don't still get old people who can help themselves, you see? So, like I'm the kind of person who wants to be there for people that's older than me and just to *motiveer*[motivate] me with their knowledge (Jeremy, Youth: 76).

This experience had both a negative and positive impact on Jeremy. The experience, together with other factors, such as his friend, and selling drugs, caused him to drop out of school, but it also led to his discovering a new passion for caring for frail care. From this story, it can be inferred that Jeremy did not have much supervision and guidance, and while he may have had good intentions in caring for his grandfather, this was ultimately to his own detriment. Dropping out of school led to further exposure to risk and eventually led to his referral to the Circle.

In the next interview extract, Leonard describes his experience of domestic violence and the effect it had on him:

Interviewee: My mom and dad fought a lot; they argued a lot between the two of them.

Interviewer: Was there? – Sorry you can finish.

Interviewee: They argued a lot between each other and ...

Interviewer: OK, and was there any violence part of their arguing or not?

Interviewee: They, at one time, they argued, we finished eating and they argued, and so afterwards we walked out of the house, so I went back in, so I saw my dad hit my mom.

Interviewer: And that was the first time you saw this?

Interviewee: That I saw it, yes.

Interviewer: OK, and, did you – I just want to understand the timeline. Did you get involved in the gang before or after that?

Interviewee: After that (Leonard, Youth: 38).

Leonard's decision to join a gang was taken after his exposure to domestic violence. It seems that the attraction to join the gang was accentuated when he felt that he needed an escape from his reality at home. One could argue that violence in the home has the potential to lead to children's making high-risk decisions as a short-term solution to solve immediate problems as they provide short-term relief.

A study by Mayock et al. (2014:85) substantiates these findings and shows that children and youth may be exposed to risk when they experience conflict and violence in the home. Mayock et al. (2014:85) found that violence, abuse, and neglect in the home led to feelings of fear, anger, and a lack of trust in authority figures. These feelings weakened the participants' attachment to family and their ability to remain in unstable homes with lack of care. Children who have reported witnessing violence and abuse in the home have demonstrated a premature start to engaging not only in violent behaviour, but also in displaying antisocial behaviour (Souverein et al., 2015:14). From Leonard's description of his exposure to violence in his home, one could argue that domestic violence weakened his attachment to his family. The domestic violence in his family contributed to his decision to join a gang and so expose himself to even further risk, which eventually led to his referral to the Circle.

In the next extract, Jade, who was part of a gang, describes how his gang life affected his family.

My last words...the last time I saw him, that was on a Wednesday morning...that was the first or the second. No, that was the 31st of September, I saw him last...so I told him, "I'm going to kill you if I run away," but...nevertheless...I am regretting that moment. I'm still thinking of that moment... that I told him something...but...I'm regretting...something... I am regretting my words that I told him. Because I never knew that that was my last time, I am seeing him (Jade, Youth: 3).

Jade reflects on the last words he exchanged with his stepfather. Jade was not aware that that moment would be the last time he would ever be able to speak his stepfather. The cause of his stepfather's death was an assassination carried out by Jade's rival gang. In the interview, Jade describes how the rival gang had been looking for Jade and Jade's stepbrother, but because they could not find them, they murdered a close family member instead. Gangs often engage in revenge murders or counterattacks to repay a rival gang member back for actions against them. Jade committed a serious offence against his rival gang, and they repaid him by murdering his stepfather. Revenge killings on family members are very common occurrences in gang culture. Involvement in a gang therefore places an entire family at risk (Sharkey et al., 2017:71), as was the case with Jade. These events, along with other events and factors, all added to the eventual placement of Jade at the Circle.

Another common problem in society that puts families at risk, especially one that makes children and youth more vulnerable or at risk, is that of an absent father. This phenomenon has been called a 'social disaster' (Petersen, 2013:28). In the next extract from an interview with the centre manager of the institution, he claims that the circumstances in which many of the children and youth find themselves is due to the absence of a father figure in their lives:

A lot of where our kids sit is because of an absence of a father figure. That breakdown invariably leads to a fall out in school (Mark 2, Centre Manager: 28).

Many children and youth at the Circle do not know who their fathers are, seldom see their fathers, and have little or no relationship with their fathers, as described by the centre manager. According to the Sonke Gender Justice and the Human Science Research Council (Van den Berg & Makusha, 2018:29) and Freeks (2017:19), this is a widespread phenomenon in South Africa. Fathers play an important role in their child's development as they provide safety and security, and often provide for the basic needs of their children. They also play a very important mentorship role. If this gap is not filled, there may be detrimental effects on the child's development as well as feelings of resentment (Mayock et al.,

2014:82). A study by Brown (2013) highlights ten adverse outcomes for children from father absentee experiences: (1) perceived abandonment, (2) attachment issues, (3) child abuse, (4) childhood obesity, (5) criminal justice involvement, (6) gang involvement, (7) mental health issues, (8) poor school performance, (9) poverty and homelessness, and (10) substance use. Many of the children and youth at the Circle experience some, if not a substantial degree, of each of these outcomes. Fathers (in their various forms), or good parenting therefore play an important role in their child's development. The same could be argued for lack of, or absence of parenting, which is described in an extract from an interview with the social worker at the Circle:

They don't have behavioural problems; the issue is not with them [children and youth at risk], but the issue is the circumstances at home that the parents are not capable of taking care of them (Gabriella, Social Worker: 18).

From the social worker's perspective, the reason behind the children's behavioural issues stems from the parents not taking proper care of their children and from their dismal home conditions. She sees the children's behaviour as a response to their circumstances. Ideally, the family should be part of the rehabilitative process, which Gabriella facilitates as part of her role, and she hopes that the home circumstances should have improved by the time the child returns. If the circumstances at home have not improved, the progress and improvements made by the child or youth at the Circle are compromised and the likelihood of these being sustained is low. Gabriella is in no doubt that if parents are not able to take care of their children, they put their children at risk. Gabriella's views are substantiated by Luthar (2003:11) and Hoskins (2014:506), who are of the view that there is enough evidence to suggest that the quality parenting and family environment is where a child's behaviour is learned, developed, constrained, and revealed. Parents therefore play the role of shaping these behaviours and reducing risk through cohesion, involvement, rules and discipline (Luthar, 2003:13). While peers play a major socialisation role, parenting plays a key role. Parents, if they are not careful or caring, can contribute substantially towards their children being at high risk. They may also contribute to their children's being referred to institutions such as the Circle.

To summarise this section on risks found in the family, the family plays an integral role in influencing the state and level of risk and/or protection and well-being a child/youth may receive or experience. The family configuration for each child is unique and may not exist in the traditional nuclear form. The risk factors discussed in this section include health issues, domestic violence, gang violence and its effects on family members, absent fathers, and parents not being able to take care of their children. These risks have been shown to lead to youths encountering various risks to their development, such as school

dropout, as is the case with Jeremy, and risk-taking behaviour, such as that of Leonard, who joined a gang to escape domestic violence. Families, however, may also be placed at risk owing to the actions of their children, such as is the case with Jade.

There were various factors within the family that acted as risk factors that negatively affected the youths in this study. These included domestic violence, drug addiction of a family member, gangsterism, unemployment, poverty, and health issues. Many of the caregivers of these young people were reported to be unemployed or occupying low-paying jobs. There are some cases reported at the Circle of homelessness, where children are raised on the streets or in informal settlements.

However, families can also act as protective agents if they are healthy, supportive, caring, and stable. Research shows that the more community and social support available to young people, the less likely they are to engage in risk-taking and anti-social behaviour (Petersen, 2013:36). Parenting style has been found to be a protective factor in preventing vulnerability and supporting a child in successfully overcoming vulnerability (Crocker, 2000:5; Hoskins, 2014:506). All the above-mentioned risks contributed to the youths who were interviewed dropping out of school early, which, along with other events, led to their being referred to the Circle. In the next section, the risks found in the community and neighbourhoods in which the children, youth and their families are embedded, are discussed.

5.5 Risks Found in the Community

The communities and neighbourhoods from which the youths come have various risk factors within them. In this section the various risk factors, such as gangs, violence, and drugs found within the communities are discussed.

In the extract below, Dale, a former head of residential care at the Circle, describes the neighbourhoods which the youth at the centre are from:

And one can say our communities have been severely affected, you know, by the apartheid law of that time and our learners grew up in overcrowded homes and flats where fifty to sixty families, uh, uh, share, you know, one flat. And then you will see that, um, how these flats were, were so designed that it is basically impossible to say that "gangs would never flare up there" –Um, it's basically impossible to say that "our child would be safe", and "our child will go to school". Because what you find now is there's a fight, uh, a fight for territory among gangs in these flats. You look at places like Manenberg, Hanover Park, Bonteheuwel, um, to name but a few, Heideveld, Clarkes Estate. The fight for territory to control the drug flow, the drug trade has been severe in the past and even worse now because now they're starting to use our younger learners to

be what they call "the runners", "the sellers" starting to use them as the shooters, uh, to kill people (Dale, Former Head of Residential Care:9).

Several themes emerge from this extract. Firstly, Dale apportions blame to apartheid for the current state of marginalised communities, a common and continuing narrative in South Africa. These communities are arguably 'marginalised', owing to the low socio-economic (working class and unemployed) status of their members, poor housing and over-crowded conditions, lack of work and of development opportunities, all contended to be due to their shared histories. Most of these communities were formed during the forced removal period starting in the 1960s in order to segregate 'people of colour' from white people during apartheid (South African History Online, 2017b). The main communities and neighbourhoods from which some of the youths at the Circle originate are Retreat, Parkwood, Hanover Park, Manenberg, Kraaifontein, Atlantis, Lavender Hill, Heideveld, Kuils River, Nyanga, and Bonteheuwel. Similar social issues and phenomena are found across these marginalised communities such as gangs, easy access to drugs, the prevalence of violence, and widespread poverty. Similar social issues were found among Irish youth in a study conducted by Mayock et al. (2014: 95), the findings of which suggested that economic hardship and neighbourhoods characterised by deprivation, exposure to drugs and illegal activities put youths at similar risk.

These community structures and their infrastructures, due to their historical design and apartheid urban planning, together with current political will, may continue into the future and perpetuate conditions in which future generations of children and youth will be raised and fail to flourish. This means that the same kinds of high risks, and mutations thereof, will continue to exist for generations to come if there is not a concerted and effective intervention put in place to interrupt this destructive process. These factors within these communities have contributed to the youths in this study being exposed to gangs and drugs, which have contributed, after a series of events, to their eventual referral to the Circle.

In the next extract Jeremy describes his community:

Yeah, some kind of situation that's happening in the community, the community just – how can I say? Needs to be helped with positive things in the communities but there are lots of communities that you can see that is falling down, the youth also is falling down. The small children that needs to be helped. In the park children is not safe anymore – they get stabbed, children get sore, like, no one is there to protect them (Jeremy, Youth:21).

Jeremy describes the dismal conditions of his neighbourhood and suggests that it needs a positive intervention. He describes the children and youth as "falling down" or, in other words, falling through the cracks, and how their lives are in physical danger. In addition, many children, vulnerable to the

influence of gangs, join these gangs and carry out illegal activities under duress, or even willingly, sometimes being caught by the police, charged, and placed in institutions such as the Circle. There are multiple disadvantages for people, especially young people, in these communities, including poverty, and the lack of safety and recreational activities for children and youth. Some communities have more liquor stores than game shops, as was noted in a study by the Western Cape Government (2014:47).

These communities suffer from a lack of social cohesion which makes the collective efficacy ineffective in terms of controlling crime and violence, as proposed by social disorganisation theory (Petersen, 2013:14-15; Abrams & Terry, 2014:3). In essence, the conditions for human development, growth, and adjustment (Petersen, 2013:23) in these communities are not conducive to the overall well-being of their residents, especially for children and youth. In addition, violence in communities contributes towards psychological, behavioural and academic difficulties, thus leading to school disengagement (Luthar, 2003:394).

In the next extract from an interview with Jade, he describes and comments on the prevalent issue of gangs in such a community and his reasons for joining a gang:

I started to smoke with them in front of my house on the corner. And so, I went to the previous avenue. The road before our road. So, I've been smoking there also and drinking. And so, they told me, I must sell drugs. I thought I gonna make nice money, I *mos* gonna wear Nike jeans, Jordans and I'm gonna have money. I've done, I sell, in smuggling drugs. I made money. So, they said I should try to shoot gun. So, I did it because if I didn't want to shoot guns then they would shoot me through my knees. That is the only thing. Why I thought, OK, I must now do it. Because I still wanted to be on my own two feet. Stand, walk and run. That's what I wanted to do (Jade, Youth: 12).

Jade describes his interaction with gangsters in his community. Gangs and gangsters are on the doorsteps of many homes within marginalised communities, a similar situation to that described by Spergel (1992:127), who stated that gangs "become an institutionalised feature of some poverty communities". It is therefore hard to avoid or escape the influence gangs have within these communities. In Jade's case he was slowly lured into gangs through the allure of money, status, and even social capital (Western Cape Government, 2014:46-47). He was propositioned to sell drugs, which he agreed to because this was a way of earning money very quickly. Besides his initial attraction to the gang as a quick way of earning money, he was also threatened by the gang leaders to carry out orders. Fear was a strong factor in forcing him to execute the orders given to him by the gang leaders. Jade then decided to join the gang, despite the cost to his and his family's safety and well-being, which he discovered later when his stepfather was murdered. Jade was forced to do many alarming and dangerous things, such as selling

and smuggling drugs, and shooting people. Jade, in his interview, described how he only realised later that gang life did not do him any good, and that he had risked his life for ruthless people who did not care about him or his life. Jade's involvement in the gang led to more severe crimes, and these eventually led to his admission to the Circle.

Besides being lured by the promise of money, status, and power, and by being forced to do so, people, including young people, decide to join gangs after a thoughtful, reflective process. Gangs are able to provide economic capital, protection, fun, excitement, a form of social inclusion, respect, and admiration, and this pressure to join is not always perceived by those considering joining a gang as having malicious intent. People join gangs for some or all of these reasons. Gangs therefore provide "psychological, social and economic opportunities" (Western Cape Government, 2014:65) not offered by other members of a community, by a family, or by a social group that provides access to social capital and even respect (Carson et al., 2017:4). Young men may find this attractive, and it may also explain some of the reasons Leonard chose to join a gang. Gangs also provide protection as part of their *modus operandi*. Protection from rival gangs is provided without the necessary orders from the upper echelons of the gang. This forms part of the "brotherhood" and the protective nature of gangs. This means that gangsters avenge one another and are constantly in a state of counterattack (Hinsberger et al., 2016:1-2).

In the next extract, a teacher at the Circle describes life for youths after leaving the Circle to return to their communities:

There is some of the learners that won't make it outside, but then again, is it learner, when he's time is done here at the school, where he goes to, there's nothing for him outside there, there's nothing. There's no structures to help these learners, majority there is no structures, that's why you find some of these learners, they come back to the institution, because in society they can't cope out there, there is no-one to support them, because his support was here. And we prepare him for the outside world, but yet, there is no-one there of the outside world, to support or walk with him and that is bad (Philip, Teacher: 42).

After disengaging from the institution, it is difficult to know what kind of life awaits the youths in their respective communities, as Philip describes above. The problems surrounding post-institutional life are to do with returning to the communities that have not improved since they left; there are still no or few developmental, educational and employment opportunities awaiting them, especially for people who have not completed their basic education, such as the youths at the Circle. This lack of opportunities may put them at risk of relapsing into past behaviours such as those which accompany gang

involvement. During my fieldwork, there was a situation involving a recent alumnus who broke into the Circle and stole items because he could not find support networks or a job opportunity outside. Post-institutional life in these communities may therefore be challenging for the youths if they do not have the necessary family or other support structures.

To summarise this section, common risk factors found in the communities from which the youths at the Circle come are gangs, the lack of recreational, developmental, educational, and employment opportunities, and witnessing and experiencing violence, drugs, and poverty. These factors place children and youth at high risk of school disengagement, violent victimisation, institutionalisation, and even premature mortality. Many of these factors contributed to the youths' admission to the Circle.

5.6 Conclusion

To conclude, this chapter, through recording extracts from interviews and describing the various problems experienced by youths entering the Circle, attempted to answer the question: What are the risk factors experienced by the youth, found in previous institutions, the family, the communities/neighbourhoods and among their peers that contribute to their being referred to the child and youth care centre? In order to answer this question, a synopsis of the family and social backgrounds of seven youths who had been referred to the Circle was given in relation to these four areas. This description included the previous institutional experience of these youths, family life, community life, and the influence of their peers. In exploring each social field, I found both the accounts of the youths interviewed and the literature highlighted the interdependent and relational nature of these social fields. In addition, these social fields were found to be characterised by both risk and protective factors. The risk factors contributed to negative life outcomes, whereas the protective factors tended to assist in building resilience. The cumulative effect of these risks and protective factors, including individual agency, resulted in unique life outcomes for each youth, outcomes which directed their life's journey towards the Circle.

In addition, individual agency, such as poor decision making, together with individual disposition, all contribute to the state of risk of youths such as those interviewed. Structural factors, which the youths were not aware of, also played a role in influencing their decisions. Given the findings from the data, there were, however, extremely high-risk factors which contributed to their school disengagement,

institutionalisation, violent victimisation, and, for some of their peers and a family member, premature mortality.

From an analysis of the data, the risk factors emerging from firstly, the institutional experiences of these youths, include the educational system as a whole, ill-equipped schools where teachers were unable to address the life challenges facing their learners, and the porous boundaries between school and community, especially in marginalised communities. These were all found to contribute to school disengagement and dropout of some of these youths. These youths eventually went to other institutions to find safety and help which led in turn to several institutional shifts that included their transfer to the Circle. These shifts have had a combination of positive and negative outcomes for these youths, such as “knifing off” old gang ties, and a shrinking social network.

Secondly, the risk factors emerging from the family include health issues, domestic violence, weak attachment to family, youth and family involvement in gangs, and other factors, such as poverty and unemployment. Absent fathers and “bad” parenting may also put youth at risk, as is the case for many of the children and youth at the Circle.

Thirdly, the risk factors emerging from the communities from which these youths came include the lack of recreational, developmental, educational and employment opportunities in marginalised communities, the prevalence of gangs, membership of which is accompanied by drugs and violence, and also the relapse into old behaviours once the youth return to these institutions after disengaging from the Circle.

Finally, the risk factors stemming from peers were intertwined with these other social fields, such as having peers who were gang members and were selling and using drugs, and who were in marginalised communities. All these risk factors, combined and existing in dynamic ways, have contributed to the youths being at risk of school disengagement, even violent victimisation, and eventual institutionalisation at the Circle.

Given the conceptual framework of this study, a framework that illustrates the relationship between the background of the youth, and the norms, values and rules of the institutions they attend, as well as the experience of education received there, this chapter demonstrates how necessary it is for the institution and the teachers to be aware of the ways in which the adverse life experiences of many children and

youth living in marginalised communities lead to emotional and behavioural difficulties that prevent them from engaging in learning and integrating socially. The chapter also demonstrates the various psychological and emotional needs these youths have that require to be addressed before teachers at an institution such as the Circle engage in teaching them and these youths engage in learning. In order to address educational and social inclusion, it is therefore important to fully understand the learners and their backgrounds. Neglecting to do so could lead to both educational and social exclusion. In the next chapter, the Circle's institutional culture through its the rules, norms and values that contribute to the children and youth at the Circle experiencing educational and social inclusion are discussed.

CHAPTER SIX: The Institution's Rules, Norms and Values

6.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to answer the second research subsidiary question: How do the child and youth care centre's (the Circle's) rules, norms and values promote the social inclusion of children and youth at risk?

The themes discussed in this chapter are those that emerged from the data collected from three different interviews with the centre manager, nine teachers, three education support service staff members, three childcare workers from the Circle, as well as interviews with three government officials from the WCED. Other data sources included minutes of meetings, institutional documents, semi-structured observations, and informal conversations during a three-year period.

There are thus three main themes, framed by the conceptual framework that guided the analysis of the data and the structure of this chapter. It begins by discussing the first theme which centres on the institution's rules. This theme includes a discussion of the legal function and obligations of the institution, which are mandatory for the institution and for its actors to follow and comply with. The second theme is the institution's norms and centres on a discussion of how the moral and ethical obligations informing the various religions shape the thinking and behaviour of the actors, and how the 'least-restrictive' environment of the Circle creates a normative standard at the institution. The third theme is the institution's values, a theme which centres on the prevailing values and beliefs of the actors at the institution that shape their views of, and attitudes towards, the children/youth in their care and their work ethic. There are four sub-themes: the 'Circle of Courage', the value of reintegration, the value of care, and the value of family. These three main themes demonstrate the ways in which the institutional rules, norms and values facilitate social inclusion at the Circle. This chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

6.2 The Institution's Rules

This section describes and explains certain institutional regulative elements, such as the rules and policies at the Circle. Conceptually, these regulative elements are understood as elements enforced by law and often driven by fear, coercion, rules and policies (Powell, 2007:2; Bolfiková et al., 2012:89;

Palthe, 2014:61-62) which govern the operations and entities of any kind of institution, and the behaviours of its actors. In this section, an understanding of these regulative elements as they apply to the Circle is presented. In practice these regulative elements are the legal function and internal policies of the Circle.

6.2.1 Legal function and obligations

The Circle exists and functions mainly under two government and provincial departments – the DSD and the WCED – but fulfils legal obligations from an additional department – the Department of Justice and Constitutional Development (DOJ&CD). This inter-sectoral function of the institution sometimes causes confusion at the Circle, as there are expectations and laws that intersect and govern each department. A discussion of these laws and their practical implications for an institution such as the Circle are discussed in the following extract from an interview with Mark, the centre manager, who describes the complexity and confusion of having relationships with each department in terms of the practical application of legislation and policy:

So, I'm the Western Cape Education Department's representative and responsible for coordinating the educational programme, care programme and [I'm] also just facility management. My position technically is just as principal of the school um in the interim though um due to a variety of changes, we are a Youth Care Centre that is in service to the Department of Social Development and so whereas I am the principal of the school, I'm also centre manager of the broader complex. Um yes it sounds very confusing, but the past five years in terms of changing legislation and a whole host of things it has actually been very confusing at times. So currently I serve two masters (Mark 1, Centre Manager: 1).

Mark, the centre manager, explains this complexity of his position and the confusion that may arise because of the cross-cutting and inter-sectoral nature of the Circle. Mark has the role of both centre manager and principal. To contextualise the nature of the Circle: it has an inter-sectoral function as it functions as a child and youth care centre as described in the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005 (Children's Act) (similar to those institutions resorting under the DSD, but legally acts as a special school under the aegis of the WCED. This institution is therefore a special school for children and youth with 'emotional and behavioural barriers to learning', and therefore abides by all the national education legislation and policies (including White Paper 6 [Department of Basic Education, 2001]) pertaining to such an institution. Referral to the Circle is governed by the Children's Act, which is enforced by the Children's Court, which resorts under the DOJ&CD. Owing to the kinds of cases and children involved, the Circle works in conjunction with the DSD that executes the decision made by the court via institutions such as the Circle. An institution such as the Circle, therefore, is obliged to fulfil the requirements of the court

order granted by the Children's Court, a special court for children (those under the age of 18). This court deals with all matters pertaining to children who may be in conflict with the law or who are in need of care and protection (Department of Justice and Constitutional Development, 2018). The Circle is legally bound by law to provide for the residential, educational and therapeutic needs of 'children in need of care and protection'. The WCED is in charge of the educational provision, but owing to judgments made by the court, the Circle is currently under the aegis of the WCED. Thus, the Circle exists, and is regulated by, a legal system, various policies, and rules (Palthe, 2014:61). The existence of the Circle is upheld mainly by the Children's Act, in conjunction with other laws and policies governing schools in South Africa, such as the South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996.

Another factor that the court considers when making decisions on the future of these youths is separating them from the harsh circumstances that negatively impact the well-being of these children and youths. In the following extract from an interview with a government official, she was of the view that it is sometimes necessary to remove children from harsh and unpleasant living conditions clearly detrimental to their emotional, mental, and physical well-being. She believes it to be in the youths' best interest to be placed at an institution at least for a short period of time:

Knowing [the Circle], and what they do there, I realised this child needs to be removed from their parents' home because things at home are not supportive of his needs. The mainstream school is not equipped to deal with the challenges that this boy brings with him to school. And [it] would be the best interests of this little boy to perhaps just slot into a youth care centre for a while. That would be the high-level support that the kid needs to move from their home circumstances and their community context and placed within the shortest possible time in a youth care centre such as [the Circle]. And that is the aim of schools such as those – the shortest possible time to turn that child around and integrate him with his community again and then that would be the aim of the high risk of high-support level of intervention (Sarah, Government Official: 29)

Sarah assumes that a short period is enough to undo many negative behavioural patterns or unfavourable home circumstances. It has been argued that it is also unhelpful to remove children and youth from their parents for a long period of time. One finding of the research of Vanderhaar et al. (2014:16) is that once children enter these facilities, the likelihood is high that they will re-enter such facilities, as is observed from the reported findings in the previous chapter. These studies showed placement of a child or youth at risk at an alternative school to be ineffective in addressing the cause of the youth's admission, in addition to a lack of post-institutional planning.

There are some identity-related consequences of separating children from their families for long periods of time (Malatji & Dube, 2017:109). Separating children from their care givers, families and

communities at a young age may have serious implications that could have a lasting impact on the lives and relationships of the children/youth. Furthermore, the question arises of what happens if the family or community environment from which the child came does not change or improve? This may lead to further harm to the child. The obvious solution would be to continue to care for the child in the safety of an institution. Because of this course of action, there are certain deprivations that the child is likely to experience that only a caregiver, such as a parent, the family, and/or community can provide (Malatji & Dube, 2017:109). This is a sense of identity and cultural belonging. As an outcome of protracted stays at child and youth care centres, children have been found to experience a loss of cultural and language identity (Malatji & Dube, 2017:109). The staff at child and youth care centres have certain limitations due to their own experiences and cultural identities. In many cases, such staff are not culturally diverse. The identities and cultures of the staff may not be the same as those of the children they care for, and this could lead to cross-cultural misunderstanding and the needs of the children not being fully addressed. Therefore, the preservation of the culture/cultural background of children in these institutions is a challenge to be seriously considered. The consequences of children not being in touch with their culture, language, and heritage, and assimilating the culture of the institution, often make it difficult for them to later reintegrate into their communities (Malatji & Dube, 2017:112-114).

The therapeutic team at the Circle is also unable to produce significant changes in the child's behaviour without a long-term intervention. Often the children and youth coming to the Circle bring with them complex problems that need to be resolved over a period of at least two years. The staff at the Circle therefore face the difficult task not only of protecting and rehabilitating the child or youth, but also integrating him back into his family and community life (without the rehabilitation of the family having taken place) so as not to isolate him from family and community. A critique of therapeutic work with children and youth in general is that in order to sustain the small improvements made by and in the child or youth, it is necessary for the family members of the child to undergo a similar therapeutic intervention themselves, as evidence shows that this positively impacts the child's rehabilitation process and community reintegration (Roostenburg & Oliphant, 2012:46). In the absence of this concomitant family rehabilitation, the child or youth will return to the same circumstance that contributed to their behavioural problems in the first place.

According to neo-institutional theory, the Circle has a strong regulative element as its very existence and governance are determined by laws and policies. Its survival is also determined by the extent to which it abides by these laws and regulations. In a sense it is socially rewarded for executing these laws

by “legitimacy, survival and resources” (Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:7), a process described as isomorphism. As has been mentioned, the Circle adopts the norms, values, policies, strategies, and practices from these various government institutions. It does, however, develop its own permutations of these norms and values, as discussed later in this chapter. The adoption of ideas and practices that are not identical to, or do not strictly adhere to, those in the legislation are referred to as ‘translation’ (Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:21). The context in which the Circle applies these laws, policies, norms, and values creates a certain kind of institutional culture at the Circle, which is discussed in the rest of this chapter.

In the extract below a teacher explains what this inter-sectoral relationship may look like in practice at the Circle:

Actually, the departments, I would say it's like silos. Each work um independently, the justice, the kids come through the court. So, their main objective is you need to go back to school and you [the children and youth] need to complete your [their] schooling. So, then we have our social worker, and then we have to report to them also. They ask us for their reports and a report on how the child is faring, so then I also give a report, also from the teachers. So, then we send it and then she meets with the external social worker. And so, that is also to find out right, is it possible – is the child going to have his stay extended or is it coming to an end now because he's 18 um, then he's not under the Child Care Act anymore, but there are cases where we feel that the child is maybe at an FET college. And then he would still stay on here. So yes, there is that other integration with the Department of Justice and so on, but that works with the Education and Support Services that we have here (Teacher, Focus Group:14).

The teacher explains how the different actors at the Circle interact with the various government departments. The Circle is legally bound to fulfil the requirements of the court order granted by the Children's Court, which functions under the DOJ&CD, and therefore the provision of care and education for the children and youth is the institution's ultimate goal, and thus guides the roles, duties, practices, and actions of the staff. In this case, in order to ensure that the different actors fulfil their functions towards reaching this goal, reports on the progress of the children/youth are written and sent to the respective departments.

Since it is the obligation of the actors at the institution to fulfil their role and duties, the provision of care and protection (and education) is the main priority at the institution as inferred by the laws governing the Circle and its internal policies. Other areas such as academic and skills development seem to be less of a priority. (The implications of this prioritisation are discussed in depth in Chapter 7.) The way in which the Circle fulfils these various obligations is by developing an individual development plan for each child, which determines the focus and the kinds of interventions the child/youth will

receive. These development plans are evaluated periodically to adjust them and ensure that they are on track. Addressing the physiological, security, and affective needs of the children and youth is given precedence at the Circle, but it is also a prerequisite for addressing their needs for esteem and self-actualisation (which includes educational provision), according to Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs.

The Circle, by applying these laws, makes it clear that law and legal regulations play a prominent role not only in determining the kinds of work and processes carried out at the institution, but in determining and describing its very existence. The Circle is socially rewarded because it accepts the pressure and coercion and attempts to fulfil its obligations towards the various government departments (Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013:7). The Circle therefore has a strong regulative element according to neo-institutional theory, an element which also shapes the institutional ethos.

Furthermore, the Circle has developed its own internal policies to govern its internal operations and functioning. The Circle does not, however, possess in-depth and extensive school policies, such as a detailed and fixed disciplinary policy. The policies that do exist have very few descriptive lines of instructions or protocol for responding to certain situations. The succinct internal institutional policies do however give the Circle the flexibility to navigate through the expectations of different government departments and respond to unpredictable situations which often occur when working with children and youth at risk. The policies (and the paucity thereof), create an open and flexible environment to fulfil the Circle's main priorities, which are to provide care and protection for vulnerable children and youth to facilitate their social inclusion. The institution's norms are discussed under the next theme.

6.3 The Institution's Norms

Neo-institutional theory does not discuss where an institution's norms (and in fact, laws or values) may come from, or how these norms and values prescribe how things ought to be. In the case of the Circle, the data from the current study suggest that its norms were developed and came from the actors themselves. Normative elements include prescriptions, ethics, and moral obligations made legitimate by a system of morality (Powell, 2007:2; Bolfiková et al., 2012:89; Palthe, 2014:61-62), but not enforced. There are two kinds of normative elements that emerge from the data. The first is normative beliefs and behaviours inspired by religion, and the second is the normative views on how children/ youth should be treated at a child and youth care institution by being given the opportunity to move freely within the boundaries of the institution instead of being confined. These norms are discussed in this section.

6.3.1 Normative beliefs

Religion provides a normative element to the Circle's institutional culture and shapes the beliefs, values and behaviour of its actors. It is a vehicle to enforce moral discipline and provides a moral and ethical system which people may agree on and embody (Palthe, 2014:61). How these morals and ethics shape the practice of social inclusion at the institution, and how these beliefs guide the actions of those at the circle, are discussed.

In the extracts below, a staff member shares examples of how religious beliefs shape how they view and treat the children and youth at the institution and serve to encourage and affirm these young people and their worth:

The centre manager always tells them God doesn't make junk so remember that you are the best, the best that you can be (Lisa, Former Head of Academics: 29)

Remember you are not junk; you have a second chance; you were created in the image of God and we are all equal whether you are pink, white, or black. We are all equal (Lisa, Former Head of Academics: 41).

The centre manager plays an important leadership role in shaping the institution's normative values and culture. His particular view of children is anchored in his religion, and his view on the worth of the child has permeated to the rest of the staff, as is illustrated above by Lisa who echoes similar views. Many of the staff members have strong religious beliefs that drive their motives and shape their work ethic. There are a few prevailing beliefs about children and youth that guide how they should be treated at the Circle. These beliefs are that children (who have embarked upon risk-taking behaviour) are not junk, and that they deserve a second chance, are made in God's image, and are equal to other children. These beliefs, which are echoed among and firmly held by the rest of the staff members (as observed by the data), set a precedent for how children and youth should be viewed and treated at the Circle. These normative beliefs facilitate the social inclusion of the children and youth at the institution.

In the next extract a teacher expresses how his religion creates a normative element at the Circle.

I'm Islam [Muslim], but here's non-Muslim people here and other faiths here. And our interactions are wonderful. We'd sometimes just sit here and talk about what happened today... And then we'd talk and when we'd walk out here, we'd feel much better... Yesterday the lady was asking me, how do I survive it [working with the children and youth]. I said *ja*, through the grace of God and

through colleagues and through having a strong faith also. And I would go with my God and I would go to church, and when children misbehave, I don't have a problem getting up and getting them to sit up straight...No two days are the same. I personally believe that God has placed me here for a purpose (Teacher, Focus Group: 45).

This teacher, who follows the Islamic faith, described his interactions with those of other faiths. A situation where there are many teachers and staff members who are devout followers of different faiths could potentially cause conflict. But in this case, it actually promotes peace and collegiality. In the extract above, the teacher's faith seems to shape his thoughts and actions in terms of how he should behave and treat people. It therefore has a positive outcome for his relationships, work ethic, and how he treats the children and youth in his care. Religious beliefs, which are prevalent among the actors, therefore seem to play a strong role at the institution in guiding the moral beliefs and actions of the actors, and in how they should behave. These faiths shape the way staff and teachers think about their work as well as the way they view and treat the children and youth with whom they are working. Their beliefs also provide a normative standard for collegiality which influences the way the staff treat one another and the children/youth at the institution.

In summary, religious beliefs manifest in the informal and formal structures of the Circle, such as through church services hosted on the premises every Sunday, inviting a preacher to preach at assemblies on Fridays, the celebration of Christian and other religious holidays, and children and youth opening events and meetings such as sports days and fun days with prayer. In addition, all the food is prepared in a way that meets the relevant religious requirements. Religion therefore forms part of the normative element that highlights social obligation, responsibility, and duty. While Christianity has been and often is used as a tool of oppression, for example in the education system during apartheid (Van Eeden & Vermeulen, 2005:177), religion has been reframed in a more positive light at the Circle and the institution has adopted its positive norms that include people being viewed as having equal worth, as opposed to the ways in which some people were viewed and treated in a hierarchical and discriminatory way in the past. In this way, norms are used to create a socially inclusive environment for the staff and children/youth alike. In the next sub-theme, the freedom of movement as normative for state care is discussed.

6.3.2 The freedom of movement as normative for state care

The Circle prides itself in its "least-restrictive" approach, which means that children are not incarcerated behind bars and their movement is not highly restricted in comparison with children and youths at other

child and youth care institutions. In this section, how children and youth at risk should have the freedom to move, as advocated by the Circle, and how this promotes social inclusion, is discussed.

Mark, the centre manager (Centre Manager's Report, 1st term 2015) stated in an internal report that, "Incarcerated spaces imprison the mind."

What could be inferred from this statement is that physical space has a psychological impact (Murphy, 2016) on those inhabiting it, and that the architectural and infrastructural design of a structure influences how those who live in it feel. Incarcerated spaces create a hostile environment, whereas a "reclaimed" space is open, and conducive to human connectivity. The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (2008) argues that:

... The quality of buildings and spaces has a strong influence on the quality of people's lives. Decisions about the design, planning and management of places can enhance or restrict a sense of belonging. They can increase or reduce feelings of security, stretch or limit boundaries, promote or reduce mobility, and improve or damage health. They can remove real and imagined barriers between communities and foster understanding and generosity of spirit (Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, 2008:3).

This statement supports the norms as well as the quality of life that the Circle attempts to create in its space, and, as the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (2008:3-4) argues, the nature of a space(s) can also promote a sense of belonging. Mark, the centre manager, describes the importance of the centre in creating an environment that is not prison-like and does not marginalise and isolate the youth from the community:

There needs to be a seamless approach where our activities need to be more normative. Um and that our kids must not be seen to be placed in a prison type of environment. And that I must say has been amazing – our kids interact with the community through school participation through going on outings, hiking, going to beaches. Whereas in the previous dispensation they were always on the margins and not where many people are. You know. So that has made it so much easier for our children to be accepted more readily (Mark, 1:14).

Mark makes it explicit that rejecting the punitive approach, as well as a prison-like environment, and promoting the freedom to move, is a normative approach to their work and a reaction to the previous dispensation's restrictive approach to working with children and youth. The programmatic boundaries between the institution and its partner communities (those communities the Circle trusts and works with, and those trusted communities which the child/youth is part of) are therefore intentionally porous and, unlike the schools in the neighbourhoods from which many of the youth come, regularly monitored and positive, and mutually beneficial interaction occurs between the two. This is similar to how the meso-

system of the ecological framework is conceptualised (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) in which two or more social fields interact. This approach is used in order to promote the social inclusion of children and youth at the institution, so that they may be accepted more readily by their own trusted communities if there is regular interaction and trust.

This is in contrast to schools in marginalised neighbourhoods, which attempt – usually not very successfully, as has been described – to strengthen the boundaries between their school and dangerous elements of the community. The Circle intentionally and mindfully makes the boundaries more porous, whereas these schools strengthen their boundaries. The difference is due to the types of communities the children/youth are exposed to and whether they need to be protected from them. In the case of the Circle, the communities they expose the children/youth to are often pro-social and assist in their positive development. In addition, the Circle has more control over this process, owing to its location in a safe neighbourhood. In marginalised communities, schools may attempt to do the same, but are often overpowered by the anti-social and negative elements in surrounding neighbourhoods and may have less control than the Circle has. The following interview extracts describe the impact of this ‘open approach’ on some of the youths.

Jeremy and James described their reaction to the Circle when they arrived there for the first time:

I was just like, "It mustn't be like gates again behind bars that I am." Like when I came here, I saw the trees and the things here and outside. And I'm shocked! It's not like [Life Secure Care Centre] or [Hope House Secure Care Centre]. Then I'm like "There's no wires around the hostels" (Jeremy, Youth: 68).

In this extract it seems that Jeremy was expecting to be locked up behind prison bars and see a barbed-wire fence around the Circle, similar to the previous institutions to which he had been assigned. He was both relieved and pleasantly surprised to see the Circle's more openly designed structure and to experience a culture where children and youths can walk freely (although not unsupervised). Design elements, such as trees and animals, contribute to the therapeutic environment where children and youth can feel nurtured and secure. The building design and the freedom to move help children and youths not only to feel safe but also contribute towards feelings of being nurtured and cared for. Just as the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (2008) argued, the design and management of a building has the potential to enhance a sense of belonging. It can also contribute to the development and sustaining of a more equal and inclusive society. From the extract of the interview with Jeremy, one

can observe the impact the design of the Circle's building initially had on him and how it influenced the quality of the rest of his stay.

In the next extract James expresses his disapproval of the more restrictive institutions he had been to before coming to the Circle:

Interviewee: That place was like hell to me compared to this place, actually any other place. I think that is not the place for children to be. I think if children do something wrong, and know they must be punished, but I don't think in a manner like how that place is.

Interviewer: What did they do?

Interviewee: The manner in which the care workers worked with the children or I don't think it's fair towards the children. The children who are there don't speak English...so yeah, it's different. A whole lot different than people who have a viewpoint about life. It's way different on that side (James, Youth: 27).

James expresses his disapproval of the treatment of children at other institutions and believes strongly that children should not be treated in that way. He is of the view that the type of punishment that he experienced and that is inflicted upon children was neither appropriate nor effective. As a result of attending a different institution, James is able to distinguish between the different worldviews of disciplining children and, from this, develops his own views of what is acceptable and humane discipline and punishment. In comparison with this harsh disciplinary/punitive approach, the Circle follows a "least-restrictive" approach, as opposed to the "restrictive" approach mentioned by James, where the movement of inmates, food portions, leisure-time and interaction with various role-players at these institutions are restricted. Safety in a more restrictive institution relates to the safety of the community rather than the safety of the "institutionalised", who are the children and youths in this case. From the extract it can be inferred that the physical environment has a significant impact on the overall well-being of children and youth, as well as their feelings of social acceptance.

Dale, the former head of residential care, in an interview also expressed his disapproval at how children are treated at other institutions. He feels that those children are treated as "lepers in society" and perceives them as being "shoved into a corner where society cannot see them" (Dale, Former Head of Residential Care: 34). The staff members at the Circle therefore do as much as possible to expose their children and youth to pro-social and trusted communities and to integrate them as far as possible into these various community activities for them to be able to move freely and feel socially included as mentioned earlier. This forms part of assisting the children and youths' reintegration into society (which the staff at the Circle consider to be normative), so that after they have disengaged, reintegration into society does not involve a difficult transition.

The Circle is 'least restrictive' on the continuum of care (matching the individual to the level of need (Mallet & Boitel, 2015:5) in comparison with other child and youth care or secure care institutions. Secure care centres which are under the jurisdiction of the DSD are perceived to be more regulative and restrictive, rationalised as an effort to guarantee the safety of those involved, including the community. Some of the children and youth at the Circle who have attended these more restrictive institutions in the past describe vastly different experiences in comparison with their experience during their time at the Circle. The least restrictive approach of the Circle is both a response to and a critique of the more restrictive institutions that treat children and youth punitively. The Circle therefore offers an alternative way of working with children and youth at risk, one which focuses on restoration and reintegration.

In the next interview extract James goes on to describe in detail his first impression of the Circle when he arrived and his feelings of joy, elation and safety:

Interviewee: My first day, since we enter in from the gate – I was afraid... to see the security guards outside the gates. It was a place I thought I'd be locked up in again. We drove in. We arrived at the hostel. Um, I actually was surprised the first time, to see so many children. And there was a small gate, with the smallest lock attached. I just thought, but is this really the right place? I thought they were taking me to something like a jail. Until the sir told me, this is the place where I will be from now on. I froze for five minutes. So, I just sat there. Er, so I began to smile because I knew OK, something good came into my life ... I began to laugh. I began to laugh from my gut. The sir asked me why? All that I got from it [this experience] was [the feeling of] heaven. I went out and sat with the kids. There were animals on my right-hand side. On the left-hand side there were trees... On my left-hand side, there were trees. I sat for a few minutes. I looked at the animals. I looked at the trees. And I just sat there until the teacher called me and told me to fill in a form to say, this is exactly what is going to happen, and I just need to give my permission. I signed and the man that dropped me off signed as well. He greeted me and drove away. I felt safe and that feeling I'll never forget (James, Youth: 24).

James eloquently describes in detail his feelings of joy and amazement when he first arrived at the Circle. He was astonished by the small gate with its small lock, the many children, the trees, and the animals. It seems to have given him a lot of joy and relief, similar to Jeremy's first experience of the Circle. James was placed in a more restrictive child and youth care centre (known as a secure care centre) before he arrived at the Circle, where the institutional ethos followed a more restrictive approach. It seems that the previous state care institutions he had attended had had a dramatically negative affect on him. His reaction on seeing the Circle for the first time seems to have relieved the stress he was feeling and the prison-like environment he was anticipating. Being at the Circle since his arrival has therefore contributed to his being able to feel more socially included and accepted.

To summarise, Mark, the centre manager, believes that children and youth in need of care and protection should not be incarcerated as this contributes to and exacerbates their social exclusion. He, together with the rest of the staff, creates a physical environment conducive to safety, care, therapy, and ultimately to social inclusion. As the leader of the Circle, he does this by promoting a culture of least restriction, where children and youth may walk and move about freely. They do, however, remain supervised and are subjected to structure and routine. There are also fewer restrictions on the children and youths in terms of their interactions with one another, with staff members, and with members of the community. To promote positive community interaction (with the children's family, and the surrounding neighbourhood), the Circle organises opportunities such as fun days, and exposes the children/youth to positive and pro-social communities. The normative value of their having the freedom to move therefore contributes towards feelings of safety and social inclusion of the children and youths at the Circle. This way of working with children and youth also serves as a critique of the more punitive and restrictive approaches used at other institutions, including schools. In the next section, the institution's values are described and discussed.

6.4 The Institution's Values

The values of the institution can be understood in several ways. The values are what guide the motivations and actions of the actors in the Circle as it is the place on which they place the greatest importance. In addition, according to neo-institutional theory, it is the values, the cultural system, the beliefs, and the assumptions that guide the actions and behaviours of the actors. These beliefs and values are the cultural-cognitive elements of all institutions that regulate social interactions and behaviour (Powell, 2007:2; Bolfíková et al., 2012:89; Palthe, 2014:61-62). The findings from the data presented in this section highlight the ways in which the cultural-cognitive elements of the Circle manifest in the form of certain dominating values. These values emerged from the data in the form of the following themes: The Circle of Courage and its values, the value of reintegration, the value of care, and the value of family. Each sub-theme is discussed in turn.

6.4.1 The Circle of Courage and its values

The Circle has adopted a strength-based and positive youth development philosophy, called the Circle of Courage, designed specifically for children and youth at risk. The Circle of Courage's philosophy is embedded in all aspects of the programme provided by the institution in order to develop children and

youth in a positive way. The values of this philosophy and how it is used at the Circle are described and discussed in this section.

In the following extract from an interview with Mark, the centre manager, he describes in detail the value this philosophy has brought to the Circle.

So, the four ways is belonging; with belonging, the core area that goes with that is mastery. So, in a school, in a workshop – how to engage with the world outside; getting a skill set and then, independence. The idea is to connect to a community outside and then generosity – you need to be able to give. So being able to share – giving of yourself. So, it's a care approach which is much more developmental than the very punitive and very disconnected way of working with kids. The idea is to work with kids. So, all these different things need to work together. So, your curriculum, your outreach, your intervention when things go wrong. So Restorative Justice – connecting with the community outside. They all form part of an entire package. It is very difficult to work in one way as a stand-alone. There's got to be a greater level of integration. That's part of the challenges we had in arriving at this stage in the five years of tweaking the programme. It would appear as kids could do as they please. Like you'll refrain from staff to say, "But you know this kid gives me absolute beans but when I send him to you, we have a case conference about this kid so how does this help me?" And obviously there's a knee jerk to say he's done this wrong; this is what you've done to fix that and there the child is fixed, and he does that (Mark 3, Centre Manager: 34).

The Circle of Courage is a strength-based model that is designed to work with children who experience behavioural and emotional problems or who are at risk. Mark describes the model, its application, and resistance to its application at the Circle. He makes a few points which are, firstly, the philosophy consists of four quadrants in the form of a circle. The four quadrants are belonging (or attachment), mastery (or achievement), independence (or autonomy) and generosity (or altruism). These four values are similar to the "short-list of protective factors" (Luthar, 2003:14) which are attachment or close relationships, mastering developmental tasks, and others such as self-control and cognitive development. However, independence is hard to achieve for youth leaving care (Dickens, 2018:558) as advocated by the Circle of Courage, and instead, interdependence should be encouraged (Moodley et al., 2018:1)

Secondly, with this approach to child and youth development, its implementers need to be selfless as is inferred by the statement, "You need to give of yourself". This selflessness includes giving time, effort, and energy even when it is, or appears to be, difficult to do so.

Thirdly, the Circle of Courage uses a non-punitive approach to correct and address difficult behaviour, and to connect with the child to bring emotional healing. Alternative discipline approaches are therefore used. These are discussed further in the next chapter (Chapter 7).

Fourthly, this philosophy is integrative, holistic, and is used as a whole school approach that is embedded in the programmes at the Circle, as described by Mark. Everything that the staff hopes to achieve is guided by these four values mentioned above by Mark, when designing and implementing programmes.

Finally, Mark addresses the challenge of implementing a model such as this that appears to suggest that the children and youths are not facing the repercussions of their actions. This perception of the model has caused some resistance among some staff members towards the philosophy. Mark, the centre manager, fully supports the philosophy, which, in his leadership capacity, has a considerable influence on forming the institution's culture. Despite having some resistance, the Circle of Courage has gained momentum over the years, and it has proved to be a useful and sustaining tool in working with troubled children and youth.

In the next extract, Rambo, a childcare worker, describes the challenges children and youth face in their communities and how the Circle of Courage philosophy helps them overcome these:

And now if you look at the model [the Circle of Courage] that we are working with at the [Circle] youth care centre – the Circle of Courage. Then you can see a lot of our boys' circles are broken...Like, if you look in, in a sense of belonging...maybe they belong to gangs or they come out of houses where they were maybe, um, oppressed. And then one thing that you mustn't forget is a lot of them come from broken homes... So, if you look at the sense of, the sense of belonging in the Circle of Courage, um, um, one, a lot of them is missing that part. And, um, then if you look on the Circle of Courage, maybe "independence" – none of our boys can go out of this place and say they can go and walk alone this route. Because even the independence part of Circle of Courage is not [complete]... The mastering sense of belonging is [what] we try our best here at [The Circle] to let them master – something like mechanics or woodwork or arts and craft or spray painting or welding. We try to let them master a, a trade so they can earn money. And the last one – as they earn the money to do the "generosity" part... So, that is, we try to make that broken circle – we try to fill the gaps (Rambo, Childcare Worker: 10).

Rambo describes how the Circle of Courage is implemented and why it is necessary to use a philosophy such as the Circle of Courage when working with children and youth at risk. Rambo highlights how, with children and youth at risk, belonging is often the part of the child's Circle of Courage that is "broken" or not fulfilled. This often results in many cases in children and youth joining gangs in order to find a sense of belonging, as discussed in Chapter 5. Chapter 5 described the volatilities and unmet needs in family life many of the youth face within non-traditional family configurations, such as having both adoptive and biological parents, and having to confront and/or experience domestic violence. This leads them to find belonging in spaces other than in the family, such as in gangs. The Circle therefore

creates opportunities for the children and youth to experience a sense of belonging, such as reintegrating them into trusted and pro-social communities who partner with the Circle (see Section 5.4.2) to create a sense of family (see Section 5.4.4). Other than belonging, independence, mastery and generosity, there are also other areas in which the children and youth need to develop. The Circle tries to ensure that the youth in their care develop in those areas, such as mastering a skill (discussed in detail in Chapter 7), developing independence, and becoming more generous by giving back to their families and communities.

In the following extract Jeremy describes how important the Circle of Courage is to him as a youth:

See, the Circle of Courage, it's actually a huge thing ... Like I was very, um, how can I say? How can I say now? I was very, uh, shocked to see, like on the paper how Circle of Courage works ... how do you do it and what you can do to people to help people. And the, the choices you make in life, it's like you must live the life that you need to live positive[ly]. Like if you look back to wrong things your life would be going back, you see. And you won't get further, how can I say? *Motiveerings* [motivation] in life, like, if you live a positive life, you look forward in life and people will help you and you will be able to help yourself (Jeremy, Youth: 46).

Jeremy describes the ways in which the Circle of Courage has impacted his life positively. He refers to it as a “huge thing”. After experiencing many disappointments and challenges, he discovered that the philosophy was able to motivate him to live positively. He is impressed by how the Circle of Courage works, how it is future oriented, and how it can be used to help people make better decisions and live positively. It seems that the Circle of Courage has had a positive impact on him.

In addition, the data showed the youth interviewed indicating that their greatest needs are affective and relational, meaning that care, love, affection, connectivity, attachment, and belonging became more salient in comparison with all their other needs. This model or philosophy of positive youth development is therefore highly suitable for children and youth, such as Jeremy. Other positive youth development models, similar to the Circle of Courage, have also been shown to have a positive impact on youth behaviour such as the ones described in studies done by Espiner and Guild (2010: 21-25) and Brentro et al. (2014:13).

To summarise this section, the Circle of Courage and its four values have been shown to be a useful tool in healing and developing children and youth at risk. At the Circle the belief in the positive impact of the philosophy is held by the centre manager, who leads the institution and shapes its culture. The philosophy is therefore implemented by embedding it in all the aspects of the programmes offered at the

Circle. Rambo also stated how important this philosophy is for the children and youth at the centre, and Jeremy shared his experience of the positive impact this philosophy has had on him. The culture at the Circle is therefore substantially shaped by the values advocated by the Circle of Courage.

Furthermore, Van Bockern and McDonald (2012:14) argue that schools or institutions that do not meet these four needs presented by the Circle of Courage often develop a toxic environment for children, resulting in their being unable to flourish. Education at these institutions instead becomes narrowly focused on test scores rather than on relationship building, shared responsibility, and the joy of learning (Van Bockern, 2014:15).

In addition, Levin (cited in Crocker, 2000:36), argued that schools can be both a solution and a problem. Schools can behave as protective agents and have the potential to solve certain social problems and he acknowledges that a systems approach is needed to address these issues. Levin (cited in Crocker, 2000:36) described the many needs to be considered: “We are all caught in an ecology all of which [many] needs have to be considered at the same time”. He argued that it is therefore not just the needs of the children that should be considered but also those of the family and community. Mark, the centre manager, therefore, promotes a holistic and integrated education at the Circle in order to achieve this holistic outcome. This aim is also the reason for understanding the backgrounds of children and youth at risk, as discussed in Chapter 5. The next sub-theme discusses the value of reintegration in the healing and future of the children and youth at the Circle.

6.4.2 The value of reintegration

Reintegration into the family and community is a necessary step for social inclusion. This section discusses how the Circle attempts to include the children and youth in its care in their communities and families, and the challenges which accompany this.

In an extract from an interview with Faye, his occupational therapist at the Circle, she expresses her view of the need for a holistic disengagement programme that would help prepare youth before they leave the Circle, and describes how she went about researching and developing this:

I felt that there was a need for a specific programme to prepare these kids for when they go back into the community. So, one of the first things that I have done was I had a session with them. [To find out] what they think they need to prepare themselves [for] when they leave here. They would come up with aspects like teach them how to do a CV. How does an interview work and [they]

come up with certain [ideas]? And that information I took, and I went and observed and asked people in the hostel again. Do you know what you think this kid needs assistance with – and just get a holistic aspect of what is it that will be most beneficial for them. Then I'd also look at the holiday feedback over the times that they've been here. What has it seen? You know, if we're in contact with family, what do the family feel?" (Faye, Occupational Therapist: 35).

In order to prepare the children for life after the Circle, the occupational therapist (OT) developed a specific programme called 'The Disengagement Programme' for those leaving the institution. This is a bridging programme that helps the youth to cope with the various challenges they may encounter while becoming independent adults, and for life outside the institution. She developed it after realising the need for the youth to be adequately prepared to live life independently and productively once they leave the institution. She chose topics to include in the programme by speaking to various people, including the childcare workers, heads of residential care, the teachers, the family, and the youths themselves, in order to find out what the youth need to know and to explore, and the particular skills that would benefit them after leaving the Circle. A variety of topics were identified, including drawing up a budget, cooking, developing and managing relationships, CV writing, and interviewing skills.

Home visits are one way the Circle assists the children and youth to feel connected to their homes, families, and communities. The following extract from an interview with the social worker at the Circle addresses the risks and fears families with children at the Circle raise during home visits, even though these visits are very necessary:

I pick up that the family is so fearful that when a child, in some cases, the children, are referred to the centre, after not attending school, maybe being involved in gangsterism, abusing all sorts of substances, and when the child comes to the centre, there is now a change in the behaviour of the child, he is now attending school – the family doesn't have to worry about the child coming in later at night, um, because of the area they live in and the high rate of gangsterism, and substance abuse, etc. So, after the two years when we have a meeting with the social worker again and the family, that is most of the time, the fear, if the child is under the age of 18 still. That is the fear of the family, that this child is doing so well, now. "I don't want my son to come back home, and what if he falls back into drugs again, gangsters, not attending school, because from here, a mainstream school will not easily accept the child back." So, if the child can't go back to school, what is he, and he's still 15 years old, what is he going to do all day at home. So that is the argument of the family. So, they request – the child needs to stay here a bit longer (Gabriella, Social Worker: 22).

Gabriella describes how she notices that some families are afraid that the child will relapse into their old behaviours when they return home. Once the child has been at the institution for the full duration of the court order, which is usually two years, a panel is convened comprising the family, together with some professionals, in order to make a decision on the child's/youth's future. Besides the fear of the

child/youth relapsing when back in his community, there is also little chance that the child/youth will be accepted into an ordinary school and will cope with the standard curriculum (see Section 7.3). If the child is under the age of 18, the families usually prefer to extend the court order so that the child/ youth can stay at the institution for longer and sustain the positive changes he has made (as opposed to relapsing into the old behavioural patterns described by Gabriella). Home visits are important for social inclusion as family involvement affects youths positively in the rehabilitation and reintegration process (Roestenburg & Oliphant, 2012:46), but there are sometimes considerably more risks than protective factors in the cases of many children/youth at the Circle, as the family, community, or peers may pose a danger (Romero et al., 2018:1). As much as there are protective factors associated with family and community integration, there are also risk factors, especially in the case of the children and youth at the Circle. It is therefore up to the social worker and the family to use their judgement in deciding how best to provide protection for the young person and support him in maintaining connections with those at home, and the family with him.

Becoming independent and self-sufficient after living at the Circle for many years is very challenging for many youths, especially at such a young age, and with very little support. What happens to some of these youth is discussed in the next extract from an interview with a teacher at the Circle:

Interviewer: May I ask, what happens to some of the learners after they leave [the Circle]?

Interviewee: Look, to be honest with you, quite a few end up again in prison. And it's actually sad, because, like I said to you before, there are no structures in place, these boys go look for a work and no-one wants to give him, because the first thing they see, where does the boy come from? [The Circle], right where was he before [the Circle]? How did he get to [the Circle]? Via the court, c'mon. And I think that needs to be changed also. That needs to be changed" (Philip, Teacher: 35).

Philip, a teacher, admits that he is not sure where the graduates and alumni of the Circle end up, especially since the Circle does not have a formal tracking system. He, however, knows of a few who end up in prison. This may be due to many reasons which can only be inferred. One reason could be that the court order, for many of the children and youth, lasts for up to two years at a time. Owing to the brevity of this period, the interventions may not have been effective in influencing a sustained positive behavioural change within that period. Another reason could be that there are many structural and social factors that play a role in influencing their decision making and may play a stronger role in influencing their decisions in the wrong direction. These, however, are inferences and speculative, and cannot be confirmed. Philip highlights that finding employment for these youths is very difficult because of the stigma attached to where they come from, and to their having attended institutions such as the Circle. Life outside the institution is therefore very difficult for these youths, especially given the scarcity of

social support they receive. Experiencing social inclusion outside of the Circle for these youths is therefore often impossible owing to the stigma attached to their past and to the institutions they have attended. Philip therefore suggests that structures need to put in place to support such young people as well as to educate them and to change the attitudes of prospective employers. This is, however, to date, not the role of the Circle as their mandate and resources are meant to focus on those youths who are currently at the Circle and thus limited in this regard.

The following extracts from interviews with a childcare worker and teachers at the Circle and a government official at the WCED describe the various challenges of reintegrating youth into their communities:

Um it's like teaching kids how to swim without taking them back to the community pools. You teach them the theory of swimming at the school and you expect them to swim in pools outside the community and you've never actually taken them there. To mentor them to show them how their bodies respond to water, how they're going to panic when they're overwhelmed. And these are all symbols that represent the challenge and the newness in the ability to learn a new skill. So, it's like mentoring the child through integrating them back into the community. We don't expect to let it work every time. Sometimes it doesn't work. It's a journey that we feel we want to give you and hope that momentum carries the kids through. And sometimes it's exciting, sometimes it's sexy, sometimes it's interesting, but most times it's challenging. Most times you realise, we've got to model responsibility to these kids, and we've made mistakes in the past. We're going to take a chance on your behalf irrespective, but then what are you modelling to that child, when you jump out and run into a shebeen?¹³ You're saying, it's OK for you to do it when we are gone. Do the same thing that we do... so when we interact, we've taken almost a decision – OK, let's tone down the outreach and model a more reasonable approach in the outreach (Solomon, Childcare Worker: 8).

Solomon has a very sobering view of reintegrating children and youth into the community and of their acquiring a new skill. He describes the process of reintegrating youth using the analogy of learning to swim. Learning the theory of swimming is very different from learning the practice of swimming. Thus, if one learns about how one should behave and how to respond to situations in a productive way without getting a chance to practise it, this will remain an abstract concept. The institution therefore allows the children and youth to visit their homes and communities often, as mentioned in the previous quotes, so that they have an opportunity to apply all the lessons they have learned at the Circle, and to learn new

¹³Shebeens, alternative to pubs and bars are located in townships (Mkize, 2012).

lessons learnt from these experiences by both young people and the staff at the Circle. Solomon describes this: sometimes there is success and sometimes there is total failure. However, the staff are willing to learn, support, and mentor the child/youth through the process despite its challenges.

The second extract addresses the challenges the families and communities present to reintegration from the perspective of a provincial education department official:

Let's take [the Circle]. The child is sentenced to [the Circle] as a child at risk. What guarantees do we have that every system that failed them in the community will be in place when they are released from [the Circle]? There is no repatriation work done, there's no reconstruction work within the family; let's say the child arrives there because, if we unpack it, we discover that what caused it was a dysfunctional family. Where's the external case manager? Who's monitoring the necessary rehabilitation reconstruction and repatriation that needs to take place for the child to be released from [the Circle] and go back into society? Therein lies the biggest deficit when working with children at risk (Tony, Government Official: 16).

Tony, a government official at the WCED, speaks about the challenges with reintegration that beg the question, what and with whom are the youth being reintegrated? From this question, the challenge for the staff at the Circle can be seen in terms of the time and energy invested in the development of the children and youth, and the attempts made to improve their behaviour at the Circle may not pay off once they return to their families and communities, owing to the many pre-existing triggers that may lead to their relapse. These are therefore some of the concerns the caregivers may have, and why they request that court orders be extended (as seen in earlier in Section 6.4.2 in an interview extract with the social worker).

Furthermore, in many cases, the family members and community have not been sufficiently prepared and equipped to receive the child or youth once they have disengaged from the Circle, or from other similar institutions. The family often remains un-rehabilitated, especially those family members who suffer from addictions, aggression, anger issues, or who may not have received assistance while living in poverty. In these cases, there is a high possibility that when returning the child to the family, old and negative behavioural patterns will be triggered and revisited, thus negating the progress made. The families and communities that the youth are being reintegrated into are sometimes problematic and may be representative of structural issues which inevitably hinder attempts at social inclusion. The families and communities therefore need as much time invested in them to improve as the children and youth do, as recommended by Tony, the WCED official.

Another attempt to assist the process of reintegration that the Circle makes is in the form of finding a job for the youth, as described in the following extracts from an interview with a teacher, and a comment made during a focus-group discussion with teachers at the Circle:

We had a few around in the area. They would travel from their areas to come here to work in those job placements. Some of them would drop out – as soon as they finish with the school, they would drop out of that job placement and continue with their, with their activities outside (Gordon, Teacher: 59)

We've got certain skills partners here on the premises. So we would, if a boy can fulfil [the job], and he's mature enough, we will put him in a programme where he works at a particular place and gets a stipend and in this way we also prepare [him] (Teachers, Focus Group: 29).

Gordon, a teacher at the Circle, describes how the Circle attempts to find the kinds of study or work opportunities for the youth that align with their interests and skills as a means of meeting their basic needs and living expenses. The Circle makes every effort to find the best opportunities for the youth so that they do not experience social exclusion. The problem with work placement after disengagement, however, is that the youth are not always sufficiently qualified, skilled, knowledgeable, and equipped to become fully independent adults, especially if there is very little social and financial support. These opportunities are more developmental than being permanent and sufficient sources of income. Thus, the problem is that these jobs are not enough to pay for all of their expenses, which puts them at risk of returning to bad habits or criminal activities to meet their basic needs and living expenses necessary for them to be self-sufficient.

There may be other developmental areas that the youth still need to be guided through before they enter the world of work. A teacher shared an example of a youth who received a work placement and a stipend. He then asked the employer in a disrespectful manner to increase his payment. The youth in that case had obviously not developed the professional and interpersonal skills and the work ethic to understand the difference between appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. The employer responded by stating that he was not responsible for teaching the youth discipline, but responsible only for teaching him how to work. The teacher then realised that the teachers at the Circle had not adequately prepared the youth for the outside world, especially in terms of communication and professional skills. The teacher expressed very little hope for the youth outside of the Circle as there are few opportunities for young people with few skills, including communication skills, and no qualifications. In general, becoming financially independent at the age of 18 if one has low or few qualifications is very difficult in the current economic conditions in South Africa, given that the youth unemployment rate was 54.70% in 2018 (Trading

Economic, 2019). Economic and social inclusion therefore constitutes a challenge for children and youth at risk who do not have the appropriate support.

In summary, reintegration forms part of the attempts at social inclusion of youth at risk who are and have been in a place of care such as the Circle. Schools and institutions that do not attempt to reintegrate children and youth stand to be responsible for their further exclusion. However, it seems that attempts at reintegration are highly valued and regularly implemented at the Circle. King (cited in Crocker, 2000:33), argues that structural issues of inclusion should be dealt with in the home first, and that parents are key to addressing this issue. The Circle therefore arranges regular home visits so that the child and youth are not disconnected from their families. The Circle also makes sure the children and youth visit their homes often enough, by arranging weekend and holiday home visits so that community engagement, involvement, and integration do not become an unfamiliar experience, and the child/youth does not become estranged from his family and community. Mark, the centre manager, calls this a “fluid model of community”, and he and others acknowledge that when a child engages with the family and community, the possibility exists that there will be both positive and negative outcomes. There is the risk that there may be times when the child returns to old behavioural patterns, but also times when things go smoothly, and the child makes an independent and conscious choice not to return to his negative, harmful peers and old behaviours.

There are also the issues of structural and socio-environmental problems beyond the institution’s control that undermine the effectiveness and sustainability of attempts to positively reintegrate children and youth into society. In some cases, living outside of the Circle places the youth at more risk as they are much older than they were before they came to the Circle, and cannot get the same support and opportunities they did when they were younger, nor can they compete in the job market. Without proper attempts at reintegration, social exclusion may be perpetuated. In the next section, the value of care is discussed.

6.4.3 The value of care

Care is a term regularly used and applied at the Circle, since essentially the children and youth are in need of care and protection. The value of care is legislated, but it is also a lived and embodied value at the Circle. This section discusses what care looks like in, and how it translates into, practice, and how it contributes to social inclusion.

This excerpt from the centre manager's report highlights the value of care for the Circle:

That is why, when working with troubled young people, one has to be guided by an inner compass that puts practice, passion, and care at the very heart of a delivery model meant to positively impact on young lives. In such a sector, where the realities are invariably disquieting, what is doggedly required is a firm commitment to a standard of care and practice that embeds worth and belief through practitioner engagement. While the challenges in the sector are immense, so too are the opportunities to ensure that every child matter, and that all young people prosper. To paraphrase Uri Bronfenbrenner, for a child to feel worthy all he/she really needs is for one adult to be crazy about him/her (Centre Manager's Report, June 2015).

The centre manager sees care as one of the values at the heart of the service delivered to the children and youth at the Circle. The standard and practice of care should embed worth and belief in every engagement with the child/youth. The centre manager also describes the immense challenges presented in the sector, which he does not explain in detail, but says that despite these challenges, he sees the opportunities that arise to show the children/youth how valuable they are. One important lesson according to the centre manager is the importance of adults paying close attention to children, and a child having at least *one adult to be crazy about him/her*. This is supported by Luthar (2003:544), who found that resilient adaptation depends on having good relationships, and in the case of children, having at least one supportive adult will help the child develop effective coping skills. Adult–children relationships are vitally important in providing the child with a sense of security, guidance, and self-belief. Relational engagement and attachment assist in treating complex trauma in children and youth (Kinniburgh et al., 2017).

In this extract from an interview, Mark elaborates on what care means in practice:

These things are not legislated for, but it's the value add that you need to give when you have a centre like this, so that there is a deeper commitment to the well-being and reintegration of the child. Yes, there's a professional responsibility where you can't bleed and cry with a child as a professional person. But you need to feel, you need to care, you need to love. And our centre must be littered with random acts of kindness. A kind word – my God. Knowing you by name... Not, "YOU, there – boy, *laaitie* [lad] – *dinges*[thingy]". If you don't know me how can you care about me? We do not confer value on a child by giving him a certificate. A child feels that. He connects to that. Now we are not all perfectly formed human beings. We all are frail. We all have our challenges. But you need to give in order that this child may live a kind different life (Mark 1, Centre Manager: 39).

These words shared by Mark represent care in various forms. Care, which is a strong and central value at the Circle, may be reflected and manifested in many ways, such as first, a deep love for the children and youth. He says that there are no "rules" or laws for loving, a sentiment he expresses by saying that

“these things are not legislated for”. Second, care also manifests as kindness, and random acts of kindness are encouraged at the institution. Third, care acknowledges and affirms the child/youth and makes it clear that he is not just another number, but a unique person with a name, worthy of recognition and acknowledgment. The child/youth is not a *dinges* – a thing of no value that is disposable. Fourth, care stems from a “deeper commitment to the well-being and reintegration of the child”. Mark says that “a child feels that” – meaning that the child can feel when he is cared for, loved, and valued. When a child feels that kind of love, the process of the child’s learning to love and accept himself is facilitated. Finally, care allows the children/youth to experience a “different life” from what they are used to (see Chapter 5). Problems with such care may arise when the professional boundary becomes blurred. Coady (2014:79) suggests “relationship boundary decisions [in professional care] are influenced by a wide range of factors and do not support the idea that there are, or can be, clear boundary positions delineating the limits of professional behaviour”. It is therefore up to the professional’s discretion as to what is appropriate and to be held accountable. Care as a value and practice, if carried out professionally, is therefore important in contributing not only to the fulfilment of the court order, but also towards social inclusion.

Sometimes there are instances when children/youth do not feel cared for. Such an instance is described by Mark in this interview extract:

He ran away here once, [----] and his team went out. They went to go look for him, they hunted for him, they found him, they brought him back. And what was his story? That nobody cares, nobody makes an effort (Mark 2,¹⁴ Centre Manager: 26).

Mark mentioned in an earlier interview that human beings are frail and imperfect, and therefore the staff do not always practise care to perfection. There are therefore instances that may cause children/youth to run away because they do not feel cared for. Like the one mentioned in the above extract, there were a few cases of children and youth absconding from the Circle for different reasons, including not feeling cared for. There may be cases when children/youth feel neglected despite the staff’s collective effort to create a nurturing place of care. Nevertheless, in the instance described by Mark, the staff members

¹⁴Three different interviews were conducted with Mark. This number refers to the second interview.

searched exhaustively until they found this child in order to demonstrate how much they cared about him. It is therefore important that the staff members make every effort to connect with each child to ensure that each child feels that care.

To summarise this section, care is one of the highest values legislated for at the Circle. It entails acts of love, kindness, acknowledgement, and using children's/youth's names at all times. It is important for the staff to connect with each and every child/youth, otherwise these young people may feel neglected and this may lead to absconding. In addition, while showing care in various forms, it is important at the Circle to maintain the boundary between professionalism and care as that line could easily be blurred. It is therefore up to the professionals' discretion to determine if their care may be perceived inappropriately. Care is ultimately about being aware of the needs of the child/youth and being able to meet these to the best of the professional's ability. If children/youth feel cared for they will remain in the caring community which fosters a sense of inclusion. In the next section, the value of family is discussed.

6.4.4 The value of family

Since children and youth have been removed from, and live apart from their families, the staff at the Circle attempts to fulfil the role of the family. This is also an attempt to create a sense of belonging, and to provide mentorship and guidance. In this section, the value of family and how it contributes to creating social inclusion is discussed.

In the first extract from an interview with a teacher at the Circle, a sense of family, which is meant to create a sense of belonging as advocated as one of the values of the Circle of Courage (see Section 5.4.1), is created by the teacher in his classroom, as described in this extract:

When we come in here, we are a family here. Whatever happened outside, we're a family here. We treat one another with respect, and I want them to respect me so I must respect them. So, we treat one another with respect, and this is how we operate here, and that's why we know, we know already tomorrow when they come in here, they going to clean up this workshop, you know. So, if there's a lot of dirt, like the cutting, then they know they have to pick it up before they leave the workshop. So yes, it is, I would say that is the norm. That is the norm. That is what we want to have here. We don't want to bring the problems in here. We focus on our things (Adam, Teacher: 20).

Adam describes how he views the institutional community. He sees the children/youth (including the staff) as a family. In a family context, everyone has ownership, and the upkeep, maintenance and

cleanliness of the workshop are the responsibility of all the family members – who include the children and youth. Adam therefore teaches the children/youth their responsibilities as family members. Adam also emphasises the importance of respect within a family, as it plays an important role in guiding the interactions between the teacher and their children/youth. The teacher believes that he must first model and demonstrate respect before he receives it. It is therefore earned by the children/youth rather than expected or taken for granted. He therefore initiates respect and hopes that it will be reciprocated. I have observed Adam's class and have seen how the children and youth cooperate and respect Adam during and outside his workshop. The children and youth have a good relationship with Adam, which comes from his work ethic, and from the care and the values he instils in them. Adam, therefore, through creating the feeling of being part of a family, creates a sense of social inclusion within his workshop.

In a focus-group discussion, a teacher speaks about the different activities they have instituted at the Circle that help create the feeling associated with being part of a healthy family:

We try to make it a home. Like when it's a child's birthday we will highlight it on a Friday in the hall; we give him a present. Even we'll have a little braai in the hostel where he is. Now we even take him home for the weekend or we will take him home for a couple of hours where he can celebrate his birthday with his parents, that type of thing. So, all these types of things we try and do to make life easier for everyone at our institution. That is beside us, what we are doing within the classroom situation. Taking them on excursions like. I mean like, we have more braais at the school for our kids than they have ever had in their whole life, you know. So, when they come here and we partake in those kinds of things, it's a family thing. It's not just a braai for them. We all sit around the fire; we do our thing. We take them to the beach; we do our thing here on the beach. We sometimes braai on the beach, we play with them. All these kinds of things are being done to show to them this is the second chance that we are talking about. And it's not talking about it, it's living it out with them (Teacher, Focus Group: 29).

The teacher describes the many ways in which the Circle attempts to create a family-like environment so that the children/youth do not feel as if they are being punished for needing care and protection, since they have already been separated from their families. Events and activities, such as birthday celebrations, excursions, and barbecues have become part of the institutional culture and are attempts at making the children and youth feel cared for, special, and loved. The staff therefore makes an enormous effort to make sure the child or youth is celebrated as is described in the extract above. This also helps the children/youth to understand what a healthy family should do and how it feels to be part of one. Other than celebrations at the Circle, if approved by the social worker, the child/youth may be taken home to his family for his birthday, or to celebrate important family events. These efforts create experiences of social inclusion.

Teachers often have to play the role of a parent at the Circle, as is shown in a description by a teacher in a focus group:

We are also, we always tell the kids, “We are here in place of your parents. I am not your mother, but I am like a mother to you.” So, you have to um you know, try and have lots of empathy with the kid (Teacher, Focus Group:23).

The teacher describes how teachers at the Circle are sometimes called upon to fulfil the role of a father or mother. The teacher makes it clear that she does not replace the father or mother, but she is like a mother or father to the child/children. Teachers often fulfil a variety of roles, even in mainstream schools, in order to meet the various needs of the children and youth in their classes. It can be very challenging and demanding, but the children/youth are separated from their families for long periods of time and may feel a longing and need for the presence of parents. These needs are important for the staff to fulfil in various ways in order for the children and youth to cope independently from their parents at institutions such as the Circle.

To summarise, the value of family is a strong value operating at the Circle and is created by the staff members in various ways. Because the Circle has become a home away from home and their family members live far away, it is important for the institution to fill that void for the children in their care by fulfilling a family-like role. This also creates a protective factor for children and youth at risk. The staff at the Circle does this in various ways. By creating a sense of family in the workshop and classrooms, they demonstrate how family members treat, or should treat, one another, and the importance of ownership. They provide guidance, they demonstrate respect, they celebrate each other, and they fulfil, rather than replace family roles. The value of family creates a sense of belonging which contributes towards experiences of social inclusion for children and youth who live separately from their families.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter attempted to answer the question: How do the child and youth care centre’s (the Circle’s) rules, norms and values promote the social inclusion of children and youth at risk? This chapter examines that part of the conceptual framework focused on institutions. The chapter was divided into three sections: institutional rules, institutional norms and institutional values, and each section was discussed.

First, there was a description of how institutional rules promoted social inclusion for the children and youth at risk through the Circle's essential legal function, which is to provide for the care and protection of youth. A strong institutional function, it fulfils the institution's legal obligation in various ways, including separating the children and youths in the institution's care from dangerous situations, and providing for their basic, therapeutic and educational needs. In addition, the flexible internal policies allow the Circle to juggle between various departmental expectations, to respond to unexpected situations, and to solve disciplinary issues using a developmental rather than punitive approach. The legal element, or rules of the institution, also determines its very existence and the roles that it is obliged to fulfil. In this sense the children and youth at the Circle experience a form of social inclusion through the legal processes and the implementation of laws governing different government departments, which ultimately aim to promote the various human rights of these young people.

Second, the institutional norms manifest in the form of normative beliefs about children/youth and how they should be treated. These normative beliefs are embedded in the actors' religious beliefs which shape the ways in which they believe children/youth should be viewed and treated. Furthermore, the normative beliefs about how children and youth should be treated in state care include allowing them the freedom to move. This normative belief is also a reaction to the more restrictive approaches adopted at other state care institutions. These normative views contribute positively towards a sense of belonging.

Finally, the Circle has a few dominating institutional values which include the core values of the Circle of Courage which encourage belonging, mastery, independence, and generosity, the reintegration of children and youth into their families and communities, the value of care, and the value of family. Each of these contributes to the experiences of social inclusion of the children/youth in various ways.

In addition, Scott's (2010) concept of a reinventive institution is in many aspects applicable to the Circle, as it advocates fewer restrictive elements in comparison with Goffman's (1961) total (or totalitarian institution). However, the Circle is not characterised by, nor free to choose, the voluntary 'institutionalisation' proposed by reinventive institutions, since the children and youth are referred (and obliged) to the Circle based on a court order. The Circle is therefore a permutation of a reinventive institution, with total institutional elements such as loose forms of surveillance, supervision and control. Also, the aspect of school leadership in influencing the institutional ethos has played a strong role in the selection and acceptance of values, and in staff buy-in. This is an aspect that may be overlooked in neo-institutional theory. Furthermore, the cultural-cognitive view of institutions argues that the culture of

the institution is embodied in the people involved in the institution through a socialisation process. The cultural-cognitive view does not, however, make clear from where these norms and values may stem. In the case of the Circle, these norms and values derive mainly from its actors, who ultimately shape its cultural-cognitive element. The institution leader plays a strong role in shaping the culture of the institution. The desire to change behaviour therefore comes from personal desire, and the values are internalised and supported by the actors involved (Palthe, 2014:61), as demonstrated by the actors at the Circle.

From the data collected, it can be inferred and argued that the Circle reflects an unbalanced combination of regulative, normative, and cultural-cognitive elements. It can be argued that despite there being many cultural-cognitive elements in the form of its values, the regulative elements of an institution prove to be the strongest approach to social inclusion, as these stem from national legislation, a human rights approach, and constitute the factor of determining the very existence of the Circle. These regulative and cognitive-cultural elements are the main factors influencing and shaping the actors' behaviours and interactions and enforcing a kind of social order.

This chapter demonstrated how the Circle promotes social inclusion for children and youth at risk, through its rules, norms and values. In the next chapter, the third point of the triangle of the conceptual framework, namely teaching approaches for children and youth at risk, is discussed.

CHAPTER SEVEN: Teaching Approaches for Children and Youth at Risk

7.1 Introduction

This chapter attempts to answer the third research subsidiary question: How do the teachers' teaching approaches promote the educational inclusion of children and youth at risk?

The chapter focuses on teachers, and teaching and learning, specifically focusing on those teachers and on the teaching and learning taking place at the Circle (which forms part of the academic component of the Circle). The chapter draws from nine interviews with teachers (teaching both academic and technical subjects), one focus group of six teachers, twelve semi-structured classroom observations, three interviews with government officials, three interviews with education support services professionals, three interviews with childcare workers, and seven interviews with the youths.

This chapter begins by discussing the teachers at the Circle, and their teaching approach. The discussion includes the teachers' relationships with their learners, and their approaches to addressing barriers to learning in the classroom. It goes on to discuss how teachers mediate the curriculum and offers a critique of the Curriculum of Care offered at the Circle. It further explores the teachers' teaching methods, and the various ways in which discipline is instilled. The chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

7.2 Teachers' Teaching Approach

Teachers play a pivotal role in quality teaching and effective learning and teacher quality is a large determining factor for academic success (O'Connor et al., 2009:20). Besides promoting their learners' academic success, and preparation for further education and/or future employment, teachers are important role-players in academic inclusion, especially in the case of the Circle where young people lack a feeling of belonging in the community and in school. There are various approaches to providing quality education and promoting effective learning, especially when working with children and youth at risk. In this chapter the specific approaches of the teachers at the Circle are discussed in depth.

7.2.1 Teachers' relationships with children and youth at risk

Before teachers can teach children and youth at risk or, as these young people are described in White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001), learners with emotional and behavioural barriers, these issues to learning have to be addressed. In this section, the data regarding teachers' and youths' (those interviewed for the study) relationships with one another, and how these relationships promote educational inclusion, are discussed.

In the following interview extract with Mark, the manager at the centre, he suggests that building rapport with children and youth at risk is a key aspect in gaining their trust and being able to teach them effectively as, in his view, this fosters cooperation and respect:

If there is not a relationship, your teaching role become very difficult (Mark 3, Centre Manager: 5).

In an education environment such as that of the Circle, effective teaching cannot take place without there being a relationship between the teacher and learner(s), otherwise teaching children/youth who experience emotional and behavioural barriers to learning becomes virtually impossible. Babedi (2013:79) suggests that failure to address the needs of learners in the "physiological, moral, social and emotional domains" may lead to emotional and behavioural problems. Therefore, as was discussed in Chapter 6, therapy and other interventions may be necessary before these learners are able to engage in learning. Teachers may not be able to address these needs fully, which is why an eco-systemic approach may be necessary and other professionals outside of, or in addition to, the teaching staff, are required, an approach which has been found to be effective by Attar-Swartz (2009). Teachers may, however, be able to address their learners' affective needs by being caring teachers and by understanding their learners' learning needs better (Engelbrecht & Green, 2001:228).

The next interview extract shows the importance of teachers building trust and a relationship with their learners, not only for the sake of teaching and learning, but for the sake of emotional healing and personal development which children and youth at risk often need:

As a teacher working here, I think I will describe my role more [than just] a teacher. A teacher is defined, from 8 till half past 3; my role is more than that because, if a learner now comes in and says he wants to talk, Sir, I want to talk to you, then I will say OK, let's go sit and talk... You see the approach in the role is different, where you must know now where does this learner come from; this learner comes from hardship. Hardship, he never had a father, his father abandoned him when he was you know, or his father is in prison... And that makes me different than a teacher, that defines my role, completely different as a teacher (Philip, Teacher: 15).

Philip sees himself as more than just a teacher. He sees himself as a confidant, friend, and father figure who is willing and open to talk to the children/youths whenever they need to talk. He tries to make them feel as comfortable as possible by making time available for them to speak to him. Much of the work of the teacher (and staff working collaboratively) entails convincing the child and showing him that the teacher is trustworthy, and that the teacher genuinely wants to help, without having any ulterior motives. Philip understands that the children and youth have experienced many difficulties, including not having a father or a relationship with their father or a father figure. He attempts to fill that void by building a good relationship and fulfilling that fatherly role in various ways. He compares himself with mainstream teachers who go home at a certain time of the day, whereas he goes beyond his duty by caring and helping children and youth wherever he can.

In the above interview extract, Philip describes how he engages in informal conversation with his learners to build trust. Relationship building is mentioned a few times by the teachers interviewed and is often emphasised as a precedent or prerequisite to teaching children and youths at risk. Teachers are not informed or briefed on the children's/youths' backgrounds or the reasons for their referral to the Circle, as this information is confidential. Building a relationship is therefore key to teachers understanding their learners. Teachers therefore need to get to know their learners individually and through much effort, as this encourages their learners' meaningful engagement with both school and their education (Langenkamp, 2016:19). Teachers at the Circle only know as much as the children/youths tell them and what is shared by the Education Support Services (ESS) in staff meetings. This serves as a precautionary measure to prevent teachers from projecting any form of prejudice against a child/youth which may affect their perception of the child/youth and their ability to relate to and teach him. This has created an environment where teachers treat the children/youths as any other child/youth found in mainstream schools, rather than as a child or youth who has made mistakes in the past. The unintended consequence of teachers not knowing the backgrounds of their learners is, however, that teachers may be unaware of the barriers that the children/youth face to learning both academically and socially and that may be preventing them from being able to make the necessary adaptation to the curriculum (see Section 7.3).

The teachers' perspectives of and responses to their relationships with their learners include a variety of views and feelings, which are at times contradictory. These include approaching the child/youth individually in an attempt to address his misbehaviour, the teacher losing his/her equanimity when addressing the disrespect of a child/youth, feeling compassion for the children and youth, going beyond

their expected duties of teaching, inviting children and youth into their homes for religious holidays, engaging in informal conversations in order to build trust and relationships, acting as their advocates and counsellors in certain situations, and listening to their stories. Teachers therefore use a variety of approaches to win the trust of their learners in order to be more caring and in this way to assist their learning.

From the youths' perspective, aspects they saw as being important to them when building relationships with their teachers showed that essentially, they were appreciative of their teachers. They reported that their teachers took time to give them advice, that their teachers not only focused on the content of the subject matter but also on life and life experiences in general, they were always willing to help, they treated them as their own children, were good role-models, motivated them, and treated them as "a normal child" (Jade, Youth: 11). Overall, the youths' views of their teachers were positive, and it seems clear that teachers play the role of more than a teacher in the classroom in order to promote educational and social inclusion.

This positive relationship seemed to contribute to the cooperation of these youths in the classroom and thus improve their willingness stay in school and learn, as was found in a similar study conducted by Visser (2000, cited in Weeks, 2012:337). I also observed an instance where a youth refused to enter a classroom because of an argument he had had with a teacher. From this instance one can infer that negative relationships can produce the opposite effect to that intended by teachers attempting to engage their learners: children/youth may not engage, or engage consistently, with the school and/or their learning.

In summary, the data from the sample of participants showed how vital it is for teachers to connect with their learners and to understand their backgrounds and communities. Once there are authentic relationships, learners are likely to be more cooperative, and teaching and learning more effective (Watson, 2008:26-27). This supports research that shows that teachers are the most significant factor influencing learner achievement (Hattie, 2009; OECD 2005; Oswald & Engelbrecht, 2018; Swart & Oswald, 2008). Bonding with teachers has been shown to be a great protective factor and the bonding to predict better social behaviour, academic outcomes, and school commitment (Tiet et al., 2010:370, 373). In addition, the youths viewed the teachers' efforts to have paid off for them, and they viewed their teachers in a very positive light, a situation which has been found to be important as a first step towards educational inclusion. From these data, which are substantiated by the literature, it can be argued that building relationships with children and youths at risk is therefore vital for academic success. In the

next section, the ways in which teachers approach the various barriers to learning experienced by their learners are discussed.

7.2.2 Approaches to addressing barriers to learning in the classroom

As has been described, there are various factors contributing to children and youth experiencing barriers to learning. These barriers may be intrinsic, societal, systemic or pedagogical (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2010). This section discusses the various barriers to learning the children and youth at the Circle face, and how the teachers at the Circle attempt to overcome these barriers in order to promote educational inclusion.

In the following extract from an interview with a government official, he notes some of the various barriers to learning:

It's either the systemic issues that create the barriers to learning, so you could have overcrowding in classes, teachers not competent at the level that they are to teach. It could just be neglect or academic neglect (Tony, Government Official: 20).

Tony highlights the systemic barriers to learning which result from an unequal education system such as that which persists in South Africa. It then filters down to schools and learners, causing many unintentional outcomes, such as school disengagement. Systemic barriers may be exacerbated by existing intrinsic and societal barriers to learning that contribute towards even further school disengagement, and possibly to institutionalisation (as is the case with the youths in this study). Many children and youth may as a result be exposed to risk from different angles, as was described in Chapter 5, leading to an escalation in learning and social problems. Many of the systemic problems stem from the rigidity of the one-size-fits-all, outcomes-based curriculum. This is discussed in an extract from an interview with an academic in the field:

But my sense would be the curriculum is still a major barrier because it's not flexible enough. It's not responsive enough to difference...Then you get teachers are increasingly under pressure to focus on just getting learners to meet certain outcomes and your weaker learners are always the ones then who will be neglected etc. (Carol, Academic: 27).

Carol is an academic who has worked in the area of inclusive education. She explains how the Curriculum Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) curriculum has become a barrier to learning for many learners. Teachers are under pressure to deliver a 'high quality' curriculum, and to stick to a rigid

schedule, with large class sizes and learners with different learning abilities, paces, and needs. In the case of institutions such as the Circle, the combination of intrinsic and pedagogical barriers is multiplied with the systemic barrier. The CAPS curriculum may be too demanding for teachers to be able to adapt it according to the different learning needs of all their learners in a short period of time. Therefore, learners at school, and especially those at the Circle, owing to various reasons, may experience the CAPS curriculum itself as a barrier to learning.

In the next extract from an interview with another government official, she speaks of the cumulative problem that develops when learners fail to keep pace with the curriculum:

So those learners who are unable to keep up with that pace or the volume quickly get left behind. And then it becomes cumulative and they are so far behind, and often it just starts with kids being restless in the class and often being the class clown and before you know it, it ends up with them being asked to leave the class and it just spirals [from] there (Sarah, Government Official: 27).

Sarah notes how children and youth who do not cope with the curriculum may behave badly and eventually drop out of school. The CAPS curriculum leaves little room for slower-paced learners to keep up. As a result, children/youth who are left behind often become distracted and are a distraction to other learners which may lead to disruptive behaviour. They are dismissed, suspended, and expelled from the classroom leading to their lagging further behind in the curriculum. This may lead to failure and dropout. Sarah therefore highlights the cumulative effect the curriculum may have on “weaker” learners.

In the next extract from an interview with a teacher, she describes how she addressed the barriers to learning her learners face:

I did it [teach] never embarrassing them even here outside school also and um and then I would tell them um okay so now I will come and stand by you, what I usually did was I told them to move up and I sat next to them, and um I said okay “you read to me”, and nobody else will hear you reading and so on and that is how you win the trust of the child and um the same with the oral, and also the topics that you chose... You then have to go back to the basics, even if it’s a Grade 7, 8 or 9 class, then you always have to go back and um if the child can’t sound, child can’t read and um yeah, so that is the way I went about up until today (Lisa, Former Head of Academic Department, 22).

Teachers at the Circle, such as Lisa, are often sensitive towards the learning needs of children and youth during the teaching process. In this case her learners struggled with reading and writing and were not on a par with their peers in this area. Her attempt at addressing this problem is demonstrated in the interview extract as Lisa described her attempts to create a safe space and positive learning environment for her

learners by sitting next to them while they read. Lisa does this in order to not embarrass or shame her learners while they may struggle in their attempts to read and write, as they may be insecure about their abilities. Lisa attempted to make the learning process less intimidating by offering a lot of support. These classes are small (2–15 learners), which means she is able to give each learner the necessary attention that contributes to their educational inclusion.

Many of the children and youth have stayed out of school for many years, which causes gaps in their knowledge. This is a huge barrier to progressing at a sufficient pace. In the next extract from an interview with a social worker, she describes this problem:

A lot of the times the boys are referred to the centre and haven't been in school for 5, 6 years. So, they already have that delay. So, when they come to the centre, it is something new for them to attend school all over again (Gabriella, Social Worker, 17).

In the above extract Gabriella mentions the length of periods some children and youth may have stayed out of school before being admitted to the Circle. The school and learning environment become unfamiliar and children/youth may find it difficult to readapt to an academic environment. Often the children and youth also have a negative association with school and education (as discussed in Chapter 5), which creates an aversion towards learning. This leads in turn to feelings of insecurity about their intelligence and ability to learn. One youth said that, “I never really liked school, and still now I don’t like school” (Cameron, Youth: 29). These negative sentiments towards school become challenging for the teacher, but as mentioned earlier, may be remedied by the teacher building relationships with her/his learners. Because they were out of school for so many years, these youths have a substantial knowledge and skills gap that needs to be closed in a short period of time while they are at the institution. Unfortunately, because of time constraints, the Circle is not able to ensure that the children, or all the children and youth at the Circle, are on par with their peers in mainstream schools.

In summary, it seems the barriers to learning stem from systemic, societal and intrinsic problems. Systemic barriers include the CAPS curriculum, and in the case of ordinary schools, the large class sizes. Intrinsic barriers include learners not being able to read and write on the same level as their peers at mainstream schools, physiological problems, such as Foetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), ADD or ADHD, and being out of school for a long period of time. There are also societal barriers which were described and discussed in depth in Chapter 5. The teachers at the Circle, such as Lisa, therefore, strive to create a safe and unintimidating learning environment that is conducive to learning and educational inclusion. In the next section, the ways in which teachers at the Circle mediate the curriculum are discussed

7.3 How Teachers Mediate the Curriculum

As discussed in the previous section, the CAPS Curriculum seems to be a systemic barrier to learning for many teachers and learners. This is also reflected in many of the interviews and institutional documents produced by the Circle. The Circle has therefore developed its own curriculum, the 'Curriculum of Care', to cater for its learners and their different educational needs, but it is essentially an adaptation of the official national curriculum, CAPS. In this section, a brief description of the Curriculum of Care is given, and the ways in which teachers have adapted the CAPS curriculum. How this promotes educational inclusion is discussed.

7.3.1 The Curriculum of Care

The White Paper 6 (Republic of South Africa. Department of Basic Education, 2001), which is commonly known as the Inclusive Education Policy, makes provision for educators to adapt the curriculum for the learning needs of their learners. This is called a differentiated curriculum, and it allows for different teaching and learning styles, multi-level teaching, etc., to suit the learners' learning needs. The Curriculum of Care is an adaptation of the national curriculum, CAPS. It offers the same subjects as those offered in mainstream and inclusive schools, with additional technical subjects such as woodwork, welding, arts and crafts, and bricklaying. It generally focuses on the holistic development of the child or youth, as the centre manager states:

Your education has to be holistic from word go. You cannot look at any kind of purely academic, or technical, vocational, or didactic kind of practices. You've actually got to enrol the child into a kind of learning which includes all of that (Mark, Centre Manager: 2).

This holistic learning comprises academic, technical and vocational training, extracurricular activities, sports, and arts as part of this broad curriculum experience. The Curriculum of Care can be viewed as a critique of CAPS, since CAPS has an academic focus and is rigid and inflexible (see Section 7.2.2 of this thesis). The Curriculum of Care incorporates the Circle of Courage which takes belonging, generosity, mastery, and independence into account. These four principles are embedded in all its developmental activities as described in Chapter 6. Curriculum, in Mark's understanding, is defined as 'curriculum as experiences' (Su, 2012), which considers the formal and informal learning and experiences the learners undergo.

In the next extract from an interview with the centre manager, he notes why they considered developing their own curriculum at the Circle was necessary:

So, the Curriculum of Care is one that we coined many moons ago of almost bringing into check the pressures from the provincial education and district departments to say, you need to set targets around that. Kids need to be able to do this and all of that. We're not saying that's unimportant. But if mainstream has really failed these kids and we're duplicating mainstream, then what is our purpose? We need to be seen to be doing more for the kids and their families (Mark 3, Centre Manager: 25).

In the extract, Mark describes how the 'Curriculum of Care' is a response to a rigid curriculum that is not responsive to the needs of those children and youth who, in the case of the Circle, experience emotional and behavioural barriers to learning. In Mark's opinion, the 'Curriculum of Care' is an attempt to offer and achieve more than the mainstream schools can offer children and youth at risk. The Circle does not relate to children and youth in terms of their learning difficulties, but rather sees them as whole persons with various needs, not simply as young people who have knowledge and skills gaps. The Curriculum of Care therefore attempts to respond to the whole child/youth. The Circle, however, does not suggest that the CAPS curriculum is educationally invalid; it is just not suitable for all learners. In this way, by adapting the curriculum, the Circle attempts to promote educational inclusion.

In the next extract from the interview with the centre manager, the children's/youths' response to the CAPS curriculum is discussed:

It [the Curriculum of Care] is to harness access to a – an appropriate learning programme that brings the kid in alignment with an ethos of care and connecting him to a curriculum. Whereas his experience thus far has been one of being pushed out of a curriculum, of being labelled as being stupid, being disruptive and all of those things. It is saying to a child that there are some things that are outside of your control that have gotten you here. You now have an opportunity and how can we optimise, maximise this window which is essentially between 2 and 4 years? To do some serious intervention and to get a kid believing in himself (Mark 1, Centre Manager: 25).

In the interview Mark speaks about accessing the curriculum, in other words, educational inclusion. The Circle attempts to provide access to education through an adapted curriculum appropriate to the kinds of learners found at the Circle. Children and youth may disrupt classes for various reasons, and often labelled, as Mark mentioned, and removed from the classroom. Mainstream schools do not have the time, skills, and patience to address the underlying causes of disruptive behaviour which may escalate the at-risk behaviour. Chapter 5 addresses the various reasons for school disengagement. The Curriculum of Care therefore makes room for teachers to respond to the learning and other needs of

children and youth at risk. The Circle and its curriculum therefore allow time for the underlying causes of difficult behaviour to be addressed, which will eventually help children and youths to learn more effectively. Important to highlight is that the Circle has the infrastructure and structures available to create an inclusive learning environment. Ordinary schools do not have the same flexibility and liberties offered to them as the Circle does in this regard.

In the next extract from a focus-group discussion, a teacher comments about the practicality of the Curriculum of Care:

We do follow the CAPS curriculum to an extent because of notational time, and because of the type of school we have and academic, we cannot actually adhere to the CAPS document. As far as the Grade 6 class is concerned, it's a multi-grade class so the teacher will teach Grade 4/5 and even Grade 6 works to those kids. The same with your Grade 7s. Also, because your kids come in at any time of the year, so they get to your class, and you have to assess and see where they are at, and um, that can cause lots of problems because a lot of them, they are illiterate. So, we try and actually look at a Curriculum of Care to – within their CAPS document. We actually try and fulfil our task as educators to conform to what we need to do, but we also try and reach the child in turmoil. The child who has behaviour problems and nobody else could cope with outside (Teacher, Focus Group: 8).

The teacher describes how the Curriculum of Care is implemented. The institutional context is different in comparison with an 'ordinary' school and therefore a curriculum such as CAPS would not work in a schooling context and culture such as that of the Circle. The time allocated by the Curriculum of Care to accommodate all the activities to provide a holistic curriculum is limited. Half the school day is spent by learners in the academic department, and the other half is spent in the technical department. This is besides the therapeutic aspect of their care. The institution also has multi-grade classes, as well as children and youth entering it at different times throughout the year, which means that they miss out on the progress made earlier in the year and would not be prepared for an upcoming test or exam. Some children and youth arrive at the Circle with low literacy and numeracy levels which makes academic progress on a par with their peers unattainable during their time at the Circle. The longer a child/youth's development lags behind that of their peers, the harder it is to accelerate their learning and develop their literacy skills (Allington & Walmsley, 1995:8; 2007). This presents a challenge to these children and youth in terms of progressing academically. This issue calls for a critique of the Curriculum of Care.

7.3.2 A critique of the Curriculum of Care

Despite the good intentions of the Circle to provide a holistic curriculum through the Curriculum of Care, the lack of capacity of the institution to expend intensive efforts on academic acceleration may keep children and youth at a disadvantage. In this section a critique is provided of this adapted curriculum.

In the following extract from an interview with a teacher, she expresses her view that the Curriculum of Care does not challenge some learners enough:

But here they don't really focus academically – the school as a whole ... it's not really a main factor in their lives, where I feel it should be, despite their background or whatever, where they come from, their missing part of their lives – the reason why they are here. We assume because they come from [marginalised] communities – we assume – they are not – their strength is not really [academic], but I feel some of them, they do extremely well. Some people just underestimate [them]. Like one person said that they [children and youth] couldn't cope there so we shouldn't put the pressure on them – here in this care school, we should be more lenient on them. But I think, it shouldn't be like that, because they can really work. Some of them want that challenge. I often speak to them on a personal level. One learner told me, is the Circle preparing us for the world out there? Like here we care for them we want to baby them, we want to give them what they are not getting out there. But then[it] reality strikes [them], are you preparing us for the world out there? You're not letting us be strong. Because some of them want the challenge and some of them want to grow. I think we should teach them to grow, prepare them for the world out there, but at the same time care for them (Cindy, Teacher: 7).

This extract above describes the danger of not stressing the importance academic progress and development may pose. This teacher and others have expressed the view that the emphasis on care (such as building self-esteem and a sense of belonging) deprioritises education, which is key to the integration into employment of the youth and to study opportunities in the long term. In fact, it has been thought to place them at a further disadvantage in the future. The potential to join a mainstream school after disengagement is less likely to occur if they are not up to speed academically, which means they are not thoroughly prepared and on par with their peers in mainstream schools. According to this view, the challenge is thus to place equal emphasis and stress on both care and education.

The deprioritisation of academics in favour of care is visible throughout the Circle's timetable as mentioned earlier (Berridge, 2012:1171; Smeets, 2014:77). For example, a class period is usually 20 minutes long, and is doubled per class subject, which means 40 minutes are spent on a subject three to four times per week. In addition, children are removed from classes to attend extracurricular activities, such as surfing. If sports or other events and functions are planned, preparation time for these events eats into and disrupts the school timetable. In total, little time is allocated for the youth at the Circle to make enough academic progress, complete the curriculum, and succeed in formal assessments.

Therefore, it can be said that there are many interruptions in, and reductions of, their academic programme.

There is also the common-sense assumption that because all of the children and youth have similar backgrounds, have a scholastic backlog, and have dropped out and failed in the past, they do not have the potential to do well academically. These assumptions are not based on reality, as shown by Berridge (2012:1174) who argues the contrary: that all children/youth can achieve academically. This academic achievement is subject to “instructional leadership, innovative curriculums, and high expectations for every child” (O’Connor et al., 2009:10). There is therefore very little pressure placed on these children and youth at the Circle and other institutions to develop academically as a result of these beliefs about them. Children and youth at risk could be viewed incorrectly as having little academic potential, or that they cannot be helped. These beliefs have the potential to lead to a more relaxed and non-academic teaching approach than would be the case in mainstream schools.

Furthermore, it has been argued that being at risk is a temporary state for young people between 15 and 25 years (Anlezark, 2011:9-11). However, commonly held low expectations lead to less teaching effort being expended on children/youth with emotional and behavioural difficulties, resulting in their acquiring “minimal skills” suitable only for low-skilled employment, as opposed to high expectations that lead to more effort, resulting in their completing their basic education, and preparing them for college, university and eventually for gainful employment (Allington & Walmsley, 1995:1; 2007).

Cindy was of the view that some children and youth would like to progress academically at a faster pace and in fact have the potential to progress if they are given the opportunity. In the interviews, some youths even voiced their desire to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills and to be sufficiently prepared for further education or gainful employment before leaving the Circle. Cindy therefore proposed that preparing rather than caring should be emphasised, although she saw both as being necessary. Evidence shows that “higher teacher expectations, more rigorous academic content and engaging pedagogy” to have benefited children/youth more than lower expectations and an emphasis on caring (O’Connor et al., 2009: 23). Teacher expectations and engaging pedagogy have been linked to academic achievement (O’Connor et al., 2009:23; Berridge, 2012:1175; Petersen, 2013:43-44); thus, according to this research and to these arguments, teachers need to believe in the academic abilities of their learners.

In the next extract from an interview, a researcher mentions the negative effect of trauma on learning:

Forget about the maths and the science you're about teach especially with neglected and traumatised children because the academics, as Mark [the centre manager] says, is immaterial (Cheryl, Researcher: 11).

Cheryl, a researcher, highlights the negative effects trauma has on the learning of traumatised children, especially in mathematics and science. Research has shown that trauma negatively affects a child's ability to learn (Cook et al., 2005; Gailer et al., 2018). This makes teaching traumatised children/ youth very difficult as they are unable to focus. This has been one of the reasons for teachers at the Circle lowering their academic expectations of the children/youth. To resolve this challenge, children/youth are placed in classes that suit their ability. Assigning children/youth to an ability group (rather than an achievement group) is also a good predictor of educational outcomes. Allington and Walmsley (1995; 2007) found that most children who are placed in "high ability" groups, proceed to college, and those placed in "low ability" groups may "leave school before graduating, fail, be placed in a special school, become a teenage parent, commit a juvenile offense or remain less than fully literate" (Allington & Walmsley, 1995:2; 2007).

There is also evidence that suggests that all children/youth become literate alongside their peers (Allington & Walmsley, 2007). It is however important to note that the staff are not opposed to these ideals of having high expectations and bringing the children/youth up to speed academically, but the structure, timetable, and culture of the institution all militate against such ideals. Thus, it can be argued that the Curriculum of Care does have its benefits, but that it should be adapted to the needs of the children/youth, including their academic needs, and that higher academic expectations should be placed on the learners.

In summary, the Curriculum of Care is a uniquely adapted curriculum and suited to the Circle's institutional context, culture, and ideals. However, what needs to be taken into consideration is that the Curriculum of Care may be a stumbling block to the long-term success of children and youth at risk. It can be argued that it does not prepare children and youth adequately for reintegration into an ordinary/mainstream or inclusive school, or for further education and training after disengagement. The educational psychologist even commented on this curriculum being inadequate preparation for the long-term future of the youth at the Circle:

By the time they leave here they are 18 years old and there is very limited impact to advance themselves educationally, and that's still a worry for me, because that means that their access in life is quite limited. It's going to be low skill limited (Clinton, Educational Psychologist: 67).

It appears that there is generally a low expectation of the children's and youths' ability to learn and the emphasis on care at the expense of academic achievement results, in the worst case, in academic neglect and a negative view of the child's ability to achieve academically. As a result, it can be argued that these children/youth receive a lower quality of education than that on offer at mainstream or inclusive schools.

Allington and Walmsley (1995: viii; 2007) argue that academic institutions are political institutions, and thus creating an alternative curriculum, such as the Curriculum of Care, is a way of asserting or imposing political ideas on what education should look like and what should be achieved. However, according to Allington and Walmsley (1995: viii):

Good ideas need good politics to help them get initiated, and even better politics to keep them going. On the other hand, programs that are politically aware but have no academic substance can do enormous harm to children [and youth] (Allington & Walmsley, 1995: viii).

According to what I have observed, this seems to be occurring at the Circle, and I am of the view that the children and youth might be even further disadvantaged by not accessing the same curriculum of that of their peers at other schools, and not receiving the intensive teaching needed to accelerate their progress, despite the Circle's advocating a more inclusive and relevant curriculum. In this light, the Curriculum of Care provides educational inclusion in the short term, but the possibility exists that it may contribute towards educational and social exclusion in the long term. In the next section, teaching methods that have been found to promote educational inclusion are discussed.

7.4 Teaching Methods

Teaching methods or strategies can be described as those methods used to teach and to implement a curriculum or subject. These may entail a specific pedagogy, or a variety/combination of teaching methods. There are various legitimate ways of teaching children and youth at risk (Allington & Walmsley, 1995: vii; 2007). Teachers at the Circle do not subscribe to specific teaching methods or pedagogies but use what they think is appropriate for their subject area and for the children/youths at the institution. This section draws on data from five different subject area classes I observed between one and three times per class, depending on the availability of the teacher and convenience. These classes included the Tourism class and Afrikaans class (three observations in total as both subjects are taught by the same teacher), the Mathematics class (three observations), the English class (one observation), the Welding workshop (two observations) and the Motor Mechanics workshop (three observations). The Tourism and Afrikaans, Mathematical, and Motor Mechanics classes are the focus of the discussion as

they were observed most frequently. Comments are given only on the English and Welding classes. Interviews with the teachers and other professionals are used to supplement the observations. For this section, the way the observed lesson was adapted to suit the children's/youths' needs and abilities, and the way in which learners were included in the learning process, are discussed.

7.4.1 Subject area 1: Tourism and Afrikaans

There are only two children in the Tourism and Afrikaans classes. The two children listen attentively to the teacher who talks during most of the lesson. She does revision at the end of her lesson to check if the children have understood the concepts correctly. Only one child responds, while the other remains quiet. The lesson is essentially teacher centred as the teacher's voice is heard during most of the lesson, while there is very little input from the two children. The children sit quietly for most of the lesson and answer now and again.

In a different classroom observation with the same teacher, teaching the same subject, there are four children in the class. The teacher does most of the reading. One child protests and says that the teacher reads too fast. The teacher then asks if she should slow down, and the child says, "No, it's fine." This child points out a problem he has been experiencing during his learning process but he chooses to disregard it because of possibly feeling that he did not want to inconvenience the teacher or interrupt the lesson, or he did not want to be seen to be unable to keep up with the lesson.

From these observations, one can see that the children's/youths' voices are sometimes (to a limited extent) included in the learning processes by means of one basic pedagogic method: questions and answers. The teacher asks the children to repeat something after her and to read what is written on the board. The children listen attentively, and the teacher asks questions throughout the lesson. The children's interest in the lesson becomes apparent with the comment, "This is a *kwaai* [cool] story." The children/youth are generally open to learning and the effectiveness of learning depends on the ability and attitude of the teacher.

Allington and Walmsley (1995: vii) commented that children in special or remedial classes, or those who are low achieving, have little opportunity to read during their reading lessons. This was demonstrated in the Afrikaans class where the teacher did most of the reading. Children/youth appear to be given few opportunities to practise their reading skills in special schools that are meant to accelerate

their learning. Certain outdated beliefs about teaching reading have influenced educators' thinking around teaching literacy. In fact, actual reading has been found to be the most effective method for teaching and learning how to read rather than time spent on skill and drill, including an emphasis on phonics (Allington & Walmsley, 1995:7; Allington & Walmsley, 2007). Some of these beliefs are unfortunately found among staff at the Circle, which may explain the lack of emphasis on academic development.

Allington and Walmsley (1995: viii; 2007) claimed that special schools often spend most of their time doing skills-based work and less time on the kind of reading which is important for their learners' academic progress. There is also a constant battle to reconcile the effort to maintain the standards of the curriculum while ensuring the teacher does not lose the learners' interest, motivation and goodwill (Bidwell, 2001:103). At the Circle, however, there seems to be a trade-off of maintaining high curriculum standards in exchange for the constant engagement of children and youth. Both, however, need to be achieved.

In the next extract from an interview with the occupational therapist, she offers a reason for the classes being teacher centred in terms of the sensitivities of the learners:

So that's why, I always say, we have to look at the stage of development and we have to take that into consideration when we're targeting sensitive things like reading and writing. For us as adults it would be so simple and say we're just going to learn to read and write. But for that kid in that developmental stage, he is going to feel embarrassed... We need to be sensitive to those issues if we want to target those areas and make them understand that it's not to make fun or anything like that, but it is for your own benefit. Because a lot of these kids deep down they want help, it's just how we go about it (Faye, Occupational Therapist, 20).

It seems that the reason for the teacher's being the centre of the classes is, according to Faye, her or his awareness that the children/youth may feel shy, embarrassed, aware that they have knowledge gaps, and they may lack the confidence to participate in lessons. The teacher alleviates the pressure and discomfort the children/youth may experience by speaking more and asking the types of questions she feels they are able to answer easily, rather than challenging them. It was also apparent from my observations that the children enjoyed these lessons but needed more time to process and understand the new knowledge gained.

Faye described the developmental stage of the child and the impact certain learning approaches might have on the child. She considers their ability to read or write, or the lack thereof, to be a sensitive issue,

which is true for a child who is illiterate at the age of 12 and above. Such children may feel insecure about this inability to read and write, knowing that their peers have progressed further than they have, and are more advanced in this area. Faye recommends that the teacher should help the child/youth to believe that learning is for their own benefit and that it is not something to be ashamed of, but that the teacher is there to help them. Deep down the children/youth really want help, as can be observed during the lessons, but they may not be able to express this orally. The methods employed to teach them should thus be sensitive to the learners' needs yet prepare them thoroughly for life outside the institution. This teacher was being sensitive to the needs of her learners that contribute towards their educational inclusion, but which may also place them at a disadvantage if she continues this method in the long term.

7.4.2 Subject area 2: Mathematics

In the Mathematics class, there were four children in the lesson observed. The teacher speaks to each child/youth to ascertain what they do not understand. The teacher then calls two children to her desk where she helps them to understand the content of the lesson. Each of the four children are at different stages in the textbook and work independently and at a different pace. The teachers assist each one at his level. They sit relatively quietly while doing their work and speak to their peers now and again. The teacher uses the board to explain how to round off numbers. One child commented, "Now that you must learn [*sic*] me how to do it. Now I understand!" [That is the way you should teach me how to do it. Now I (finally) understand!]" This is a very positive response from a child, and from those who may find learning a new concept challenging.

When the children are at her desk, they are very eager and playful around her. They respect her a lot and listen attentively to her explanations. While she is explaining the lesson to a child, she gets impatient and says, "Don't think about the answer, but think about how you'll get to the answer." The child eventually found a solution.

In one lesson, the bell rang indicating the end of the class, but the children decided to stay in her class and complete their work. This response showed an interest and eagerness to learn. It is interesting to observe children/youth who are stigmatised for their low academic achievement enjoying a Mathematics lesson. It seems that the learning atmosphere created by the teacher and the attitude of the teacher towards the children/youth is what motivates their interest and their learning. The teacher does not

assume the children/youth cannot learn (as indicated in her interview). She instead gently guides them at their pace and helps them at the stage they are at. She also does not seem to lower her expectations of the children/youth and believes in their ability to learn difficult concepts even though she becomes impatient at times with their apparent slowness.

The Mathematics teacher actually confessed in her interview that she does not know what she is doing in the context in which she is teaching and does not use a specific or appropriate pedagogy. Unlike the other teachers, this teacher is a newly qualified teacher and admitted in her interview that her training programme had not prepared her adequately for this type of work. She says she teaches informally so that the children/youth are comfortable speaking to her and asking her questions. It seems that this approach has made her a successful teacher even though she doubts whether she is teaching correctly as there is no standard, criterion or guide for her to measure herself against in terms of teaching children/youth with emotional and behavioural barriers to learning. This teacher, who recently graduated, did not feel adequately prepared to teach inclusively, and was not sure whether she was doing the right thing. This is unfortunately the challenge with teacher training programmes that claim to provide inclusive education training in South Africa, as reported by the British Council (2018:69); it shows that teachers who practise at mainstream and special schools do not feel as prepared as those who teach in full service schools. Furthermore, inclusive education teacher training programmes across universities in the country are disparate, the common teaching approach is within a silo, and the content is often superficial (UNISA et al., 2018:52-55). These issues help to contextualise Cindy's insecurities about her practice.

7.4.3 Subject area 3: Motor Mechanics

In the next class, the Motor Mechanics Workshop, two children were present. It was a multi-grade class combining Grade 8 and Grade 9. These workshops are divided between theoretical and practical lessons. The children sit in the classroom and the teacher teaches using the blackboard.

The theoretical aspect of the lesson is teacher centred as the knowledge is new and subject specific, in this case, safety and wheel balancing, which the teacher then delivers in a teaching style similar to the 'chalk and talk' style. The lessons are spoken and written on the board in both English and Afrikaans to suit home language speakers of both languages. The children were generally included in this theoretical lesson through questions and answers.

During the practical aspect of the workshop, the teacher first models how to balance a wheel, and then allows each child to apply what he has just learned. The children are attentive and interested, and the one child even competes to get this content correct, and then proceeds to correct the other children when it is their turn to answer. In these classes, each child/youth gets a turn to apply the lesson practically while the others observe him. The children/youth also get practical experience in using the equipment and such tools as the tires, spanners, engine, etc. When the children/youth get something correct, they feel very proud of themselves. A few children/youths stated that they hoped to become motor mechanics one day.

In general, the children/youth are interested in this subject and are very eager to participate in applying what they have learned as it opens their world to a potential career and is also useful in terms of practical skills they can apply immediately. In this context, for children/youth to have an interest in a subject area means they are willing to learn and progress further in this area, thus opening up a potential career path. Sparking their interest in a subject is therefore key to including children/youth at risk in education.

In summary, what was commonly observed in these lessons was that the CAPS curriculum is highly simplified by the teachers, as less is covered, and more time is spent to cover the lessons. From these lessons it was observed that the teachers at the Circle do not intentionally use any theoretically informed and innovative pedagogic practices during their lessons. Instead, they use pedagogical styles that are essentially teacher centred and which they see as suited to their disciplines or subject areas, and these styles include learning by listening and learning by doing. The teacher was often the focal point of knowledge, especially for the theoretical aspect of the technical classes and for the academic classes. During these lessons the children/youth copied notes from the board and worked from textbooks – each class being slightly different in terms of the weight and time placed on writing notes and listening to the teacher.

A common observation was the silence of the learners while the teacher taught – a teaching style similar to the banking model of education described by Freire (1970). However, the children/youth have and show very low confidence levels in these classes and this could be the reason they do not initiate questions and discussion, or easily or freely volunteer answers to questions posed by the teacher.

Besides the differentiation of the entire CAPs curriculum, it seems that a possible mixture of learning abilities in the classroom and a differentiation of instructional methods and materials for individual learners are not addressed or considered/trialled. It can therefore be argued that these are not in this sense inclusive classrooms, but instead “special” classrooms (Boston-Kemple, 2012:51).

However, the teachers make frequent attempts to motivate learners through building self-esteem and confidence throughout the lesson. Some teachers have very good relationships with their learners and talk about life and tease the children/youth in a playful manner while they are taking notes from the board, as I observed in the English class and Welding workshop. This creates an enjoyable and relaxed classroom environment. From these interactions I could tell that the teachers and children/youth generally have a very good relationship with one another, but the issue remains that some teachers have very low academic expectations of the children/youth. In these cases, confidence and relationship building rather than academic advancement becomes the focus. It can be argued that these teaching methods, and their focus, contribute more towards the children/youth developing feelings of belonging rather than academic or skills mastery. Furthermore, each teacher seems to apply his/her own methods to include the children/youth during classes; however, does not appear to cover enough of the curriculum for learners to be able to progress on a par with their peers at mainstream schools. In the next section, discipline in its various forms, including at the Circle, is discussed.

7.5 Discipline

Discipline is a contentious issue in education (Carstens, 2012:69). Discipline means both “discipline as formal punishment for an offence” and the practice of “training people to obey rules or follow a code of behaviour” (Carstens, 2012:70). While corporal punishment is illegal in South Africa, discipline is still advised (DBE & CJCP, 2012). The disciplinary policy at the Circle states that staff should use a positive disciplinary approach, as in the form of developmental opportunities, staff role modelling, and a culture of learning and teaching that upholds the values of the Circle of Courage. The staff is advised to provide insight and help the children/youth examine the logical consequences of their negative actions. Overall, the institutional discipline policy advocates a restorative and developmental rather than a punitive approach to discipline. There are no explicit consequences for misdemeanours of varied degrees of seriousness, such as expulsion, and there are no consequences aligned to specific transgressions, such as absconding. Overall, misbehaviour and other misdemeanours are addressed on a case-by-case basis. In this section, discipline at the Circle is discussed and how this relates to the many and various forms

of disciplinary issues. Discipline emerged in a variety of developmental forms in the data. These forms were discipline in the form of self-discipline, discipline as correcting disrespectful behaviour, discipline as calming uncontrollable behaviour, and discipline as addressing conflict among learners. Each of these sub-themes is discussed in turn.

7.5.1 Discipline in the form of self-discipline

In this section, how the Circle attempts to cultivate self-discipline among the children and youth is discussed.

In the following extract from an interview with Grant, a youth at the Circle, he describes how the Circle has helped him to cultivate self-discipline through structured routines:

They basically just have a lot of discipline – teach you structured discipline. Every morning [you’ll] stand up, shower, get dressed, make up your bed, brush your teeth, clean; then you’ll eat. You know, they have a schedule basically, with everything organised and with discipline – everything. Clean your shoes and so on and yeah, they have particular times when they have meetings with us to discuss our problems that we give them or discuss the good points they see in us which we should use to our own benefit to help us into the future (Grant, Youth: 32).

Grant describes the process of the Circle’s helping him and others to cultivate self-discipline in the form of structure and routine, a process which he refers to elsewhere as “structured discipline”. Self-discipline in this instance is cultivated through external controls, such as a rigid and consistent schedule, strict routines, a formal dress code, all of which may be used to teach children and youth life skills such as time-management skills, hygiene, self-care, and values such as accountability and consistency. They are then able to apply these values and disciplines to their lives long after they have left the Circle. These procedures may appear to be highly regulative and maintaining these habits outside of the institutional environment may be difficult, particularly as they are forced upon the children/youth. A review in the Netherlands (Van Gageldonk & Bartels, 1990, cited in Knorth et al., 2007:125) showed that a structured living environment and the training of social skills and social competence were most effective when working with youth with emotional, psychological and behavioural problems. These are features found at the Circle.

In addition, part of the process of holistic development and holding the children and youth accountable, is to monitor and check on them through meetings, and discussing and reflecting with them their behaviour and strengths or “good points”, as mentioned by Grant in his interview. All these aspects are

intended to develop self-discipline which, it is hoped, will flow into other areas of their lives, such as their education. While these forms of instilling discipline may not lead directly to educational inclusion, they are part of the pedagogic process that builds a foundation for self-discipline, vital for knowledge and skills acquisition. This therefore contributes through an indirect process to educational inclusion. Besides the process of cultivating self-control through developing self-discipline among the children and youth, the staff also engages in a process of correcting disrespectful behaviour as a developmental form of discipline.

7.5.2 Discipline as correcting disrespectful behaviour

Another form of discipline that occurs at the Circle is that of correcting disrespectful behaviour. Disrespectful behaviour is to be expected from children and youth at risk in an institution such as the Circle. However, disrespectful behaviour among the children and youth at the Circle is rarely seen as it is managed and addressed, beginning with routine and structure. In addition, disrespectful behaviour is addressed immediately by teachers, childcare workers and other staff members if necessary. In this section the various ways in which staff disciplines disrespectful behaviour are discussed.

In the following extract from my interview with Jade, he explains what happens to him when he gets into trouble and how his misdemeanours and lack of respect are dealt with by staff:

Interviewer: OK, so what [happens] when you get into trouble, when you do something wrong, how do the teachers correct you?

Interviewee: They tell me, some of them call me in a private – in a corner, then they call me in the corner, then they tell me, you were very wrong. This is what you do wrong and we don't want to see that or hear that again. Then I will try not to do it again. I can't say I won't do it again. I can always try not to do it.

Interviewer: OK, that's being honest.

Interviewer 2: What are some of the things that you sometimes get into trouble with?

Interviewee: I have been smoking dagga at the school, marijuana at the school and the sirs didn't like it. I've been running away also. And my respect and my discipline for the sirs was not 100% or 50%. It was like 10 or 7% (Jade, Youth: 22).

In the extract Jade speaks about how the staff addresses his disrespectful behaviour. This behaviour includes smoking marijuana on the school premises and absconding from the Circle without informing anyone. He has also disrespected the teachers in various ways. When Jade behaves disrespectfully, teachers talk to him in private and explain what he did wrong and ask him to not repeat it. Jade says he tries not to repeat his disrespectful behaviour, but he cannot promise anything. Jade is honest when he says he has tried to change, because it seems hard for him to do so. His response is both honest and

shows he has a positive view of his teachers and staff who are attempting to help him improve his behaviour, rather than punish him. It is important for teachers and staff to correct these kinds of behaviours through dialogue and non-punitive means because it cultivates the kind of pro-social behaviour necessary for educational and social inclusion.

In the next interview extract a youth speaks about how his disrespectful behaviour is corrected in a non-punitive way and his appreciation of this approach:

But I enjoyed it; people are mostly kind, I can say, but there's sometimes when you do wrong you will get punished. But you don't actually get punished; you get taught a lesson. So, for instance, maybe um where you're allowed to watch TV you have to sleep. That's how it works, when you don't adhere, they take away your phone – cell phone or tell you also to go sleep or clean (Grant, Youth: 33).

In the extract Grant says that when he does something wrong, he is taught a lesson rather than punished. These lessons include privileges being removed, such as watching TV and having a cellular phone. These are similar disciplinary methods to those used by caring parents. Grant understands that there are consequences to his actions, and he shows himself to have developed the maturity to accept the consequences of his actions. He experiences the teachers and staff as being kind. In this context Grant feels cared for and this approach is more likely to promote cooperation and inclusion in the educational process.

In the next interview extract James shares the ways in which his disrespectful behaviour has been addressed by the staff, again in a developmental rather than punitive manner:

Interviewer: If you have done something wrong, how do the teachers and staff treat you?
Interviewer: If I have done something wrong, then...or the sirs scold me, that's what the sirs always do. But then the sirs call you in, the higher sirs or the principal, and then they will question you why you have done it, and if you will give them a good answer. And then they will still understand you. And if it wasn't good enough of an answer, then it was just unnecessary, then they will call in your parents, they will talk with your parents and all that stuff. Or they will punish you by not letting you go home on weekends. That's actually all the punishment we get. Yeah (James, Youth: 19).

James describes how teachers respond by scolding him when he does something wrong, whereas the principal would call him in to question him about the incident. If the reason for the misbehaviour is valid, the youth will be let off easily. If the disrespectful behaviour has no valid reason, his privileges would be removed, such as weekend leave, and staff would speak to the parents about their child's behaviour. Therefore, there is room provided for the children and youth to justify or explain why they

may have behaved disrespectfully, with the understanding that in some cases there may have been justification for the expression of their anger. This also gives staff the knowledge and time to address the underlying causes of incidences of disrespectful behaviour, as mentioned earlier.

In the next extract from an interview with the social worker, she describes the various ways in which disrespectful behaviour has been addressed in the past, and is currently addressed, in particular the withdrawal of certain privileges:

They used to, I don't see it as often anymore, do a detention, like mainstream schools also have. Like if the child is acting out, you have to sit in detention in the afternoon. Say from 2 [pm] when the child eats. You will still get your food, but not at 2 o'clock. When the rest of the boys eat in the mess. We will then arrange detention for them to sit in and give them words to write like they will not act in the class again, etc. and if and sometimes if a child doesn't behave well in school or [the] workshop, or he didn't attend school or [the] workshop the whole week like he was supposed to, we will then tell him that he can't go home for the weekend. We [are] going to withdraw [weekend leave] if it's fine with the family. That the child can go every alternative weekend, and then we will send him every alternative weekend. Then we will take one weekend away from the child and send him home for just one weekend. They like their soccer or their sport, "So you can't go practice tonight. You're not going to be part of the match." Some of the boys, not all of them, have cell phones [so] they can only get their phones in the afternoon [at 4] p.m. "You're not going to get your phone for that three hours. So today you didn't get your phone to discipline [you]" (Gabriella, Social Worker: 37).

Gabriella speaks about the various disciplinary methods used at the Circle. In this case detention and delaying meals were frequently used in the past, but now less frequently, as consequences of disrespectful behaviour. During detention, children/youth would be given sentences/lines to write. Currently the focus is on withdrawal of privileges. For example, if children/youth skip classes, their family visits or weekend leave is removed, or they are not allowed to participate in a match, and/or their phones are confiscated for a few hours. These consequences teach them certain lessons and lay down boundaries which, it is hoped, may improve their behaviour socially, as the staff want to encourage them to stay in class and continue learning. The next form of discipline used at the Circle is how teachers and staff attempt to calm uncontrollable behaviour.

7.5.3 Discipline as calming uncontrollable behaviour

'Uncontrollable behaviour' from children and youth at the Circle includes rage, tantrums, swearing, shouting, and crying, as reported in interviews and focus-group discussions with teachers at the Circle. Sometimes these behaviours are directed at the teachers, and the teachers and staff find these difficult

to manage at times. In this section, the teachers and staff describe their various attempts to handle these behaviours.

In this extract from a focus-group discussion, a teacher describes the process of managing a youth's acting-out behaviour, and the patience and understanding required by the teacher for this:

He's being staying here for two years, so now the two-year period is over, and he wants to go home, but because of circumstances he cannot go home, and that child is crying the whole time. So now he says, "I am not going to cooperate, I'm not going to do this, I'm not going to do that." If you in your class, you [may] have this one particular child acting out. You first try and calm him down – and your tone of voice – that's important. Your body language, your attitude. So um, in my case, then I would just tell, OK fine let him – he will carry on and give him some time maybe. He would maybe swear at me and say he doesn't want to do that and that. But I will still carry on, with all the other kids as if it's a very normal situation, and later in the day or the following day when the child is in a better mood I would call him again and say hello how are you and so on, "Tell me, you know that day... Was that the right attitude?" "No." "Why do you think it was not the right attitude?" And then we come to respect and feeling and all of that and then the child would then apologise.

Sometimes he would tell me to my face, "I am not going to apologise." Then we say, *ja* fine. You always have to find another time when you can speak to that child again. Because when he is in a terrible mood, nothing will actually register.

Then somebody else that has a better understanding and a better relationship with that child will then speak to that child. We can either get the child 5 minutes' time out, maybe one of the other colleagues, he would feel freer to go and sit there with that colleague. We do that sometimes. Take the child out of the one classroom, leave him in another classroom. Do some work there and then try and restore that relationship again the next day, and say fine, I think, you know what um, maybe you need to go back to your teacher and say sorry and so on. So that is part of the way we restore.

So, it's not holding a grudge against that child. You will never be able to last; it mustn't be seen as this personal attack on your ego. It does hurt but then again as teachers and as colleagues, we can speak to one another again and then as I say, "Another time, you can speak to that particular child." That kid will come back and sometimes say, "No, I'm sorry that I did that" and just carry on (Teacher, Focus Group: 22).

The teacher explained how a child acted out of control and how difficult it is sometimes to manage this kind of behaviour in class, without taking it personally. She gives one example of a child who refused to cooperate, swore at her and had an aggressive and negative attitude. She describes a few methods she uses in collaboration with, and supported by, her colleagues. She talks to him calmly and uses a tone that does not provoke the child even further. She would be aware of her own body language and attitude and consciously allow time for the child to cool off. She would then attempt to address the issue at a better time which may be a few days later, by helping the child reflect on his behaviour. Hopefully by the end of their interaction the child would apologise.

In some cases, the child may not be willing to apologise, especially if he is not in a good mood, a situation which makes calming the child and correcting this kind of behaviour more difficult for a teacher. In a case such as the one described above, the course of action taken by the teacher would be to remove the child from the classroom and collaborate with other teachers and staff who may have a better relationship with the child in the hope that their engaging with and calming the child may be more effective. This relationship is key as it allows the child to open up to a trusted adult and eventually have the underlying issues resolved. That adult would then facilitate the restoration and support of the child and his teacher.

Another example of this is that of another teacher who stated that “everybody and everybody had a problem with Luke [pseudonym]. Adam [referring to himself in the third-person] had limited problems with Luke” (Adam, Teacher: 22), but Adam’s unique relationship with this particular child facilitated cooperation, which none of the other teachers were able to do. Adam is the only teacher at the Circle who was able to build a good rapport with this child and spoke well of him despite his behaviour. To address the child’s behavioural issues, Adam attempted to understand the child’s problems, share his own story with the child, and give him life advice. Adam said that while one does not [have to] have all the professional skills, one can nevertheless have a positive influence on the child.

In the last part of the extract above, the teacher in the focus group also explains how, in cases such as this, it is easy to hold a grudge against the child. This may make teaching the children/youth an unpleasant experience. The teacher also tries not to take such disrespectful behaviour personally, even though it may be hurtful. Sometimes the child will return to apologise, but there is no guarantee that he will do so.

The teacher in the focus group described the variety of ways that teachers at the Circle address uncontrollable behaviour, and how important it is for a teacher to be aware of his or her own body language, tone of voice, and attitude, not to hold grudges or take things personally, and to collaborate with other adults who may have better relationships with the child. Discipline in the case described was very nuanced and required a high level of emotional intelligence, good interpersonal skills, collaboration with other colleagues, and the ability to not hold grudges.

In the next extract from an interview with a teacher, she describes her own unique approach to calming uncontrollable behaviour in the classroom:

Some of them would um maybe um throw a tantrum and throw their books around and so on, and you do get that, but then you just have to stay calm and um carry on and um well address that boy but he must be calm first. You cannot have a conversation if someone is going out of his mind, so then I would tell the other kids, okay let's, we can carry on so long. I will speak to Johnny, or whoever; maybe Johnny wants to walk out the class um he can cool off outside and when he comes back, I'll always ask him what, what was, what should you have done? What do we always do? Do we walk out of the class? No, now what must we ask for? Permission and so on; then they would come back and say sorry you know, and then we would just carry on again, so um something like that is what I have learned is that you must have a lot of patience. You cannot get into their heads always. Maybe I will never understand them fully because I will never be able to understand the experiences they had, violence they saw, and hardships they went through and it um all has an impact (Lisa, Former Head of the Academic Department: 30)

Lisa describes the type of uncontrollable behaviour she would encounter in the classroom. This includes children/youth throwing tantrums and throwing books around. Lisa stays calm and waits for the child first to calm down, then allows the child to sit outside the classroom. Eventually, when he is ready, she talks to him and asks him reflective questions. Lisa also shows compassion and admits that she will never be able to understand or imagine their experiences. Lisa acknowledges that their backgrounds and experiences play a significant role in influencing their negative behaviour. She is able to address the situation with calmness and patience. This extract demonstrates what uncontrollable behaviour might look like in the classroom, and highlights the importance of compassion for a teacher, because, without it, the problem might escalate and cause further harm to the various people involved. Compassion helps the teacher to facilitate difficult situations like these and to help children/youth with emotional and behavioural difficulties to feel cared for and experience a sense of inclusion within the learning context. There are also incidences of conflict and violence among the children/youth. How teachers and staff address these is discussed in the next section.

7.5.4 Discipline as conflict among learners

Conflict and physical fights may arise among those children and youths who have experienced emotional and behavioural barriers to learning, as is the case with many children and youths at the Circle. These conflicts may occur in the classroom and affect the learning process. In the following extracts from interviews and focus-group discussions, the types of conflict and how these are managed by teachers and staff are described and discussed.

In the following interview extract a youth speaks about how teachers at the Circle address fights among the children/youths when they break out:

First, if you fight, the teachers would scold you and the teachers will come to us and shout, "Leave them!" They would hold me back and the other boy back and keep us apart. Then they'll talk to us. If they still continue, they [teachers] will again pull us apart. If we still continue, we get smacked, then we calm down. Then, after that, the teacher will talk to us, saying, "No, that's not good." They write the incident in the book and say who fought. Clinton [educational psychologist] will talk to us saying, "We don't fight here. It's not good." [Unclear] That boy hit me, but OK, I forgive him. It's like that. Sometimes, the boys don't stop. The coloured boys don't fight like us [as black people]. Us, if we fight, we fight once and it's finished, but them [the coloured boys], they will fight and finish and they lose to me, for example, they become like a friend and forget the fight, and [then] he will suddenly come after you and stab you. Because they still feel angry... The teachers say I should look out, watch your back and be careful because of the boys. The boys realise I watch my back and eventually leave. Sometimes we just fight for stupid things, doom, doom, doom – finish. We hit each other and we don't talk with them (Xola, Youth: 13).

In this extract Xola describes what happens when fights break out among the children/youths at the Circle. Teachers respond in a number of ways. These include (initially) shouting at the children/youth, pulling and keeping the children/youths apart, speaking to the children/youths and giving warnings. A teacher even encouraged Xola to watch his back and to be careful. Teachers and staff use a variety of methods to manage conflict among the children/youths which happens spontaneously and quickly.

In the next extract from a focus-group discussion among teachers, a teacher speaks about how they address, resolve and reduce conflict among children/youths:

So um, for us, we can pick up these things – this is going to happen, this is going to happen. Don't allow these two together, you know. Even within the classroom sometimes we pick up, look, he's – there are rival gangs within the classroom and then try to separate them. Look like Mr – my colleague said, there's an 'A' and a 'B' group. Sometimes we have to balance the groups even. Your A group comes to school to academics at a particular time and your B group will be then in your workshops. So sometimes you will have to take somebody out of your group and place them in the B, because within that group there's rivalry also. So that is how we try to balance it out. You know, all these kinds of differences that you have. What we've learnt through sport, we can eliminate a lot of these problems where we get them to play together as a team. Whether it's rugby, whether it's soccer, and we, what we've done now lately, as staff, we go down there and we support them. Later when they come to class, for example, one boy in particular that we had in a panel meeting. And what acts out like a team we'll get a panel meeting together consisting of everybody at the school that interacts with him. And we will get him to talk to, "But this is, we're all finding the same problem with you. How can we eliminate it? How can we work around this, and say look, eliminate all of those? (Teacher, Focus Group: 39)

The teachers and staff are aware of tensions and potential conflict between some of the children and youths. They are also aware of who gets along and who does not get along with whom. The Circle divides their children/youth into two groups and these groups rotate between the academic and technical departments and other activities. This grouping helps to split up rivals and manage tensions and conflicts among them. Sport is also used as a tool to resolve conflict and build relationships. Other than that, the teachers and staff convene panel meetings that involve the relevant parties in order to resolve the

problem or cause of the conflict. From these examples, one can discern several strategies which the teachers and staff use to attempt to address conflict among the children/youths. This is an important issue to address if one wants to create an environment conducive to learning and educational inclusion. Thus, relationships need to be managed in order to achieve this.

In summary, this section on discipline addressed a number of the disciplinary issues that arise inside and outside of the classroom as revealed by the data. These issues included the lack of self-discipline, disrespectful behaviour, uncontrollable behaviour, and conflicts among children/youths. The section also addressed the ways in which teachers and staff attempt to address these disciplinary issues using a variety of strategies in order ultimately to promote social and educational inclusion.

These strategies included using structure and routine, dialogue, lessons on correcting disrespectful behaviour, removing certain privileges, such as weekend and family visits, detention (less frequently used currently), not allowing the children/youths to participate in sports for a period, attempting to understand the underlying causes of misbehaviour, remaining calm, using emotional intelligence, addressing the children/youths who are acting out later when they are calmer, not holding grudges, using patience and compassion, issuing warnings, and convening panel meetings.

As was mentioned earlier, Carstens (2012:5) argues that discipline has multiple meanings and roles in the context of daily life, and these have emancipatory and transformative potential for those disciplined. He is of the view that the potential of discipline in its various forms can be discovered and realised when youths voice their opinions about it, and, in so doing, meaningful relations can be developed between the children/youths, their teachers, and the rest of the staff in an educational institution. This process is visible at the Circle through the various forms and strategies of discipline trialled and implemented. These disciplinary strategies are essentially developmental and non-punitive, as advised by the Circle's disciplinary policy, and, by using these strategies, the staff appear to address disciplinary issues affectively in order to manage relationships conducive to the learning environment, which in turn promotes learning and both social and educational inclusion. Furthermore, Pereira and Lavoie (2016:393-394) found that the school 'climate', which comprises the laws and policies, the physical space, safety, discipline, and fairness, has been associated with pro-social behaviour. Despite the teacher and staff interactions with the children/youths, it is the physical space (see Section 6.3.2), the sense of safety, and the kinds of disciplinary measures advocated at the Circle that contribute towards improving and resolving difficult behaviour. These practices promote educational inclusion, and all of these are

necessary interventions for the sake of the long-term future of both children/youths and the institution (Deacon, 2006:180).

Institutions such as the Circle could be viewed in light of the description Giroux (2015) gives of these: to contain children who do not fit in ordinary schools, as they do not submit to the standard of obedience required for them to fit in, nor do they conform to the social norm. There are seemingly no alternative solutions to behavioural problems, and mostly rigid, zero-tolerance policies exist to address disciplinary issues, especially at mainstream schools. Mark describes this narrow, ‘fatalistic’ and insensitive approach in an extract from an interview:

So institutional intervention is always to my mind the last way of – literally the last man standing. Having said that I recognise that there is a need for institutions at their heightened level of support to reconnect children to their communities. But there is a kind of notion that these are kids that have done wrong – these are kids that have not taken the opportunities presented to them. Look our country is free – there’s access to education. These are kids that are making life for other children unbearable – they don’t want to listen. They do all of the things that are wrong... So, there’s a kind of fatalism in dealing with kids at the levels of schools where kids are not performing [academically and as they should]. They get suspended, and they get pushed out [of school]. There isn’t an ethos in most schools saying, “How can we help? How can we get the match right? What are the bigger underlying issues that are getting these kids to act out in this particular way at school, or community?” (Mark, Centre Manager: 26).

Marks shares very important points about how children who behave ‘badly’ are treated in society and in ordinary schools. The schools do not consider restorative means of addressing disciplinary issues and some of these children and youths who misbehave are sent to institutions such as the Circle to take care of the problems. As a result, children and youths who behave ‘badly’ are removed from a school and isolated by being placed at these special institutions. While the journey from school to a child and youth care centre is not a linear process, from what can be observed from the interviews is that there are many reasons a child and youth care centre is viewed as a possible solution. Firstly, it could provide specialised support for children who may not find it in any other place. Secondly, it can be viewed as a strategy of control to isolate children who deviate from the norm or from socially acceptable behaviour. By isolating children and youth at risk, new forms of alienation and detachment from family, the community, and peers are developed which children may experience as punishment for their ‘bad’ behaviour. This may have long-term implications for them, such as losing the connection to family and culture as discussed in Section 6.2.1. This separation may not be viewed as punishment in the traditional way but may be viewed and experienced by these ‘children at risk’, as separation from the ‘normal’ societal life, and as punishment.

Some children and youth can see the benefits accompanying separation from family and peers due to the dangerous circumstances in which they were living, and as a better alternative to juvenile detention. In many of these cases, separating children from these harmful circumstances is a safety precaution and a necessary intervention, in comparison with the alternatives. However, as has been argued, the long-term consequence of this separation is lack of preparedness for further study and for work opportunities, besides the stigma attached to being at a special school or being institutionalised. There is therefore a clear tension regarding the purpose of institutions such as the Circle.

7.6 Conclusion

In this chapter, the descriptions and discussions from the data have contributed substantially to answering the question: How do the teachers' teaching approaches promote the educational inclusion of children and youth at risk? This question was answered by grouping the data into various aspects of teaching and learning at the Circle. These included the relationships between teachers and their learners, which precede, or can be seen as prerequisites to teaching and learning and as creating and sustaining an environment conducive to learning. This was followed by how teachers approach barriers to learning, how the curriculum is mediated and adapted, with a critique thereof. The teaching methods used for various subject areas and the various disciplinary issues and strategies used to create an environment conducive to learning were also addressed. The findings of each sub-theme were discussed in turn.

What the findings which can be said to answer this question reveal is that there are a number of approaches teachers use to include children and youth at risk in the learning process. Some of these approaches can be argued to have more merit than others. The learning process is preceded by, and based upon, a positive relationship between the teacher and the child/youth in order to promote trust and cooperation during the teaching and learning process. This kind of relationship also helps children/youths at risk develop a bond or attachment both to the teacher and the school, where previously at other institutions, detachment or alienation from the teacher led to their lack of interest in learning and school. What one can learn from this is that in order to promote the engagement of children and youth at risk, or those who experience emotional and behavioural barriers to learning, a bond with a teacher is a key component to that educational engagement.

In terms of how teachers approach the various barriers to learning faced by the children and youths, the data revealed firstly that the barriers are systemic and societal, and intrinsic. The systemic and societal

barriers are, however, linked to communities and individuals being historically marginalised and excluded from quality education. This has several ripple effects which lead to children and youth, such as the ones in this study, to be uniquely affected, and affected in various ways (see Chapter 5). One such systemic barrier to learning mentioned in the chapter is the outcomes-based CAPS curriculum which is why the Circle has adapted it to the needs of their learners. Another barrier to learning is the low literacy and numeracy levels of the children and youth at the Circle, owing to several background factors. The way in which the teachers address these barriers is by creating a safe and positive learning environment where learners will not feel intimidated or shamed.

Teachers at the Circle mediate the CAPS curriculum by adapting to the level, pace and learning needs of their learners. This was observed to have both positive and negative outcomes. The positive outcomes are that learners can learn at their own pace and there is the time and space for them to be able to find and receive the help they need. The Curriculum of Care is also holistic and considers all the needs of the learners, including their emotional needs, not just their learning needs. The negative outcomes of this are that the learners may not be on par with their peers at ordinary schools and may leave the institution without having the necessary qualifications to cope in TVET and tertiary institutions. This may lead to further disadvantages for them in the future. The critique of this holistic approach showed a clear tension and imbalance between care and achievement, or adequate preparation for life outside of the institution. Given that the staff at the Circle sees the greatest need of children and youth at risk as being affective, they place greater weight and importance on care than on academic progress and adequate preparation for life outside of the institution. While this may be helpful in the short term, it may cause more damage in the long term in terms of accessing further education and gainful employment.

The teaching methods used by the teachers vary from teacher to teacher, depending on their subject area and learning objectives. It seems there is great emphasis on building self-esteem and confidence, as the teachers are sensitive to the barriers to learning experienced by their learners. It can, however, be argued that there exists a converse effect of being sensitive to learners' needs, and that is having low academic expectations and not advancing learners fast enough for them to catch up with the level at which they should be. Also, because the same adapted curriculum is used for all the learners, it can be argued that these are special rather than inclusive classes (Boston-Kemple, 2012:51). Furthermore, there may be pedagogical barriers to learning as teachers may be uncertain as to whether they are using the correct

methods and those methods appropriate for their particular learners. These insecurities may stem from inadequate pre- and in-service teacher training programmes.

The last approach to teaching children and youth at risk involved the issues of discipline. As is anticipated when working with children and youths who experience emotional and behavioural barriers to learning, there will inevitably be many disciplinary issues which need to be addressed and managed in order to promote an effective learning environment. Several disciplinary issues were observed to arise at the Circle on a daily basis, as revealed by the data. These include a lack of self-discipline, disrespectful behaviour, uncontrollable behaviour, and conflict – often violent – among the children/youths. Teachers and staff approached these issues in several ways, including using their relationships with the children/youths as leverage to speak to and calm them, emotional intelligence, removing privileges, and convening panel meetings. Addressing disciplinary problems, especially inside the classroom, which often interrupted the teaching and learning process, is necessary in order to create an environment conducive to learning, and eventually to include those children and youths, who would otherwise have been excluded, into a positive inclusive learning process.

What can be observed and concluded from these findings is that there are multiple and often eco-systemic approaches to educational inclusion of children and youth at risk. This suggests that the backgrounds of the children/youths should be considered, that the institutional environment needs to adapt to the various needs of its learners, and appropriate teaching and learning methods should be implemented. Furthermore, it needs to be acknowledged that these pedagogies may not be effective in disrupting the negative patterns of these children's and youths' lives in the long term. Outside of the Circle, the children/youths return to community, family and peer values that may negate the positive changes. There thus exists the possibility of a perpetuation of risk, exclusion, and inequality in the lives of these children/youths, as is discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

All these aspects are important for both the social and educational inclusion of children and youths at risk. In the next chapter, a synthesis of the main findings of Chapters 5, 6 and 7 is provided.

CHAPTER EIGHT: Synthesis of the findings

8.1 Introduction

The main aim of this thesis was to examine the extent and process of educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk at a child and youth care centre in the Western Cape. This chapter synthesises the findings emerging from this qualitative study in order to focus on the ways in which education and care are provided for children and youth at risk at a particular child and youth care centre. The discussion is based on the conceptual framework (figure 2) presented in Chapter 3, and explains the relationship between the youths' backgrounds, the institutional culture, and the teaching approaches, and how these together make up a particular approach to creating social and education inclusion. From the findings, six overarching themes are highlighted and discussed in this chapter.

8.2 Theme 1: The high-risk factors youth in South Africa are exposed to

This theme synthesises the high-risk factors the youths in this study had been exposed to at the time of the study, and that led to their referral to the Circle. The risk factors found are associated with the institutions the youths have attended, their family circumstances, their community, and their peers, discussed in detail in Chapter 5. It was found that the context in which the youths were and are located, and their response to adversities, largely determines the type and level of risks such youths are exposed to. In this section, the main conceptual findings pertaining to high-risk factors are discussed.

Common patterns observed among the youth in this study show a high number of institutional transfers before they reach the age of 18. All these transfers are referred to by Carson et al. (2017) as non-normative transitions, which are unexpected rather than those inevitable and normative school transitions, such as transition from primary to high school. These non-normative transitions were shown to have affected these youths in different ways. While these transitions have afforded these youths new opportunities, they have also created transitioning challenges, such as instability in their personal life, developmental interruptions and disrupted academic progress, as was found in a study conducted by Carson et al. (2017). In addition, these transitions may contribute towards inequality over time in terms of developmental norms when these youths are compared with their peers across lifetimes, as found by Langenkamp (2016:1-2). Carson et al. (2017) report the kinds of opportunities that emerge from these transitions, which include “knifing-off”, and desisting negative peer associations, such as gangsters. It

also provides the opportunity for social mobility, gaining new social networks, and for receiving appropriate support which may be linked to various forms of social capital. In the case of the youths in this current study, “knifing-off” of negative peers was found to have occurred among some of the youths, while some youths remained in contact with negatively influencing peers.

Furthermore, while the scope of this research makes it difficult to determine the extent of social mobility, what could be inferred from the youth and staff interviews is that social mobility was in fact limited, as youths, who themselves may have undergone positive transitions during their time at the Circle, often returned to their unchanged families and communities. The youths in the study were also exposed to new social networks at the Circle as there were many opportunities to meet new people who gave these youths all kinds of support. However, the study done by Carson et al. (2017) only focused on normative and non-normative transitions rather than the number and nature of the kinds of transitions discussed in the current study. In addition, similar to Gottfredson’s (2005) argument that institutions may expose children and youths to similar peers who are linked to, and continue to associate with, delinquent peers who engage in anti-social behaviour, the youths at the Circle often come from similar communities and backgrounds. These negative associations formed or rekindled at the Circle may cause further problems, despite the effort of a youth to “knife-off” existing negative peers. “Knifing-off”, and maintaining these decisions to do so, may therefore be difficult for these youths, especially if they are exposed to similar peers at the Circle.

Furthermore, many of the communities from which these youths come are plagued by various social ills that are cumulative and coalesce, exposing residents to high-risk factors. Some characteristics of these communities, as was described in Chapter 5, include high levels of crime, poverty and unemployment, a lack of infrastructure and recreational activities, and the prevalence of gang activity with its link to drugs and violence, as was found by the Western Cape Government (2014) in a study which conducted a situational analysis on youth in the Western Cape. The findings of the current study suggest that these social ills continue to produce high-risk factors and permutations thereof, which are perpetuated year after year, contributing to the lack of well-being and to the exposure of risk for future generations. Furthermore, the data and literature reveal that not all those who live in these communities are exposed to high-risk factors, as the kinds and extent of risks individuals are exposed to, which may arise from their institutional experience, community, families, and peers, are unique to each individual, and their responses to these risks determine whether risks are exacerbated or mitigated.

8.3 Theme 2: The conflict between the rules, norms and values across social fields

This theme discusses the conflict between the rules, norms and values – or culture – governing the social fields in which the children and youth in this study are located, and the impact of this conflict on the lives of these youths.

The findings of the current study revealed that the most common high-risk factor under the category ‘peers’ was gangs. Applying neo-institutional theory (Scott, 1995, 2001) to gangs (or each gang), an interpretation of the social phenomenon of gangs could be that gangs are characterised by their own rules, norms and values, and that these are similar to those of organisations and businesses. In fact, many gangs can be said to have a business component as many gang members engage in drug-dealing. They may therefore take on some institutional characteristics such as establishing rules and regulations, creating a system of rewards and punishments, forming hierarchical structures with incentives for promotion, establishing an ‘institutional’ culture with its own values, and also fostering a sense of belonging and collective purpose.

In addition, because gangs exist for various reasons, including economic gain, physical security, and survival, they may not necessarily be perceived as negative by those involved in them, and who form part of them as found by the Western Cape Government (2014:65). They are a means to an end: to meet social needs such as providing criminal career opportunities and protection. These are some of the reasons why many youths may find them attractive. Those who participate in gang activities are forced to conform to the gang rules, norms, and values, and thus inadvertently and consequently are unable to abide by the rules, norms and values of social fields. The data showed that the youths participating in the study and involved in gangs are forced to prioritise and abide strictly by the rules, norms and values of their gangs, which indirectly and directly negatively affect other areas of their lives. One example is the vulnerable position gang members’ families are placed in. This was the case with one youth’s stepfather who was assassinated because of the youth’s actions while the youth was part of the gang (see Chapter 5).

Furthermore, there is a conflict that arises between social fields which are structure spaces such as the family, school, peers and community that organise around specific kinds of capitals such as resources, status and goods. These conflicts arise in the case of gangs when the struggle for capitals within the gang becomes more important to its members than the culture embodied in other social fields, owing to

the gang's culture of fear and the threat of death. For example, the demands of the gang may overpower the demands of a school owing to a youth's fear and the threat of injury and death if the gang's orders are not executed. Success in one social field, such as the gang, may mean failure in another, such as that of the school, as was observed with all the youths in this study. Children and youths in gangs may therefore find it difficult to meet the demands and expectations of all the social fields at the same time and instead choose their gang since they have much more to lose by not choosing the gang. The gang, in comparison with other social fields, may therefore hold more power and control over their members' lives, which may lead to destruction or neglect in other areas of a youth's life. In summary, using the lens of neo-institutional theory, the findings reveal that youth exposure to and involvement with gangs has detrimental consequences, and negatively affects their other social fields.

The Circle, however, attempts to break these kinds of negative associations by creating a safe, inclusive and caring environment for the children and youths by separating them from the problematic draconian rules, norms and values operating in other social fields (see Chapter 6). Some of these positive interventions are, firstly, physical protection from serious life-threatening situations. Secondly, the Circle takes care to meet their basic needs, such as the need for shelter, warmth, food, health, and care. Thirdly, they can access the kind of education that suits their level and pace. Finally, they are exposed to pro-social communities, arts, sports, and cultural activities. The children and youth are therefore able to experience life positively within the boundaries of an institution, and through it receives an adequate education which contributes towards their educational and social inclusion.

However, the findings reveal that the separation of these youths from other social fields, and their acquisition of new positive values at the Circle, may be successful in the short term, but could be ruptured in the long term, given their transitions between social fields and the need to meet the demands and expectations of each. Thus, given these transitions, it can be inferred that the child/youth would in all probability be unable to sustain the positive changes acquired. The current study does not look at the impact of the Circle on the lives of the youth who spend a few years there, since this is beyond the scope of the study. It is thus uncertain what the long-term impact of the institutional intervention has had, or could have, on the youths, except through anecdotal evidence, which suggests that not many alumni have found steady jobs, some have relapsed into old drug habits, entered a life of crime, and ended up in prison, while others have been killed owing to gang-related activities. However, neo-institutional theory (Scott, 1995, 2001) assists in our understanding of why it may be difficult for children and youth to sustain positive changes in the long term, as each social field constitutes its own rules, norms and

values which require children and youth to adjust their behaviour to each. In addition, neo-institutional theory also helps to understand the systemic and social factors militating against successful life outcomes manifesting in social fields.

8.4 Theme 3: The political nature of the Circle's work

Despite the Circle not being explicitly political, the very nature and approach of its work is political as it challenges society's perception and treatment of those children and youth in state care, and those who are vulnerable and at risk. These children and youth at risk are often perceived as criminal and problematic (Giroux, 2012, 2015). Because the Circle's staff view the children and youth at its institution in a positive light, they treat and relate to them with kindness. They do so by providing a therapeutic rather than punitive environment. This may be contrary to other state care institutions (Parliamentary Monitoring Group, 2000). It allows children and youths the freedom to move, but with supervision, as opposed to their being locked up and strictly controlled; it embeds the Circle of Courage in its programme, and implements a differentiated curriculum called the Curriculum of Care to adjust to the needs of the children and youth in the care of the Circle.

However, it can be argued that there are some problems with the way in which these subtle political acts are translated into practice, as discussed by Allington and Walmsley (1995: viii, 2007), or what Lounsbury and Zhao (2013:21) refer to as 'decoupling'. This means that policy is not translated into practice, or it is 'decoupled' from practice. An example of this was discussed in Chapter 7: The Curriculum of Care, which is a differentiated curriculum implemented at the Circle and serves as a critique of the rigidity and lock-step nature of the CAPS curriculum. However, this curriculum does not meet and relate to the long-term learning needs and contextual challenges of children/youth at risk. Despite the Curriculum of Care's good intentions, it can be argued that it places more emphasis on care than on education, thus unintentionally deprioritising academic progress for those who need it the most.

However, it can be argued from the findings that the emphasis on care is valid, as an unexpected finding revealed that the greatest needs of children and youth at risk were affective and relational. This strongly suggests that love, care, support, and belonging are their greatest needs that should be met before teaching and learning can take place. These affective needs (need for belonging, to be affirmed) therefore need to be addressed as depicted by Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs in order for these children and youth to feel safe and secure (need for safety and security) and for them to eventually engage in learning

(need for self-actualisation). However, the possibility exists that focusing on care without the necessary academic intensity may be detrimental for the children and youth in the long term as confirmed by Attar-Swartz (2009).

As discussed in the literature, institutionalisation is a political process, and the form it takes depends on the power of its actors (Powell, 2007:5). From the data, the institution's leadership can be seen to play an important role in creating and steering the Circle's culture, and despite the influence and strong leadership of Mark, the centre manager, he is limited by the regulative elements that are imposed on him and his staff by their employer, the state, elements that dominate and restrict the institution's very existence, function, and form. Interviews revealed that for Mark and the staff, radical change in this context is too risky for the actors within the Circle. The Circle therefore does not engage in radical transformative interventions, such as disruptive pedagogies (Mills, 1997:35-36; De Finney et al., 2011:372) which may disrupt the social order, nor do the actors address the structural patterns influencing the perception and treatment of children and youth at risk. The Circle's work on children and youth at risk therefore does not address larger societal and systemic issues, but only attempts to resolve them on the individual and intrinsic level, an approach which may only provide short-term relief. It is unable, or it is beyond its scope, to address the larger structural, systemic and societal issues that perpetuate inequality. This is due to its own limitations and it therefore cannot provide long-term solutions and interventions for children and youth at risk. The influence of this institution in broader society is thus not sufficiently substantial to disrupt larger societal patterns of inequality and structural violence. Without structural change and systemic interventions, the rules, norms, and values in society which negatively affect children and youth therefore continue to be perpetuated in society, particularly in those societies from which the youth come, as argued by Scott (2001:4) and these rules, norms and values ultimately affect the core values, attitudes and behaviours of members of a society.

8.5 Theme 4: Meeting the educational needs of children and youth at risk

One major conceptual theme that emerged as a finding in Chapter 7 is the nature of the relationship between the teaching approach used by the teachers, and the background of the children and youth at the Circle. The findings show that this relationship is important and needs to be positive for effective learning to take place.

It is firstly important to highlight that the Circle has special institutional arrangements and resources available to it, since it is a unique specialised institution. Therefore, ordinary schools do not have access to the same kinds of resources to support their learners who may be at risk and should not be expected to deliver the same results as other well-resourced schools. Other reasons the Circle is different from ordinary/mainstream schools are the way in which children/youth are referred to the Circle throughout the year rather than at the start of each year, the provision of education support services, the class sizes, and the various kinds of extra-curricular activities.

The findings show that the schools the youths in the study previously attended could not cater for their affective needs, nor address family, peer, and community problems that interrupted their learning. These schools seemed to be ill-equipped, did not possess a strong ethos of care, were under-resourced, may have been not had strong boundaries between the school and its community, and the staff at these schools appeared to be inadequately trained to address the needs and problems many of their learners were facing. These school cultures appeared unaccommodating and unable to keep these youths engaged in school and learning. The rules, norms, and values of these schools may therefore have created unintentional exclusionary mechanisms. Therefore, it is suggested that the teacher–learner relationships, the curriculum, and the teaching and learning approaches at these schools were unable to prevent these youths from disengaging from school. In addition, the findings suggest that children and youth are at high risk of early school disengagement because of systemic barriers such as the CAPS curriculum. This curriculum has been shown to be highly exclusionary for children and youth at risk, especially when taken together with societal/social and contextual barriers, such as gang and domestic violence, or intrinsic barriers such as attention deficit disorder (ADD) and foetal alcohol syndrome (FAS).

In order to address the intrinsic and pedagogical problems in ordinary schools, there are a few lessons and principles that could be drawn from the Circle that may be applicable and relevant across all educational institutions. The findings revealed several considerations that ideally, and if realistically possible, need to be applied before teaching children and youth at risk, as described and argued for by Pereira and Lavoie (2016:383). These include the precedence of care before learning, since children and youth have a great need for care and love, followed by an appropriate balance of care and an intensive education programme, since many children and youth at risk need to catch up on the curriculum. In addition, to effectively re-engage children and youth at risk in learning, positive teacher–learner relationships, addressing the barriers to learning, an appropriate and intensive curriculum, appropriate

and empowering teaching methods with high teacher expectations, and various developmental and restorative disciplinary methods are important.

The findings also revealed that some children/youth at the institution had a desire to learn and progress academically, and had shown interest in the subject content, but only as a result of high expectations from teachers, patience and the teacher's belief in his/her learners' abilities. Taken together, these approaches (care, high expectations, patience, and teacher's belief in their learners' abilities) and those described by Pereira and Lavoie (2016:383) form a unique pedagogic approach, which focuses specifically on the educational engagement of children and youth at risk. All of these have the potential to be effective within a flexible and accommodating institutional culture. It can therefore be argued that it is important to highlight the importance of an institutional structure, culture, and the resources necessary to support the learning needs of children and youth at risk. This has been argued by other scholars (Booth & Ainscow, 2002:7-8; Smink & Reimer, 2005:5).

8.6 Theme 5: Lack of systemic teacher training to work with children and youth at risk

The findings revealed that many of the teachers at the Circle have not been formally trained to teach children and youth at risk, but instead received in-service training. The teachers appeared to have generally improved their skills on the job. In general, the chances of availability of training for teachers to teach learners who have scholastic gaps and have experienced adverse life challenges are slim, as mentioned by a few scholars (Dart, 2006; Polat, 2011:53). This finding is supported by the newly qualified teacher who stated that she had not been prepared for working with these kinds of learners (see Chapter 7). It therefore seems that many existing teacher training programmes do not consider the contexts in which teachers may be teaching, and thus omit to prepare teachers sufficiently for the social and educational challenges many learners face in the current education system similar to what Englebrecht (2006: 257) found. This therefore seems to be a systemic issue, which, if teachers are not adequately trained, may lead to increasing numbers of children and youth disengaging from school.

8.7 Theme 6: The larger problem of youths not in education, employment or training (NEET)

The findings reveal that the phenomena and problems experienced by children and youth at risk form part of a larger systemic and societal problem of youth NEET of non-compulsory school-going age. As mentioned in the context chapter (Chapter 2), the NEET population stood at 39, 3% in the second quarter of 2018 (Stats SA, 2018:8). The kinds of risks facing the NEET population are much broader in scope than the risks discussed in the current study, all of which contribute and lead to educational and social exclusion. This phenomenon may be caused by a combination of systemic, societal, pedagogic, and intrinsic factors.

The current study, however, only focused on a specific high-risk population which is a small portion of the larger NEET population. However, after leaving state care, this group has a strong possibility of joining the larger NEET population, since research shows (Dixon, 2007:19; Dickens, 2018:558) that there is great difficulty for those who leave residential care to participate in education, employment and training. It is therefore important to highlight how some of the issues faced by children and youth at risk addressed in this study may, to some degree, be indicative of the issues affecting the larger NEET population, such as educational and eventually social exclusion. Part of the problem is a rigid and largely irrelevant education system, which is visible and enforced in the schools some of the youths in this study have attended. Therefore, it can be argued from the findings of the current study that interventions, such as a more caring and an inclusive institutional culture, or the pedagogies described earlier, are not sufficient in addressing these larger societal and systemic issues. Structural determinants therefore hinder the full education and social inclusion of marginalised youth.

8.8 Conclusion

This chapter provided a synthesis of the main findings in order to address the main research question: In what ways are care of and education for children and youth at risk provided for by a child and youth care centre in order to promote their educational and social inclusion? This chapter discussed six themes which point to the high-risk factors youth are exposed to in South Africa, the conflict between the cultures governing different social fields, the political nature of the Circle's work, meeting the educational needs of children and youth at risk, the systemic lack of appropriate teacher training to address the needs of children and youth at risk, and the larger societal and systemic issue of youth NEET

which shows the extent to which children and youth have fallen out of the education system. From the synthesis of these findings one can argue that providing education and care for children and youth at risk is not only a matter of inclusive education practices, but is a much broader societal issue, with structural and systemic determinants. In the next chapter, the final conclusion with recommendations and the contribution of the study is provided.

CHAPTER NINE: Recommendations, Contributions and Reflections

9.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary and discussion of the main findings, recommendations for policy makers, teacher trainers and child and youth care centres, and a discussion of the main contributions of the study to the field. It then provides suggestions for further research and concludes with a reflection on the research journey.

9.2 Summary of the Findings

The summary of the findings of this study is linked to the three research subsidiary questions and begins by first (re)describing the risk factors found in the past experience of the youth that led to their referral to the Circle; second, it describes and analyses those rules, norms and values of the institution that foster social inclusion, and finally it describes and analyses the teaching approaches that foster, or are intended to foster, the educational inclusion of children and youth at risk.

9.2.1 Summary of risk factors found in the social fields that contributed to the youths' referral to a child and youth care centre

In Chapter 5, the answer to the first research subsidiary question is discussed. "What are the risk factors experienced by the youth, found in the previous institution(s), the family, communities/neighbourhoods and among their peers that contribute to their being referred to the child and youth care centre?" The findings of the current study are discussed, along with the factors and events that led to the youth in the study being institutionalised at the Circle. A summary of the findings is given below.

The first key finding is in relation to the schools/institutions that the youths in the study attended prior to attending the Circle. A common theme is that the schools attended by some of these youths in the study had unintentionally aggravated risk factors by not providing the support needed in the form of trusted adults, proper counselling, and physical protection. From this it can be argued that some schools inadvertently expose their children and youth to further risk, resulting in their becoming detached from, and leaving, school early. What is clear from the findings, however, is that after children/youth leave school prematurely, if they encounter the legal system, they may experience multiple transfers between

different kinds of institutions which, on average among the youths in the study, were five transfers before the age of 18. The effects these non-normative transitions have on the youth include both instability in their social, emotional, and education development, and weakened attachments to people, school, and education.

The second key finding shows that the youth's family life may also act as both risk and protective factor, depending on the nature of family relationships and home circumstances. Families with a low socio-economic status are unable to provide for their child's basic needs, which, if these children are located in high-risk communities, may lead to the children/youth engaging in various activities to meet their basic needs, such as selling drugs (as is the case with some of the youths) or joining gangs. This is, of course, not without consequences, and running errands or doing jobs for the gang entrenches them deeper into the gang. Furthermore, the potential exists for families to enhance the risk their children face through domestic violence or other forms of abuse in the home. Children, such as Leonard (see Chapter 5, Section 5.2), who experienced domestic violence, strongly feel the need to escape such traumatic events and react by joining a gang to find comfort, belonging, and safety.

The final key finding pertaining to the neighbourhoods and communities in which most of these youths had resided were that these neighbourhoods are characterised by a low socio-economic status, high violence and crime rates, a lack of safety and security, and very few recreational and developmental opportunities for young people. These neighbourhoods are historically and currently marginalised. Children and youth in these areas are generally not exposed to many pro-social role models and are in danger of being violently victimised and/or physically harmed. In addition, gangs as peer groups are prevalent in these communities and are linked to drugs and violence, which in turn increase the risk of violent victimisation, institutionalisation, and premature mortality. Exposure to these risks does not contribute towards positive life outcomes or to the well-being of the residents of these communities.

To conclude, the findings (based on the data and existing literature) suggest that schools/institutions, communities/neighbourhoods, families, and peers are therefore not only potential contributors to risk-taking behaviour or high-risk states, but also may enhance protective factors if there is safety, care and a sense of belonging. All these risk factors were found to contribute in various ways to the eventual legal intervention to interrupt the difficult and problematic behaviours and life circumstances these youths were experiencing, and which eventually led to their referral to the Circle. The youths were found to be "in need of care and protection" and therefore referred to under the Children's Act, No. 38 of 2005.

When applying the ecological framework, the schools/institutions, family, community/ neighbourhood, and peers seem to be the most significant and influential social fields that contribute to risk and to referral of the youths in the study to the Circle. Conversely, these social fields are also the most important in terms of potentially enhancing protective factors that could build resilience.

9.2.3 Summary of the institutional culture that promotes the social inclusion of children and youth at risk

In Chapter 6, the answer to the second research subsidiary question, “How do the child and youth care centre’s (the Circle’s) rules, norms and values promote the social inclusion of children and youth at risk?” is discussed. The discussion assumes that the Circle’s institutional culture is reflected through its rules, norms and values. The findings are summarised below.

The first key finding is that according to neo-institutional theory, the strongest of these three elements is in the form of the regulative elements which are the rules which determine the Circle’s existence, function, and form. This means that the Children’s Act, No. 38 of 2005 substantially determines the existence and function of the Circle. The rules guide the work, behaviour, and interactions of the actors at the institution as the Circle is obliged to fulfil the court order for each child given into its care by the Children’s Court.

The second key finding is that the norms that guide the Circle are reflected through, and embedded in, the various belief and religious systems of the actors at the Circle. The belief and religious systems of these actors provide a framework for morality and accountability, and guide behaviour in terms of how things ought to be, such as how children/youth should be viewed and treated. Religious norms therefore manifest in various forms in the Circle’s programmes, such as through religious gatherings on Sundays and Fridays, and in the personal lives of many staff members and children/youth.

Linked to how children/youth should (normative element) be perceived and treated, is the ‘least-restrictive’ approach practised at the Circle that permits the free movement of children/youth, but under some form of supervision. The children/youth are allowed to walk freely, interact, and engage with different actors at the institution, while receiving sufficient supervision, but are held accountable to those in authority.

The final key finding is that the Circle has many informal, unspoken, and explicit values which permeate every aspect of the Circle's work and programmes, and which guide the actors in their approach to their work. There are a few dominating values guiding the social interactions, attitudes and behaviours of the various institutional actors which are operationalised through the Circle of Courage: these are belonging, mastery, independence and generosity. This philosophy provides a lens through which the treatment of children/youths, and care practices used, are interpreted at the Circle. Other dominating values at the Circle include the values of reintegration, care, and family.

Given the rules that determine the Circle's existence and function, it can be argued that its regulative element is the strongest and most important in promoting the social inclusion of the children and youth in its care. This is because the laws mentioned determine the existence of an institution such as the Circle, and the role it should play. It is also accompanied by a strong cognitive-cultural approach as demonstrated through the dominating values described above that influence the behaviour and interactions of the actors within the institution.

9.2.4 Summary of teaching approaches that promote the educational inclusion of children and youth at risk

In Chapter 7, the answer to the last research subsidiary question, "How does the teachers' teaching approach promote the educational inclusion of children and youth at risk?" is discussed. The findings are summarised below.

Teaching children and youth at risk is not only about inclusive classroom practices, which include an inclusive curriculum, but it also includes an inclusive institutional culture, and, more broadly, inclusion into society. The first finding reveals that the Circle's teachers' approach to teaching and learning starts with building a good teacher-learner relationship, one which assists in building trust and cooperation, as well as meeting the affective needs of learners. Teachers at the Circle do this by playing roles beyond their duty as a teacher, such as the role of a father, mother, or mentor. Teachers often go beyond their duties as teachers to meet some of the affective needs of their learners. The challenges both teachers and learners face are those involving overcoming the barriers to learning which occur in a variety of forms. These include illiteracy and innumeracy, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) and many years of incomplete grades.

The second key finding shows the Circle's taking a holistic approach to including children and youths who have broader and more imminent needs, such as the need for safety and shelter, than academic advancement. An adapted version of the CAPS curriculum is implemented at the Circle, which is a much simpler and slower-paced form of CAPS. It allows the learners at the Circle enough time to learn and understand concepts and to work at their own pace. However, this approach potentially leads to a widening gap between them and their peers at mainstream schools, leaving them under prepared for further education and training when they leave the Circle.

The third key finding shows the teaching methods used by teachers are often teacher centred, yet appropriate for each subject. Learners show little confidence in answering questions but respond confidently and show an eagerness to learn when teachers have high expectations of them.

The fourth key finding is the way in which discipline is addressed at the Circle. Discipline at the Circle occurs in a variety of forms, such as instilling self-discipline through external controls such as routine and structure; correcting disrespectful behaviours through dialogue and removing privileges; calming uncontrollable behaviour by removing the learner from the classroom with the help of childcare workers and speaking to them when they are much calmer; and addressing conflict between learners by separating them and managing relationships. Overall, discipline at the Circle is restorative and developmental, rather than punitive. This means that the approach to discipline taken at the Circle aims to teach children and youth to learn from their mistakes and to make better decisions in the future, rather than inflicting bodily or emotional harm.

The overall and final key finding showed that there was an emphasis on the affective needs of the children/youth, which can be argued in the long term could lead to their further exclusion from educational access. This is not solely because of the various barriers to learning, but because of the low expectations of the teachers and the amount of time devoted to helping the children and youth catch up with their peers at mainstream schools. This unfortunately has the potential to lead to fewer study and work opportunities in the future for graduates from the Circle. This may possibly also lead to these youths returning to their previous lifestyles if they are not given the appropriate support and opportunities that facilitate social inclusion.

9.3 Discussion of the Findings

Chapter 8 highlights six main themes that attempt to answer the main research question, “In what ways are care of and education for children and youth at risk provided for by a child and youth care centre in order to promote their educational and social inclusion?”

The first theme addressed the various high-risk factors that children and youth are exposed to that put them at risk of school disengagement, institutionalisation, violent victimisation, and premature mortality. These include the multiple non-normative transfers between different kinds of institutions, and the communities in which these youths are embedded. However, not all who are embedded in these communities are at risk, as individual responses to risk can either exacerbate or ameliorate the effects and consequence of risk.

The second theme highlights how each social field is characterised by its own rules, norms and values. Those social fields that exert the most control over a child’s/youth’s life will take precedence over other social fields such as gangs. Once children and youths are at the Circle, the Circle attempts to overpower the rules, norms and values advocated by gangs. The Circle is, however, unable to substantially influence youths outside the institution, leaving them vulnerable to the negative influences of other social fields, which may lead to recidivism.

The third theme addresses how the Circle attempts to position itself politically, but under certain constraints and restrictions which leave it unable to make a substantial impact in disrupting systems that perpetuate inequality and exclude children and youth at risk from society. It seems to only be influential on the micro-level, influencing intrinsic and pedagogical factors rather than societal and systemic factors that perpetuate educational and social exclusion.

The fourth theme addresses the link between the background of the children/youth and the teaching approaches. The philosophy of the Circle attempts to accommodate the learning needs and backgrounds (including educational backgrounds) of the child/youth. The Circle is unique in this respect as it has many resources to support the learning process for children/youth that experience emotional and behavioural barriers to learning. The study found that the CAPS curriculum is highly exclusionary, and that children/youths with the kinds of life experiences described in this study are unable to cope or catch up with a rigid curriculum such CAPS.

The fifth theme discusses the paucity of teacher training programmes for teachers to address the kinds of backgrounds and barriers to learning children and youth in both mainstream and special schools experience. Teachers instead learn how to address these barriers to learning through on-the-job and in-service training.

Finally, the sixth theme shows how the phenomenon of children and youth at risk is but a reflection of a larger societal and systemic issue, namely that of the NEET population. This population also experiences educational and social exclusion for various reasons other than those described in this study. This study only provides insight into specific kinds of factors leading to school disengagement for children and youth at risk.

In summary, to answer the main research question, there are various factors that need to be considered in order to provide appropriate, effective and sustainable education and care for children and youth at risk. These include a consideration of the risks, life adversities and barriers to learning the children and youth have and are experiencing; ensuring that the institutional culture is inclusive and supports the values of the Circle of Courage; and reintegration, care and family that cater for the particular educational needs of these young people and that support the kind of teaching and learning they need. The institutional culture is therefore strongly tied to the children's/youths' backgrounds and their educational needs. In the next section, the recommendations of the study are provided.

9.4 Recommendations

This section provides recommendations for various stakeholders in the field of care and education of children and youth at risk, such as policymakers, teacher training programmes and child and youth care centres. Each stakeholder is addressed in turn.

9.4.1 Recommendations for policymakers

This section of the recommendations is addressed to policymakers within the DBE and the Provincial Education Department, specifically the WCED. The data has shown various risk factors caused by a range of socio-environmental factors and individual choices, and therefore seeking ecological and multi-levelled solutions is necessary.

From this research, it is clear that the CAPS curriculum is exclusionary and may lead to, or exacerbate, the academic exclusion of children and youth at risk of school disengagement, and more broadly, those at risk of becoming NEET unless they receive adequate support and attention. This may not always be possible, given the resources and capacity available at mainstream schools to deal with children and youth at risk, such as those schools in disadvantaged areas described in this study. The curriculum should thus attempt to prepare learners adequately to address real-life and future challenges in practical and strategic ways, to resist the risk factors they encounter.

The DBE therefore needs to equip and support mainstream schools and teachers to be able to deliver the curriculum effectively, flexibly and creatively by providing such schools and teachers with the necessary resources and education support services. In addition, the WCED should budget for and develop its capacity for providing educational support service professionals to mainstream schools, especially those located in marginalised or disadvantaged areas, such as those mentioned in the study (see Chapter 5). The issues facing children and youth at institutions such as the Circle are not confined to institutions such as the Circle but are widespread and may manifest at mainstream schools also. Learners at mainstream schools need to have access to educational psychologists, social workers, occupational therapists, mentors, child and youth care workers, and counsellors who can provide the necessary care and support for learning as well as for addressing behavioural problems. Social workers, occupational therapists and educational psychologists should be made available to all schools, but especially those located in disadvantaged areas as teachers do not have the time or skills to focus on both caring and preparing learners for learning, given the large class sizes, the demands of CAPS, and potential dangers from the community. This echoes the argument of Scott (2004:15), that compliance with regulations can only be achieved if schools have adequate resource allocation.

The CAPS curriculum as a whole does not cultivate potential in all children and nurture their various talents and intelligences. The DBE should thus aim to develop children holistically so that narrow academic achievement is not the only goal to be attained and rewarded. Thus, sports, the arts and other disciplines should be equally resourced, and achievement in these disciplines should also be rewarded.

For children and youth at risk to be included in education, an ecological approach should thus be applied to teaching and learning, considering systemic, societal, pedagogical, and intrinsic barriers to learning. These include developing personalised interventions for children and youth at risk, involving the family and community, training teachers adequately through pre-service and in-service training, and providing

education support services. In addition, provincial education departments should provide teachers with the necessary in-service training to address the social challenges that spill over into classroom, and which vary from school to school and area to area.

9.4.2 Recommendations for teacher trainers

The study found there to be a lack of adequate systemic training for teachers; this contributes to the larger phenomenon of NEET. Teacher training programmes (both pre-service and in-service) are in theory intended to prepare teachers to address the realities of their teaching contexts. However, currently teachers are not adequately trained or skilled to address the social issues that affect their learners' ability to engage in learning.

This study found an ecological or eco-systemic approach to be necessary to reduce behavioural difficulties, as argued by Babedi (2013: v). Teachers therefore need to be trained and prepared by incorporating conceptual frameworks such as the one designed for the study into their training programmes, and to learn about innovative pedagogies that promote inclusion and mitigate inequality. These conceptual frameworks may assist teachers, working together with educational support professionals, in understanding their learners, their backgrounds and environments better, and in being equipped to design appropriate interventions for children and youth who seem to be disengaging from learning and school.

Conceptual frameworks such as the one developed in this study may be helpful for educational and care practitioners in analysing the risk and/or protective factors which may enhance the vulnerability and/or resilience of an individual child or youth. This framework also serves to remove the assumption that all children/youth from marginalised communities are at risk, or will most likely drop out of school, experience violent victimisation, become institutionalised or incarcerated, or experience premature mortality. The study has shown there to be a range of factors contributing to an individual's state and level of risk and vulnerability, as argued by Roestenburg and Oliphant (2012:36). This conceptual framework also shows that risk may be temporary or permanent, and therefore children and youth may not only need short-term care interventions, but also formal education and training that will empower and assist them to experience positive life outcomes in the long term.

The disciplining of learners is a common challenge facing teachers in South African schools as they are uncertain of the best and most effective ways to manage learner discipline (Du Plessis, 2018). In this study, it was reported that some children and youth displayed uncontrollable and disrespectful behaviour in the classroom and that the teachers responded in various effective ways, such as waiting for the child/youth to calm down, sending a trusted adult to speak to the child/youth, and being able to call upon the support of childcare workers. From this it can be argued that teachers would benefit from being given tools, strategies and support to address various disciplinary and behavioural issues as demonstrated in this study and be trained on how to de-escalate conflict among those learners who frequently disrupt teaching time. These tools and strategies need to be incorporated in pre-service and in-service training.

In-service training programmes and teachers who enrol for them would also benefit from updated programmes to suit the needs and context of a range of schools, as each school faces unique challenges depending on the neighbourhood in which they are located, and the learners admitted to the school. The challenges facing children and youth in this study included gang involvement, drug use, and domestic violence, which could be argued to be indicative of widespread problems for which teachers should be prepared.

In many cases it seems that the best, but given present circumstances, not ideal method for up skilling and training teachers who work with children and youth at risk, is on-the-job training, which includes regular guided reflection, identifying the gaps in their skills, and seeking/developing specific training programmes to train teachers in those areas. Teachers should thus be provided with in-service training for these reasons. This is one method used by the Circle to improve their staff's capacity and skills to work with children and youth at risk.

9.4.3 Recommendations for child and youth care centres

The findings of this study suggest that child and youth care centres would do well to incorporate child and youth development models into their work, such as at the Circle of Courage, as this model has proved to be effective in working with children and youth at risk as shown at the Circle. The philosophy addresses the various needs of the child/youth, which include the need for belonging, for mastery, independence, and generosity. Child and youth care centres could learn from the way in which the Circle

applies the Circle of Courage as their methods and model of working with children and youth at risk have been shown to be therapeutic, developmental, and integrative, and to cover a range of interventions.

In line with the philosophy of the Circle of Courage, disciplinary methods should be restorative and developmental rather than punitive as found in this study. The study showed the necessity for all staff members working at such institutions to adopt a developmental, empowering and inclusive philosophy when working with children and youth at risk.

In addition, every attempt should be made to maintain the balance between care and academic progress so that long-term needs, including academic progress, are taken into consideration rather than prioritising affective needs. This implies a more intensive focus on education balanced with care provision. Overall, the focus of these institutions should be on building the resilience of children and youth to face the realities outside of the institution, together with short-term goals such as providing safety and care.

Despite post-institutional programmes not forming part of the mandate of child and youth care centres such as the Circle, post-institutional programmes or intensive after-care programmes (as described and recommend by Knorth et al., 2007:125), especially for vulnerable youth, should be implemented in order to continue to provide support for youth at risk who do not have the necessary family and community support that can help them to avoid risk. These programmes should provide residential care, rehabilitation (especially if there are drug addictions) and education and training, so that these young people are able to continue to be educationally and socially included. It is therefore argued that in order to consolidate attempts at educational and social inclusion, post-institutional programmes are necessary to support these youths until they reach stability and independence. These programmes should also enhance protective factors and help sustain the positive changes acquired at institutions such as the Circle. The programmes should also advocate for the redistribution of power, wealth and opportunity, otherwise reintegration and social inclusion becomes unattainable (Gray, 2005:941-942, 947). It is only through the disruption of these high-risk factors, inequality and structural forms of violence, and through effective interventions, that alternative narratives can be formed.

Recommendations specifically for the Circle are the following: Teachers at the Circle should receive specialised training in curriculum differentiation, as the Curriculum of Care does not sufficiently prepare children/youth for life outside the Circle, and for further education and training. Teachers also need to

be trained in how to teach and develop literacy and numeracy effectively for children/youth who have been out of school for many years, and in order to accelerate their learning while maintaining relationships of care. Teachers should also promote academic progress together with care as recommended by Attar-Swartz (2009), rather than prioritise care above learning. Education and care should complement each other in the context of the Circle.

The education support services department should develop more capacity to initiate and offer more restorative justice processes within the institution for those children/youth who have offended in the past. In the process of using an ecological approach, together with an understanding of neo-institutional theory, it is vital that families be included in the rehabilitation process and that they are assisted to support their child outside of the institution. Education support professionals should therefore consider doing more rehabilitative work with the families (as recommended by Knorth et al., 2007:125) in addition to the interventions for the child, so that children/youth can return to relatively healthier and more supportive families.

The Circle should consider creating interventions or campaigns that disrupt the ways in which children and youth at risk are perceived and treated in society. These interventions should be disruptive and may be in the form of applying critical pedagogy, for example, using disruptive pedagogies and action research that empower children and youth to take responsibility for changing their communities. These interventions are necessary if the Circle really hopes to make a substantial change systemically and in society.

The recommendations having been provided, the contribution of the study to existing literature in the field and to teaching approaches appropriate for young people at institutions such as the Circle, is discussed in the next section.

9.5 The Contribution of the Study

This research presented a case study of the educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk at a child and youth care centre in the Western Cape. Using an interdisciplinary lens which includes risk, neo-institutional theory and education, it attempted to understand the specific kinds of risk children and youth at risk at the Circle have been and are exposed to and experience. I consider this study to contribute

towards knowledge in the following ways: by contributing to the literature on risk, child and youth care institutions and to teaching approaches for children and youth at risk.

9.5.1 Contribution to knowledge

The study's literature review revealed a paucity of in-depth studies on education provision and care for children and youth at risk. This study, using a case study research design, demonstrated the potential for an institution to care and provide for the needs of children and youth that would otherwise not have been catered for within mainstream schools, in other kinds of facilities, or in society. Thus I consider this study to contribute to various bodies of literature, such as the literature on children and youth at risk (Crocker, 2000; Schonert-Reichl, 2000; Biaya, 2005; Kemshall, 2008; Anlezark, 2011; Abrams & Terry, 2014), on institutions that cater specifically for children and youth at risk (Scott, 2004; Powell, 2007; Scott, 2010; Bolfiková et al., 2012; Lounsbury & Zhao, 2013; Palthe, 2014), and literature on teaching approaches to teaching children and youth at risk (Booth & Ainscow, 2002; Smink & Reimer, 2005; Downey, 2008; Polat, 2011; O'Brien, 2012; Weeks, 2012; Babedi, 2013; Du Plessis, 2015; Pereira & Lavoie, 2016).

Regarding the literature on risk, and on children and youth at risk, the various definitions of children and youth at risk often reflect the power differential between the researcher and the researched (Kelly, 2000; Bessant, 2001), thus framing the children and youth in disempowering and agentless ways (Bessant, 2001; Te Riele, 2006), and invoking the need for more surveillance and supervision of this particular group (Kelly, 2000). In addition, various risks are defined in the literature according to disciplines and range from school-related risks (Wotherspoon & Schissel, 2001; Watson, 2011; OECD, 2012) to criminal risks (Steyn, 2008:209). Often in these definitions, low risks, such as intrinsic barriers to learning, are conflated with high risks, such as school dropout, or various kinds of risks are lumped together, such as those to do with learners' intrinsic barriers to learning and those to do with youth who experience societal barriers to learning which also result in learning difficulties. This kind of narrow or superficial categorisation may result in inappropriate or ineffective prevention and intervention programmes. From the literature reviewed it has been difficult to find a clear, concise and accurate definition to capture the social phenomenon on which the current study focuses: those young people more likely than others to be at risk, what they are at risk of, and why they are at risk. By synthesising the various studies and definitions found in existing literature, and considering the systemic, societal,

and intrinsic factors contributing to risk, the current study has developed its own more complex, nuanced and inclusive definition of children and youth at risk. This definition is:

Those who are highly likely to disengage from school early, enter a state care institution or prison, experience violent victimisation and/or premature mortality due to their involvement in, and the effects of, structural, psychological and/or physical violence. The likelihood of experiencing these kinds of risks is increased by systemic, societal and intrinsic factors, including age and gender. Risk is however relational and there is the possibility of preventing and reducing the increase in risk, depending on the will of the individual who is at risk, the enhancement of protective factors and addressing larger systemic and societal factors that contribute to long-term risk.

This definition attempts to capture the many and various issues and causes addressed in this study regarding children and youth at risk. Boholm (2018:13-14) made recommendations for developing a comprehensive definition of risk which this definition attempted to address. This includes acknowledging everyday language and the polysemy of risk, carefully considering terms and their reductive aspects and consequences, precision, and consistency. I consider this definition, and many of the aspects related to young people at risk explored in the current study, to advance knowledge in the field significantly. It does this by stating clearly who may be at risk and what they are at risk of, what the nature of risk entails, and by highlighting the structural and individual risk factors without removing agency from individuals.

As has been mentioned, recent literature on institutions that cater for children and youth at risk in South Africa is meagre. I thus see this study as contributing to providing knowledge about a child and youth care centre in South Africa, where existing knowledge about such institutions needs augmenting. It augments existing knowledge by investigating one institution in the country i.e. the Circle, as none like it exists in South Africa. Thus, a case study of this institution is an original contribution to knowledge in the field of non-restrictive, non-punitive, and supportive residential care for young people at risk by highlighting a particular institution and its work on care of and education for children and youth at risk. As mentioned in the literature review (Section 3.3.3), there are not many similar studies on residential care, especially in South Africa. This study, unlike other studies, investigates the reasons for referral, the number of transfers between institutions, and the contextual factors as recommended for future studies by Attar-Schwartz (2009:437).

There are no studies to my knowledge that use neo-institutional theory to analyse institutional culture and its effects on social behaviour. These studies on residential care do not address issues of educational and social inclusion on both the micro and structural levels. This study used neo-institutional theory as

an interpretive lens to understand how children and youth are included in education and society through the rules, norms and values of an institution, as well as to understand and evaluate the institution's approach to teaching and learning. The original contribution to knowledge of this study is how it also applies and draws from neo-institutional theory as an analytical tool, which not studies have done, to understand an institution's culture that attempts to promote the educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk.

The backgrounds of the youth (which should first be understood before engaging children/youth in learning and school), which in this study included early school disengagement, low literacy and numeracy skills, and behavioural issues, pose major hindrances to an effective teaching and learning process. These findings contributed to existing knowledge by illustrating in detail the specific challenges children and youth face in South Africa when engaging in learning and confirmed the importance of the teacher–learner relationship to help these learners re-engage with learning.

Furthermore, I consider the study to contribute to existing knowledge in the field by bringing to light the combination of factors found to be necessary for children and youth at risk to engage in learning. The findings reveal that these factors include inclusive education, inclusive institutional cultures, positive teacher–learner relationships, developmental disciplinary approaches, positive child and youth development models, and an appropriate and intensive curriculum which ideally does not compromise high expectations of academic achievement. All these approaches were found at the Circle, which embodies an inclusive and caring institutional culture cognisant of the needs of its children and youth.

9.5.2 Developing a relevant conceptual framework

Existing conceptual frameworks, such as the ecological frameworks of Bronfenbrenner (1979) and Schonert-Reichl (2000) concerning considerations of risk were found useful for the current study but were insufficient and inadequate to describe the phenomenon addressed in this study, especially regarding the specificities of different institutions. Therefore, a conceptual framework was developed for this study to illustrate clearly the conceptual relationships between the background of the child/youth, the institutional culture of the institution under study, and the teaching approach used there. I consider that the original contribution of this study is the way in which the study used and combined these three aspects: the background of the child/youth, the institutional culture, and the institution's teaching approaches to understand and critically evaluate the process of educational and social inclusion of

children and youth at risk taking place at the institution. In exploring and evaluating this process at the Circle, each conceptual point focused on and combined particular bodies of knowledge, as mentioned earlier. This combination of bodies of knowledge has not been used before, according to the literature review and to the researcher's knowledge, especially in relation to the case study of the Circle.

9.5.3 The methodological contribution

The original methodological contribution of the study is the combination of research methods used to answer the research questions. The case study focused on a child and youth care centre, in order to illustrate the educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk at an institution situated in the Western Cape, South Africa. For example, a previous study on institutions such as the Circle used life histories as a methodological approach (Badroodien, 2001). There are, to my knowledge no other studies that have considered this subject from this angle (using a case study), and in such depth, especially in the context of South Africa. The methodology includes several qualitative methods involving various kinds of participants, as described in Chapter 4. This qualitative approach allowed for an in-depth understanding of the educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk.

9.6 Suggestions for Further Research

This study looked at the educational and social inclusion of children and youth at risk in the context of an institution. Based on the findings, and on the experience and knowledge of the researcher, this section provides some suggestions in terms of what possibly could be researched and how it could be researched in the future, given the limitations of this study.

First, future research could possibly use a longitudinal or tracking study approach, examining the post-institutional life of youth, after they have disengaged from institutions such as the Circle. This could include the various challenges they face outside the institution, the kind of risks they encounter, and the kinds of protective factors available to them to avoid the risk of recidivism and to build resilience. This research could also look at the long-term impact of interventions such as the Circle's, and whether these interventions have a substantial and sustained positive impact on the youth in helping their well-being and becoming contributing members of society.

Second, because I could not gain access to secure care centres which impose a higher level of restriction on children and youth at risk than that at the Circle, a study comparing the various kinds of institutions in South Africa available to children and youth at risk could not be conducted. A future study could therefore attempt a comparison between these institutions and examine the impact and outcomes these different institutional cultures have on their children/youth, as well as the kinds of teaching approaches used. Research could include comparisons across similar child and youth care centres, across institutions of various levels of restriction, and cross-country comparisons.

Third, this study was purely qualitative, and could be supplemented by a quantitative study on all the children and youth at the institution in order to discover other risk factors experienced, and to understand in greater depth and detail the various factors that led to their referral to a child and youth care centre. Future quantitative studies could also be conducted across various kinds of institutions, such child and youth care centres, or more 'secure' care centres, and cross-country institutional comparative studies could be conducted to highlight trends and outliers among cohorts.

Fourth, this study only focused on males at risk. A recommendation would be to conduct a study on female children and youth at risk at similar institutions. This future study could either compare how gender affects the risks to which children/youth are exposed, or it could solely focus on females and the risk factors that led to their institutionalisation, how these factors could be reduced, and how protective factors could be enhanced.

Finally, future research could investigate effective interventions that not only address the intrinsic and pedagogical barriers to learning and risk, but also explore larger societal and systemic issues that put children and youth at risk. These studies could attempt to understand what interventions could be implemented to improve the livelihoods of children and youth at risk. The study could be solution focused and investigate various solutions to the social and educational problems described in this study, such as accelerated learning for children and youth who have been disengaged from learning and school for years.

9.7 Reflections on the Research Journey

My initial interest in conducting in this research was focused on justice, specifically restorative justice, especially in the context of punitive institutions such as prisons and secure care centres. When I first

introduced the concept of restorative justice to the Circle, many staff members were unfamiliar with the concept, and from what I could deduce, there were no formal processes geared to or associated with restorative justice. In addition, the idea of open space, freedom for children/youth to move, and discipline at the Circle was generally addressed in a restorative and developmental way, which was unique for institutions like these, and drew me even more strongly to conduct research at the Circle. On reflecting on my initial interest in restorative justice and how it evolved, and the overall research journey, I discovered and learned some valuable lessons.

Because most of the teachers at the Circle had been teaching for about 20 to 40 years (including at the Circle) and were socialised during the time corporal punishment was acceptable, I learned that the institutional values embedded in the Circle of Courage, which emphasise development and care, were initially resisted because of the teachers' misperception of care in education and restorative justice. Remnants of this resistance were observed to exist at the Circle, as some staff members believed/believe that children/youth should be disciplined more harshly. I learned that because of this institutional memory, a tension exists between punitive and restorative discipline, which is not only found at the Circle, but occurs at countless other institutions, including schools. This tension demonstrates how restorative justice is difficult to implement if the actors at an institution do not believe in and collectively agree on its potential to restore and mend relationships and provide restitution.

Furthermore, my understanding of restorative justice expanded as I began to understand that it is but a part of the larger intervention of care provided at the Circle, and care is multi-faceted and holistic in nature. I learned that care is a foundational philosophy when addressing the needs of children and youth at risk, and developmental discipline is only a part of the rehabilitative process constituting the larger care model practised at the Circle. I, however, remain uncertain of whether care, without active restorative justice processes, is effective, as I became aware of many tragic stories and endings of some of the children and youth who left the Circle, although there may have been other and more complex reasons for this.

In addition, as a researcher, I learned and became acutely aware of the privilege I held as a woman in this specific male-dominated space (which could easily have been the opposite), and how this position could be used in a positive manner to gain access to, and build meaningful connections with, research participants. This position also taught me to be cautious of how I am perceived and my interactions with male participants, so that the value of my work was not undermined or misconstrued. In addition, I have

grown more confident in sharing my ideas and thoughts regarding this topic, as I find it important in relation to the many challenges facing South Africa.

In summary, my time of collecting data at the institution has also been an enriching and developmental one. I also formed very good relationships with some of the staff and some of the youth, who have taught me so much about themselves, their communities, and possible solutions to the problems they face, all of which have given me hope for the future of young people in this country. These relationships have inspired me to continue to do work related to uplifting and empowering vulnerable people in society, and to think creatively about solutions to various systemic, societal, pedagogical, and intrinsic problems that are often interlinked. This research has therefore introduced me to interesting and impressive local people who have similar visions for the future of this country, and which may, for them and for me, translate into lifelong projects.

9.8 Concluding Comments

This study has looked at the risk factors in the backgrounds of a group of children and youth in South Africa that put them at high risk of school disengagement, violent victimisation, institutionalisation (including incarceration), and premature mortality. The study showed many of these factors to result from structural, psychological and physical violence. It also looked at how an institution's rules, norms and values contributed towards social inclusion, and the ways in which teaching and learning approaches contributed towards educational inclusion. I consider that these findings have contributed to understandings of what is needed for children and youth to experience educational and social inclusion, which, if not addressed, may have larger and long-term societal implications. This study therefore hopes to have contributed to a deeper understanding of this important issue and to providing solutions for this phenomenon. It is further hoped that it will contribute to caring for and empowering marginalised children and youth in South Africa and increase the likelihood of a positive future for them as young people and as citizens of the country.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Legislation and Policies related to Education since 1995 (Sayed et al., 2017:93-96)

Policy focus	Year	Policy
Foundational	1995	Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)
Foundational	1996	Constitution
Foundational	1996	Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR)
Foundational	1997	Integrated National Disability Strategy
Foundational	2005	Accelerated and Shared Growth Initiative for South Africa (AsgiSA)
Foundational	2008	National Disability Framework
Foundational	2009	National Growth Plan (NGP)
Foundational	2009	Green Paper: National Strategic Planning
Foundational	2012	National Development Plan (NDP)
Foundational	2014	Medium-term strategic framework (MTSF)
Macro education	1995	South African Qualifications Authority Act
Macro education	1995	White Paper 1: Education and Training
Macro education	1996	White Paper 2: Organisation, Governance and Funding of Schools
Macro education	1996	South African Schools Act, No. 84 of 1996
Macro education	1996	National Education Policy Act
Macro education	1996	Green Paper on the Transformation of Higher Education
Macro education	1997	Higher Education Act
Macro education	1997	Education Laws Amendment Act
Macro education	1997	White Paper 3: Programme for the Transformation of Higher Education
Macro education	1997	Higher Education Qualifications Framework (HEQF)
Macro education	2001	White Paper 5 on Early Childhood Education
Macro education	2001	White Paper 6: Special Needs Education
Macro education	2008	National Qualifications Framework Act
Macro education	2008	No-fee school policy
Macro education	2012	Action Plan 2014
Macro education	2013	White Paper for Post-School Education and Training
Macro education	2013	Higher Education Qualifications Sub-Framework (HEQSF)
Macro education	2015	Action Plan 2019
Macro education	2015	Five-year strategic plan
Specific education – School Governance	1998	National Norms and Standards for School Funding Act (NNSSF)

Specific education – School Governance	2013	Organisation, Roles, and Responsibilities of Education Districts
Specific education – Values	2001	Manifesto on Values, Education, and Democracy
Specific education – Language	1997	Language in Education Policy (LiEP)
Specific education – Language	2013	Incremental Implementation of African Languages (IIAL)
Specific education – School Safety	2001	Regulations for Safety Measures at all Public Schools
Specific education – School Safety	2002	Policy Framework for the Management of Drug Abuse by Learners in Schools
Specific education – School Safety	2002	Regulations to Prohibit Initiation Practices in Schools
Specific education – School Safety	2015	National School Safety Framework (NSSF)
Specific education – infrastructure	2013	Minimum Norms and Standards for Public School Infrastructure
Specific education – infrastructure	2015	National Learner Transport Policy
Specific education – Affirming rights	2008	National Strategy on Screening, Identification, Assessment, and Support (SIAS)
Specific education – Teacher Governance	1998	Employment of Educators Act
Specific education – Teacher Governance	1998	Development Appraisal System (DAS)
Specific education – Teacher Governance	1999	National Student Financial Aid Scheme Act
Specific education – Teacher Governance	2000	South African Council for Educators Act
Specific education – Teacher Governance	2001	Education Laws Amendment Bill
Specific education – Teacher Governance	2001	Whole School Evaluation (WSE)
Specific education – Teacher Governance	2002	Performance Management and Development System (PMDS)
Specific education – Teacher Governance	2002	Systemic Evaluation Framework (SEF)
Specific education – Teacher Governance	2003	Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS)
Specific education – Teacher Governance	2005	Education Laws Amendment Act
Specific education – Teacher Governance	2007	Education Laws Amendment Act
Specific education – Curriculum	1997	Curriculum 2005 (C2005) (OBE)
Specific education – Curriculum	2002	Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS)

Specific education – Curriculum	2005	National Curriculum Statement NCS
Specific education – Curriculum	2011	Curriculum, Assessment and Policy Statement (CAPS)
Specific education – ITE	2000	Norms and Standards for (Teacher) Educators
Specific education – ITE	2005	Ministerial Committee on Teacher Education
Specific education – ITE	2007	National Policy Framework for Teacher Education
Specific education – ITE	2011	Minimum Requirement for Teacher Education Qualification (MRTEQ)
Specific education – ITE	2015	Minimum Requirement for Teacher Education Qualification (MRTEQ)
Specific education – CPD	2011	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in SA (ISPFTED)

Appendix B:

CPUT Ethical Clearance Certificate



***For office use only	
Date submitted	12/09/2016
Meeting date	n/a
Approval	P/Y/N
Ethical Clearance number	EFEC 1-9/2016

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

RESEARCH ETHICS CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

This certificate is issued by the Education Faculty Ethics Committee (EFEC) at Cape Peninsula University of Technology to the applicant/s whose details appear below.

1. Applicant and project details (Applicant to complete this section of the certificate and submit with application as a Word document)

Name(s) of applicant(s):	Lorna Balie		
Project/study Title:	Intersecting discourses of Inclusive Education in the Western Cape: Teacher Education, Youth at Risk and Inclusive Education provision		
Is this a staff research project, i.e. not for degree purposes?	No		
If for degree purposes the degree is indicated:	Doctorate in Education		
If for degree purposes, the proposal has been approved by the FRC	Yes		
Funding sources:	National Research Fund (NRF)		

2. Remarks by Education Faculty Ethics Committee:

This doctoral research project is granted ethical clearance valid till 12 September 2020.		
Approved: X	Referred back:	Approved subject to adaptations:
Chairperson Name: Chiwimbiso Kwenda		Date: 13 September 2016
Chairperson Signature: 		
Approval Certificate/Reference: EFEC 1-9/2016		



Directorate: Research

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wced.wcape.gov.za**REFERENCE:** 20160810 –3094**ENQUIRIES:** Dr A T Wyngaard

Miss Lorna ~~Balie~~
 144 Grasmere Street
 Crawford
 7764

Dear Miss Lorna ~~Balie~~,

RESEARCH PROPOSAL: INTERSECTING DISCOURSES OF INCLUSIVE EDUCATION AND RESTORATIVE JUSTICE: FOCUSSED ON TEACHERS AND AT RISK YOUTH

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

1. Principals, educators and learners are under no obligation to assist you in your investigation.
2. Principals, educators, learners and schools should not be identifiable in any way from the results of the investigation.
3. You make all the arrangements concerning your investigation.
4. Educators' programmes are not to be interrupted.
5. The Study is to be conducted from **15 August 2016 till 30 August 2017**
6. No research can be conducted during the fourth term as schools are preparing and finalizing syllabi for examinations (October to December).
7. Should you wish to extend the period of your survey, please contact Dr A.T Wyngaard at the contact numbers above quoting the reference number?
8. A photocopy of this letter is submitted to the principal where the intended research is to be conducted.
9. Your research will be limited to the list of schools as forwarded to the Western Cape Education Department.
10. A brief summary of the content, findings and recommendations is provided to the Director: Research Services.
11. The Department receives a copy of the completed report/dissertation/thesis addressed to:

**The Director: Research Services
 Western Cape Education Department
 Private Bag X9114
 CAPE TOWN
 8000**

We wish you success in your research.

Kind regards.

Signed: Dr Audrey T Wyngaard

Directorate: Research

DATE: 11 August 2016

Appendix D: Consent Form for Research Participants

I, _____ (your name) agree to take part in the above research conducted by Lorna Balie, a PhD student at the Cape Peninsula University of Technology. I understand the research and I have read and understood the Information Sheet, which I may keep for my own records. I understand that agreeing to take part means that I am willing to:

- participate in a focus group or an interview with the student
- allow the discussion to be audio taped and/or filmed

I understand that any information I provide is strictly confidential, and that my privacy will be protected in all situations. I have been assured that full steps will be taken to ensure anonymity. I further understand that I will be provided with the summary of the findings once the research is completed.

I hereby note that my participation is completely voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or in all of the research, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the research without being penalised or disadvantaged in any way.

Lastly, I note that I have been fully informed about the project and have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and thus agree to participate in the project.

I am participating in this research as a:

Principal

Teacher

Youth

Social Worker

Educational Psychologist

Academic: Please specify your discipline _____

Key informant: Please specify your area of knowledge _____

Name: (PLEASE PRINT)

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Personal details

1. How old are you?
2. Where are you from? / Where does your family live?

Previous School/institutional life

3. Before you came to the CYCC, did you attend school?
4. If you did not, where were you, or what did you do with your time?
5. Did you like the school?
6. What about the school did you like or dislike?
7. Did you get into any trouble at the school?

After School Life

8. What did you do during the day before you came to the CYCC?
9. Whom did you spend your time with?
10. Tell me about your friends before you came to the CYCC?
11. Tell me about what you did as a group?

Current Institutional life

12. In what year did you arrive at the CYCC?
13. Tell me about how you got here?
14. Were you sent to another institution before you got here?
15. Tell me about the Children's Court?
16. Do you like being at the CYCC? What do you like about the CYCC?
17. If not, what did you not like about being here?
18. How does your teacher respond to you when you break a rule?
19. Do you feel safe at the CYCC? Why/why not?
20. Who is your favourite person at the CYCC? Why?

Family Life

21. Please describe your family.
22. Where does your mother or father live?
23. Are they married?
24. Does your father work?
25. Does your mother work?
26. Where do they work?
27. If you have brothers and sisters, how many?
28. Where are they now?
29. Have any of them ever been involved in gangs?
30. Have any of them ever used drugs?
31. Have any of them ever been to jail?
32. Have any of them ever been sent to a place of safety, children's home, the CYCC?

Views of the future

33. If I asked you, what do you wish you could do when you leave here, what would you say?
34. What do you think you will do?

Thank you so much!

Appendix F: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Teachers

Personal information

1. Why did you become a teacher?
2. How long have you been at this institution?
3. How did you end up at this school? / Why did you decide to teach at this school?
4. How do you see your role as a teacher in relation to the children?

Curriculum

5. What curriculum is used for the learners? / I've heard of the Curriculum of Care – could you please tell me more about that?
6. How are the relationships among learners at the CYCC?

Training

7. What is your subject specialisation?
8. Which grades do you teach?
9. Please name and describe the training you received at the initial teacher training institution that taught you (indirectly) how to work with youth at risk?
10. What continuous professional development training have you received that equipped you to work with youth at risk?
11. What skills do you think teachers should possess to work with youth at risk?
12. Besides formal training, what characteristics do you believe trainee teachers should possess in order to work with youth at risk?

Teacher pedagogy

13. What does a good teaching day look like to you?
14. What does a bad teaching day look like to you?
15. The school has multi-grade classes from Grade 6–10. Please tell me your experiences with working in this format and having “intakes” throughout the year?
16. How do you adapt your classes to suit the learners?
17. What challenges do the learners experience in the classroom?

18. How do you assess the learners?

Discipline

19. Describe the learners' general behaviour in your classroom.
20. How do you address discipline issues in the classroom?
21. What are the most effective strategies you found to discipline learners?

Youth

1. What type of work are CYCC graduates doing at the moment?
2. In what ways have the youth become more integrated into the community after attending the CYCC?
3. What would you regard as a successful CYCC graduate?
4. Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you!

**Appendix G: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for the Centre Manager
(Principal) and Deputy Principal**

Professional Experience

1. How long have you been at this institution?
2. How long have you been the principal/deputy principal at this CYCC?
3. How did you end up at this CYCC?
4. What is your educational background?

Institution's Background

5. What is the purpose of the Child and Youth Care Centre (CYCC)?
6. What facilities does the institution have?
7. Do you have adequate facilities and resources for all the children?
8. How is the school funded?
9. What other CYCCs that you know of are currently running?

Institutional culture

10. How would you describe the school culture?
11. What is the role of religion in the school?
12. Could you please tell me more about the curriculum?

Learners

13. How would you describe the needs of the learners?
14. What is the school's admissions policy?
15. What type of learners does the CYCC receive/admit?
16. Who sends them here and on what basis?
17. Are there learners who come here voluntarily?
18. How are parents involved in their children's lives?
19. What type of activities are the children exposed to?

Teachers

20. What training have the teachers received to work with youth at risk?

Legislation

21. How many children are there at the CYCC?
22. How do you cater for learners under the Children's Act?
23. What are these learners' special education needs?
24. How do you think the CYCC works towards helping these learners integrate back into society?
25. What is the current legal status of this institution?
26. You only have Grade 6–10 and multi-grade classes. Why have you taken the decision to have these grades only?

Discipline

27. How would the school discipline learners who break the rules?
28. How do you think restorative justice principles are used at the CYCC?

CYCC graduates

29. What happens to the children once they graduate from the institution? (Successful and unsuccessful stories.)
30. Are they able to find employment easily?
31. What type of employment do they receive?
32. What is it that you hope to do in these children's lives?
33. Is there anything else you would like to add or say?

Thank you!

Appendix H: Generic Semi-Structured Interview Guide

This interview guide was used and personalised for the Centre Manager, the Deputy Principal (IMG) the Educational Psychologist, the Heads of Residential Care, the Social Worker, the Occupational Therapist, and the Childcare Workers working at the Circle.

Professional Experience

1. Could you please tell me about your position and role?
2. How long have you been at this institution?
3. How did you end up at this CYCC?
4. What is your educational background?

Institutional Culture

5. Can you please describe the school culture?
6. What is the role of religion at the institution?

Learners

7. What are the backgrounds of the learners?

Curriculum

8. How do you decide which learner goes to which grade? (Occupational Therapist)
9. What are the ages of the learners for each grade? (Occupational Therapist)

Discipline

10. How does the school manage discipline?

CYCC graduates

11. What happens once they have finished Grade 10? Where do they go to?
12. What are some of the graduates currently doing?
 - a. Are they able to find employment easily?

- b. What type of employment do they receive?
- 13. What is it that you hope to do in these children's lives?
- 14. Is there anything else you would like to add or say?

Thank you!

Appendix I:

Classroom Observation Schedule

Start time:

End time:

Teacher's name:

Learning area:

Number of Learners:

Grade(s):

Lesson content/topic:

Textbook:

1. How is discipline managed?
2. How is the lesson adapted to suit the learners' needs and abilities?
3. What learning barriers/challenges are the learners experiencing?
4. What does difficult behaviour look like?
5. What is the teacher–learner relationships like?
6. How are the learners included in the learning process?

Appendix J:**Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Government Official 1**

1. Please could you tell me about your position?
2. What do your responsibilities entail?
3. How long have you been in this position?
4. How did you end up in this position?
5. May I ask what your qualifications are?
6. What is your previous experience in Inclusive Education?
7. How would you define Inclusive Education?
8. How would you define Youth at Risk?
9. What in your opinion are the main needs of youth at risk?
10. Could you please explain your responsibilities with regard to child and youth care centres (CYCCs)?
 - a. What are their different purposes?
 - b. How many child and youth care centres are there that focus on children and youth at risk/ youth offenders?
 - c. If the Circle were under the DSD, what do you think would change in the culture/ethos of the school?
11. Could you please explain the political dynamic that has led to those school shifting from the WCED to the DSD?
 - a. Reasons?
 - b. Main goals of this shift?
 - c. Who is involved?
12. What are the plans for these CYCCs?
13. What are the plans for addressing behavioural challenges for youth in mainstream schools?

Thank you!

Appendix K:**Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Government Official 2**

1. Please tell me about your position.
2. What are your responsibilities?
3. How long have you been in this position?
4. How did you end up in this position?
5. May I ask what your qualifications are?
6. What is your previous experience in Inclusive Education?
7. How would you define Inclusive Education?
8. How would you define youth at risk?
9. What in your opinion are the main needs of youth at risk?
10. Can you please explain your responsibilities with regard to child and youth care centres?
 - a. What are the different types of child and youth care centres?
 - b. What are their different purposes?
 - c. How many youth care centres focus specifically on youth at risk?
 - d. If the Circle were under the aegis of the DSD, what do you think would change in terms of the ethos and culture of the institution?
11. Could you please explain the political dynamic that has led to these institutions shifting from the WCED to the DSD?
12. What are the future plans for the child and youth care centres?
13. What are the plans for addressing behavioural challenges for youth in mainstream schools?

Thank you!

Appendix L:**Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Government Official 3**

1. Please tell me about your position.
2. What do your duties entail?
3. How long have you been in this position?
4. What is your previous experience in Inclusive Education?
5. Please tell us about your previous experience at the Circle.
6. Could you please tell us about the proposed interventions/plans for addressing behavioural issues in schools?
7. How would you define youth at risk?
8. How would you define Inclusive Education?
9. Do you think the Inclusive Education Policy makes provision for youth at risk? If so, how?
10. Do you work with Child and Youth Care Centres?
 - a. What is their purpose?
 - b. How many are there?
 - c. What are the implications of a child and youth care centre being under the WCED instead of the DSD?
11. What are the main needs of youth at risk?
12. How do you feel about the Circle's open model that promotes greater freedom of movement and trust in the learners?
13. Could you talk about the future of child and youth care centres in the Western Cape and what the implications would be if they were closed?

Thank you!

Appendix M: Semi-Structured Interview for Gang Specialist

1. What is the name and purpose of your organisation?
2. Could you please tell me about your role and duties?
3. How long have you been working in this field?
4. What is your specific interest in gangs?
5. What is your experience in working with gangs?
6. How did you end up in this profession?
7. Why an interest in gangs in South Africa and not in the States?
8. Could you please describe gang culture?
9. How do gangs function?
10. How does masculinity function in gangs?
11. What types of rites of passage are gang members initiated into?
12. How are children involved in gangs?
13. What in your understanding is the cause of gangsterism?
14. Could you name the gangs? Does each gang have a specific purpose?
15. How do members choose their gang affiliation?
16. How are members able to exit the gang?
17. What are some solutions to the gang problem?

Thank you!

Appendix N: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Inclusive Education Expert

1. Please can you explain your research in Inclusive Education?
2. How long have you been in this field?
3. What is your understanding of Inclusive Education?
4. Why have you chosen to specialise in this area? (Disability rights).
5. Could you please tell me about your work/experience in Inclusive Education?
6. What was your main input into and contribution to the development of the Inclusive Education Policy?
7. What is your theoretical approach to Inclusive Education?
8. What in your view were the main conceptual errors in the Inclusive Education Policy if you think there were any?
9. What are some of the current debates around Inclusive Education?
10. What are the major forces constraining the development of the Inclusive Education Policy and practice?
11. Given the political climate and education crisis, do you think inclusivity is possible?
12. What are your main recommendations for including all learners into education?

Thank you!

Appendix O: Semi-Structured Interview Guide for Researcher (teacher wellness)

1. Could you please tell me about your research at the Circle?
2. What is your background, qualifications and experience?
3. What is the purpose of your workshops with teachers?
4. What does a workshop entail?
5. What are the kinds of outcomes (and changes) you've noticed as a result of conducting these workshops?
6. What were some of the issues around teachers that you found?
7. What kinds of responses did you get from the teachers after conducting the workshop with them?
8. Could you please tell me about theories and practices of care?
9. Could you describe the model of care utilised at the Circle and how it is implemented?
10. Could you tell us about attachment theory and how it is implemented at the Circle?
11. How does the approach of the caregiver affect the behaviour of the child?
12. How would you describe the needs of youth at risk?
13. Is there anything you would like to add or comment on?

Thank you!

Appendix P:

Transcript Sample

Interviewer: Interview with Mark, on the 23rd of November [2016]. Um, ok Mark can you please tell me what your role is at the centre and how long you've been here for?

Interviewee: Ok, um currently I'm the [position] of the Circle Youth Care and Education Centre. And um essentially it translates in being the responsibility officer for the entire complex. That includes both the educational facility and the extended Erf which is like 65 hectares. So, I'm the Western Cape Education Department's representative and responsible for coordinating the educational programmes, care programmes and also just facility management. My position technically is just as principal of the school um in the interim though um due to a variety of changes we are a Youth Care Centre that is in service to the Department of Social Development and so where as I am the principal of the school I'm also centre manager of the broader of complex. Um yes it sounds very confusing, but the past 5 years in terms of changing legislation and a whole host of things it has actually been very confusing times. So currently I serve two masters. Um however, I choose to serve the children and that gives meaning to what we do here as a centre.

Interviewer: How long have you been here for?

Interviewee: Ya, I've worked in this sector for 30 years. So, from 1987 till 2000 I worked here at the Circle school of industries which was the previous institutional form. And then from 2000 to the present I've worked here in a management position first as deputy principal and then it seems like an eternity, but I think for about the last 6 or 7 years as the centre manager.

Interviewer: Um and how has the nature of the institution changed from school of industries to a youth care centre?

Interviewee: Ya well look it has been radical in terms of our understanding of the state's responsibility to children but also in terms of the nature of care so in the first form of as a school of industry - our centre actually straddles both the apartheid years as well as the post-democratic - so from 1990 onwards there was a very serious shift in terms of policy change towards the management of children. So, we moved from a very retributive, punitive way of working with children in a very incarcerated environment. Um which meant that the system in place over here was whippings, um solitary confinement, isolation and it was just a reflection of the broader way of working in generally with children that either been in conflict with the law or found to be in need of care. So, the paradigm was a very medical model-based finding fault, deficit model, but also using um much more compliance, using token economies where you reward that which is good, and you punish that which is wrong. To one post 1994 to and from 2000 in particular, to a much more learner centred um therapeutic milieu type of way of working with children - much more developmental focus, looking at the needs of children. But that defied in some ways the way our centre went about managing the changes in legislation. On a broader of canvas though, I mean strangely though the violence of the previous system in terms of isolation and all of those things disappeared. Sadly in the way the rest of the country and the rest of the province were working with children - it's a much more invisible violence where kids move into facilities that are, are - mimic a prison type of environment and that is for - and it houses kids that are awaiting trial that have been sentenced and kids that are referred as - we only work with children that have been referred by the court. So, they are not criminally processed um to be sent out to go serve out a punishment, but rather an intervention aimed at helping children. So, I mean, obviously there are many things that I can talk about, but this is just a kind of very, very broad generalized overview. Because in the previous institutional form even though I have foregrounded the violence in terms of the way of working with children. Um that standing alone would serve as an indictment in the way that institutional form delivered on care, but there were so many other strengths as well in terms of the success in working with kids providing a very good education and vocational stream - a lot of resources etc. So, I you know if I want to juxtapose the two models you know um, you'd have all of that violence disappearing and now currently you have the best legislation and our kids' best interest are not being served. Yet in terms of all of the rhetoric, the language and the way we talk about kids in need of care and protection, one assumes that you know that this is a much more benign form of dealing with children. But I'd say to people in the practice of it, actually say that yes, the others were much more stark you can see it, but now what's not in our awareness does not necessarily mean that our kids are not being treated like

disposable children. And that is what for me singularly are an indictment the most wonderful child-friendly legislation that we have and the most amazing Constitution and Bill of Rights. But in the operational unpacking of how we work with children and the trauma laden in communities that they come from, it's very much a flashback of our apartheid past and that for me is sad.

Interviewee: I'm going to go back to that - that's quite an important point. But um just a shift from a punitive model to a more restorative and caring model - How did you manage to make that shift especially among the staff who were [00:07:42] [unclear].

Interviewee: It was very, very difficult. Um I'd say especially from 2000 to about 2010. It was just repositioning and actually negotiating with children because children also found it very difficult um that there were just so much scope and they would say something like the school has become a "*suikerhuis*" - which is like a Shebeen. It's like anything goes because we can do as we please. So there was a - from basically a school of industries to a Child and Youth Care Centre in 2000 there were huge changes and I mean the system in the main because there were a lot of things happening on the broader front where institutions were rationalized with 16 facilities that were rationalized to eventually to four and of the four, um though there was a good conceptual model in place that not enough thought and consultation had gone into how we were going to reposition and unpack. There was a huge exodus of skilled personnel working with kids in academic and technical fields that you lost. They also stopped the professional or occupational class of child and youth care worker and replaced them with security guards. So, change management was very, very difficult. One good thing though is, is that Western Education Department did make available some excellent training in the new model. So, from in that first 10 years we had people from the States coming in here and really, they invested heavily in our centres in terms of alternate ways of working with kids. Dissecting the corporal punishment and all of these ways um of working with children would give way to a life space intervention that would help kids actualize their potential. A lot of resistance to staff and understanding what was going down - a lot of people checked out. So, the first 10 years was about renegotiating the terms of reference of the centre. And it was also building critical mass. And um from 2010 um ushered in a new period of piloting and experimenting. Um literally almost like building up and breaking down and starting over again. To develop an appropriate way of working with children that covered both the needs of a curriculum that needs delivery in terms of benchmarking academic and vocational progress and also building in um developmental programmes that would build kids esteem that would have a life skills focus. So, the six years from 2010 to 2016 in terms of where we're standing has essentially been a quantum leap in terms of accepting in the main that when you work here with our children that we are going to have to work differently. We've got to work at enrolling children, and you've got to believe that this is a non-negotiable and not hanker after things that no longer have relevance. Also, in the period the admissions had changed radically. So, your big striking lads made way for much more fragile young kids coming in from the ages of 11 - physically small and also the needs of heavy trades to be replaced by children that couldn't pick up a brick. So it's a constant reflection of our praxis to make our interventions relevant and also radically um changing our idea that the centre had to be at the centre of the community and not isolated where people were not allowed to come in over here and kids were not allowed to go outside. But to build a new gateway of activity so that kids could traverse their communities, our centre and create opportunities for them to be reintegrated much easier. That their needs to be a seamless approach where our activities need to be more normative. Um and that are kids must not be seen to be placed in a prison type of environment. And that I must say has been amazing - our kids interact with the community through school participation through going on outings, hiking, going to beaches. Whereas in the previous dispensation they were always on the margins and not where many people are. You know. So that has made it so much easier for our children to be accepted more readily. And though the stigma of being at a school like ours will always remain in the mainstream view of society and community um we have I think renegotiated the way in which children now access work placements um in the community and the way the community accesses our facility - for weddings, for sporting activity. So, we are no longer a no-go zone. But we are much more open ended - we also foster entrepreneurship by giving access to communities to um set up businesses and um with a view also for getting placement opportunities for kids so that they can get relevant work experience.

Interviewer: Who was the organisation from America that came here to train?

Interviewee: Reclaiming Youth International. Um and I've got an abiding respect for the model that they have brought here. But more importantly is the absolute value that it brings. And that there are there isn't an easy way in working with kids that have lost courage. Um and communities that I've given up their responsibility and their power to start dealing with kids that are deemed to be in trouble. And um just to have the presenters coming in over here and actively engaging with the practice of what we are doing and listening to us. Because obviously there is a huge difference between the challenges in America compared to what we were doing. The relevance of the model and really just leading by example and commitment. Um I had the pleasure of meeting Larry Brendtro and Steve Van Bockern [00:15:28] -- as the key presenters. There were many other presenters along the way as well. But these two in my mind are absolute legends in negotiating a way for a paradigm which at the time people will not ready for. They were still lamenting the fact that we are powerless, and we no longer have any recourse in all of this [00:15:51].

[Chatting]

Interviewer: Do you know which state they're from?

Interviewee: The Black Hills. Where is that - South Dakota? [00:16:22]

Interviewer 2: Oh, wow that's like in the middle of the country. I've never been close to there. Surely, they do work in bigger cities too.

Interviewee: In fact, they've been enlisted um in a lot of the court cases, and they brought some of the stuff to us, just to show how they go up and they testify on behalf of kids that are in prisons. And they come up with something different. So, um they present an annual course, I know it's stuck in my head - the Black Hills. They do a course on the reclaiming youth. I've written to them some time ago, you know. I can't just come and do that. But obviously, there was only one trainer that the province...that's Dr Charles Coetzee [unclear]. The province dominated the go for the training.

Interviewer: Dr Charles Coetzee? Does he work for WCED?

Interviewee: He use to yeah.

Interviewer: Sounds familiar. Does he work with violence and...??

Interviewee: Look, at the time he was in charge of our facilities. And so, he - we went on the course. We obviously went for the like - obviously the local courses for the year, but I think this was the absolute stand out - the pinnacle of getting access to the practice and the engagement over a period of time. Um so that is one of the things, one of the opportunities you know - that I would have loved to go one. Just to deepen my understanding of the practice. And just to be in that environment - in that milieu.

Interviewer: Um what is the status - the current status of the four facilities that are there?

Interviewee: Well we are the only facility that has been given interim registration or provisional registration until the 30th of October 2017. All of the other facilities have been repurposed. So, we the last facility that is still is WCED, but rendering the service that we previously did that is to work with kids referred to a centre via a Children's Court for a programmatic intervention in terms of behaviour, life skills and stuff like that. So, the rest will be a repurposed as schools of skills.

Interviewer: Um what is the reason for the change - them converting from youth care centres to schools of skills?

Interviewee: You see with the previous Children's Act all of these facilities had a legal standing that the Children's Act identified schools of industry and reformed schools as placement options for dealing with kids that are either

in conflict with the law who committed a lot of crime. Or kids who are found in need of care which is the legal term which means the state must intervene in the lives of these children - remove them in most cases and then take care of their educational, physical and all of their needs. So, with the Children's Act changing what happened is that all of these facilities that were previously run by the Department of Education migrated in terms of the law to the Department of Social Development so all facilities will then be managed by the Department of Social Development. [00:20:17]. the legislation states that the national MEC - the national minister from funds that are accrued through the budget will in each province establish these centres and then spread. The MEC for social development will take part - will take charge of discharge on provincial level. The national ministry develops a national strategy for establishing a lot of child and youth care centres, but they get managed by the Department of Social Development. When that function migrated, each province then had to establish child and youth care centres and all of the previous facilities would be deemed as being registered in the new legislation for an interim period of 2 years from 2010 to 2012. In that period of time the Department of Social Development could then determine which facilities they wanted, and they chose in our province to say that they did not want a single WCED facility. They would upgrade, renovate their existing facilities that were transitional facilities meaning - Kids awaiting placement that they use to be in the previous dispensation they would change around. And that's where we lost all of these facilities. Our centre is unique in this sense is that right at the level of draft legislation we did an input saying that, you know what we need to be vigilant about mixing children that had offended and kids who are in need and that we were saying that there needed to be a continuum of care where that makes for a differentiated intervention. When we were served in 2012 to close our centres board of governance then took issues with it and went the way of litigation after everything else had failed and so we've been in litigation until March or May of this year where the Supreme Court of Appeal then upheld the appeal of the province. So, we have to fall in line with the facilities management - Social Development. Therefore, the status of the centre going forward is still uncertain. They will probably evaluate on a year to year basis.

Interviewer: And what are the implications for children in need of care and protection? Where would they be sent?

Interviewee: They will be sent. Look, at the moment we are on full capacity so kids in need of care the directorate facility management DSD along the courts decide what programme the kid needs. So, if he is need of care and he doesn't come to our Centre then he can only, or she can only be placed at a few centres. The one is at [CYCC 1] which is a DSD facility so it's a multi programme so kids that have committed offences will also be in there but they kept separate so they would be in the same facility but you know housed in different components and they will access the same programme but in different times. [00:23:46] so the same facility but in - but obviously the two groups are technically legally not supposed to meet. As well as Clanwilliam there's only one facility which is [CYCC 2] for girl and now recently [CYCC 3] which works like the assessment facility apparently, it's also going to be a placement facility. So, the options are obviously very limited, but it is the preferred model of intervention of DSD to have a One Stop Shop. So, some kids will be at [CYCC 4] Horizon for example. There would be diverted to attend say a substance programme called the Matrix programme in there. They will also kids who are awaiting trial over there as well. So, it's a completely different way of working and it's obviously has a much more closely supervised - it's a lock down facility essentially.

Interviewer: So, the ethos or the method of dealing with kids in need of care and protection and youth at risk is going more towards a punitive model at these institutions?

Interviewee: Look if you speak to anyone in DSD they would take exception to the fact that that you would say that it's punitive. To them they are not being punitive. Um they will argue that that given the nature of offences and all of that there is a need to structure their day and to structure all activities and to prevent any kid from absconding. Um if you look at the blueprint for secure care centres, you will see, and this is accepted policy - it is no different to a prison facility. And obviously I've been seriously challenged by the fact that kids can be dealt with, with the severity of losing their freedom. When you work in a particular model for so long you don't see that to be problematic. But you ask any of these kids over here, about what's their lived experiences are, and they will tell you straight that that is a prison - "Dit is 'n tronk". And over here I mean you'll see there obviously we are not a children's home, so we are very structured - the kids attend school over here. But if you look at our complex it's a sprawling complex which is open there is freedom of movement and access. Whereas at any other facility

which is run in line with policy, it is a completely - the ethos is one that that inhibits, restricts and micromanages and supervises kids in a way that creates an incarceration culture. I challenge that notion of saying that that this is the best way to work with children - particularly in need of care and protection. I say that the kids that have committed criminal offences that also need um high levels of developmental programmes. They need more restrictiveness so that they cannot exit yes but they also need an environment that repairs, reclaims & builds um on the positives that they do have. Otherwise when you're saying to them you gonna stay here for 2 years and when you exit here you can go and join the gang and after 18 you can go into a life of prison. So, the more restrictive - there also needs to be enough programmes that empower. My challenge is that kids should not be denied their civil liberty to access a programme in an environment which speaks to them as that they have done something wrong [00:28:23]. They have wronged society and therefore they - they are picking up the bill. If you ask the child then they will say, "Ek doen my straf" - I'm doing my punishment. The notion of working with kids in need of care and protection is an intervention - is not a punishment - it is an opportunity. It is to harness access to a - an appropriate learning programme that brings the kid in alignment with an ethos of care and connecting him to a curriculum. Whereas his experience thus far this has been one of being pushed out of a curriculum of being labelled as being stupid, being disruptive and all of those things. It is saying to a child that there are some things that are outside of your control that have gotten you here. You now have an opportunity and how can we optimise, maximize this window which is essentially between 2 and 4 years to do some serious intervention and to get a kid believing in himself. It's so much easier if you punish the kid in his mind has served his punishment and can now go on and create more havoc. This is a much tougher way of working with kids, but it acknowledges that we've got to deal with kids in a different way and we've got to acknowledge the totality of the child's life experiences. And we've got to use the curriculum and a whole host of programmes to influence a child so that would disrupt the outcome which everyone says is that he is destined for a life of crime or nothing good will come of him [00:30:24].

Interviewer: Can you maybe speak more about what you said regarding children being disposable and how that fits into the system?

Interviewee: I think it's very important to acknowledge that when children land up where they have to be taken out of the community - that something has gone wrong at the level of the family and that deliver community and that we must recognise that this must be an absolute last resort to be able to engage with a child away from the family. So institutional intervention is always to my mind the last way of - literally the last man standing. Having said that I recognise that there is a need for institution really at their heightened level of support to reconnect children to their communities. But there is a kind of notion that these are kids that have done wrong - these are kids that have not taken opportunities presented to them. Look our country is free - there's access to education. These are kids that are making life for other children unbearable - they don't want to listen. They do all of the things that are wrong. And you know what, they- this is there [unclear]. So, there's a kind of fatalism in dealing with kids at the levels of schools where kids are not performing. They get suspended, and they get pushed out. There isn't an ethos in most schools of saying. "How can we help? How can we get the match right? What are the bigger underlying issues that are getting these kids to act out in this particular way at school, at community?" The economic situation in most - I mean the profile - parents are busy working or they are unemployed - recreational facilities in communities are none to speak of. Gangs loom larger in terms of presenting a picture that says you join us we take care of you. Um so it's almost as if to say this is not a baby man so whatever will be, will be. And so, we treat kids in a where we shunt them [*two-kit in the background: meow*] from places to places. Um social workers have caseloads that run into mountains. And so, if there are not enough resources in alignment for kids sadly man- there isn't even an attempt to say let's give it our best shot. And for us we've got to really problematize the notion that only some kids matter - every child matter. And the phenomenon is obviously that the bulk for kids in need of need a care and protection come from working class communities where the resources are so limited. Where social evils proliferate, and the norm is to grow up in a yard um in an informal settlement- in a knock up place where. So, there are some deep and darker things that somehow almost legitimises for us not see these kids - to see them as these invisible kids. And that is the dark side for me in terms of our institutional interventions just looking for shortcuts to address a deeper social malaise. Um I am very glad that you are seeing increasingly community marches in our marginalized communities where they are saying no to crime - no to the burying of children because of gang violence. So, for us our children matter, we take whatever child gets an opportunity to go here. We don't select kids - we welcome every child over here and we try and get the best possible placement programme for the time that the child is here. And that is a key dynamic that we think needs to be almost the be

embraced by our Province, by a community to say that children matter. And so this cannot be the responsibility of one provincial department there needs to be more inter-sectoral collaboration and that there needs to be a broader commitment to intervention programmes - to early intervention programmes um and a commitment to educating communities about um accessing resources and facilities in terms of wellness and in terms of getting help for some of the things that are going wrong at a very, very early level. Sometimes the intervention when a child commits a crime is so late [00:36:31].

Interviewer: Just like an observation, so there was the inter-ministerial steering committee who did the research in 1996 and then there was the shift and then the shift happened in 2000 but now it seems as if because of the closure of these institutions it's going back to the is punitive model. So, what is, I don't know - um sort of the logic of doing this research process but then later, 20 years or so down line it's going back to the way it was prior to 1994. Like what is happening to the development of youth care in South Africa?

Interviewee: That's a very tough question to answer because I think in the period post 94. I think there was a euphoria - an absolute commitment to righting the wrongs of apartheid. And you had people champion across the - I think the just broader society. If you look at housing - just RDP housing, look at education. There was a period of redefining what the South Africa is that we want to live in and to the right the wrongs of the past and I mean Madiba was absolutely at the forefront in championing the rights of children. Our Children's Act which went into development from I mean from 2004/2005 came into law in 2010. Was about creating a legislation which was child centred and child-friendly, but obviously had different national ministers driving the processes. Fraser Molokete was relentless in terms of driving - she was the national minister for Social Development, and she had compiled a formidable team to see this process through. What happened obviously subsequent to that, though the legislation came into place? There were also I think at an operational level and at the departmental and provincial level an unpacking of legislation in a way that eroded the general rights and I think the ethos of creating child-friendly environments um and a child centred approach. Well we've got all the legislation, but we've got an apparatus that deals with children in obviously in a very harsh way. And if you look at the core drivers of the IMC, you will see the entire flavour was developmental. They did a situational analysis about the gross disparities between the racial base service provision and the discrimination and institutionalized abuse of children of colour. So, it overcame that hurdle in terms of doing restitution and restoration. But the wheel has come full circle, because I don't think people generally carry the institutional memory that carries the fight on um when bureaucracies and probably power lobbies in different departments fight about departmental budgets and things like that. For me it's an absolute heresy to see the kind of institutional forms that such a progressive legislation has given birth to. I shudder to see the lack of-of-of agency that comes from people based in the different departments where there is almost just an acceptance of carrying on with policy because this is a democratic South African. I haven't seen that level of activism to really bring light to what is happening to children. And it is staggering in the Western Cape to see how children are falling into gangs and how kids are falling out of school. Um and obviously you cannot build so many institutions. They are very costly. There needs to be a greater focus do on dealing with things at community level and creating different levels of capacity. We are absolutely staring down the barrel in terms of all of these kids that do not have an education that are on the street because there is very little that they can do. I mean we've got a capacity of 70 kids over which is a pinprick really in terms of the reality of kids that are out on the street, but I'm sure that the national picture looks equally bleak. But yes, it is troubling and deeply perplexing to recognise that at some level um there's been a real hijack in terms of facilities serving the needs of the children and the communities. Increasingly social development goes for a combined business model of working and I'm sure that obviously where you look to in terms of research. The more we try and incorporate an American model of dealing with kids it means that you out outsourcing that responsibility from communities, from the province, from the state and you're making it a business. So, you're looking at bums and beds. You're looking at privatized eating - all of those kinds of stuff, where you cost what the sandwich costs to give the child. Here we make the food in our kitchen, if the kids want another sandwich, he has got an opportunity to go there. The food that they eat is the stuff that is prepared at home. The people that are standing there in front of them - there's a relationship. So, I'm certainly not saying that we mustn't embrace progress. But we've also got to look at what we've got to pay the Pied Piper in exchange um for a service which is delivered to children and if the cost in collateral damage to the community and to our country is so high. We've got to problematise and rethink our way going forward. Maybe from my corner of the world I see a future where it's going to implode because of the way we are working with children and not addressing communities and not enrolling kids in feeling valued and cared for. But if we do not take care of the youth of the country then what future is there. And I think that well everyone is merrily going

about their own business there isn't always attention to what is playing itself out, where our kids see trauma as normal. I always recall a very stark demonstration of how numb our kids become when a learner had gone to a day hospital and the day hospital was in an opposing gang area and our nursing staff that was there was absolutely petrified because this young child had to go for help at the community clinic and he was recognised by a rival gangs and though they were petrified he was absolutely fine and when I called him in afterwards [00:46:14] and just debriefed him he said, "You know sir you guys don't know what's going on out there and look, you know. It's like it's like one of these games that you get in an arcade where you know - you're just shooting goof gaf and a few die, others get out, sometimes you recover, every now and then you bury a few" - very matter of fact. And he says, "Well look if they had to shoot me or whatever on that day, you know, I would have been avenged by my brother." A recognition that death walks with him and if he steps in the wrong place at the wrong time and that it's ok. This kid was sixteen going on seventeen. And I tell you it will still rattle me when our youth um just see the lack of opportunity and they don't recognise the violence of what's happening in the community. It's very, very scary. Our kids over here are still playing marbles - indigenous games. They climb trees. They do ordinary things and they live a childhood in the space because we create a space for that. That same lad over here I went to go see him playing soccer at [name of field] which is one of the community fields over here. What a promising young man in terms of that. And he felt valued um. But after every holiday he wouldn't come back to school because when he is in the community, he plays a different role. Over here at our centre there isn't a space for gang affiliation or anything like that. [00:48:25] But you recognise that while he is here that that part who makes him who he is very much alive over there. And that at best you can create discomfort, but you don't check out of his allegiances. It is life limiting if you do that. So, when we do disrupt a pattern by presenting an alternate way - it's a complete package. Many times, parents relocate to other areas, tattoos need to get removed. But that is a small proportion of the number of boys that come here. The bulk of our boys are small, and they have not been criminally inducted. They are essentially just kids that um families and adults have failed and that schools do not have the patience to work. That literacy and numeracy levels are very really limited, and the educational programmes means that that they never progress with their cohorts and so issues of bullying, acting out in class, disrupting class becomes key indicators of a child not fitting in and a child that needs to be removed. That is essentially the profile of our kids. Some of the most disruptive kids at an outside school you will not believe that is our model a few of our model boys. They will greet you and interact with you could never believe that this kid could bring an entire school to a standstill [00:50:06].

Interviewer: You answered a few of my own questions so that's good. And just in terms of how the kids are identified and sent here by the court – um how are they determined, like what is the things that the - well I don't know if you...

Interviewee: Well, you'll see there is a licensing that we have over here. You can check there in terms of the Children's Act what the key criteria is here. But I mean, what happens is essentially that there are challenges in a family or a kid is giving problems at home, a social worker will do a Children's Court enquiry and they will go to a commissioner of child and welfare and what they will do is they will listen to what the presenting issues are and they will look at placing a child there if it's for poor behaviour which is essentially the key criteria with regard to us and um also to be able to access a educational programme so that is the care determining factors in placement over hear. So the court will find, the enquiry will find that this is a child really that through intervention by the state and um and by - through opportunities that that kid could be enlisted um and be able to achieve either skills training or then get access either to mainstream again or basically find gainful employment with this intervention and also just to work with the family in terms of doing restoration because a key driver for us is to work restoratively. That we do not want to supplant parental community involvement, that we are essentially a kind of midwife. That we try and challenge a view that just says that this child is bad news. And it's amazing this morning one of our kids that is finishing up next week. He is turning 18. And his stepfather visited him here today. And his stepfather is hearing impaired. And so, came to find out how the kid was doing, and he was amazed to hear how well this child is doing. He is really excelling in sports and vocational all of that. And his stepfather was saying that you know, he must go back to the marble flats when he finishes here. Now the marble flats here for us is a very dangerous area where two rival gangs every time it becomes a no go zone and if you don't choose an affiliation sometimes guys will actually forcibly put a tattoo on you which of course you know has severe implications. And the marble flats are known for substance and for huge gang violence. I mean, sometimes it's a no-go zone for police. They come in there um three or four vehicles really, they go in there in convoy. That's how bad it becomes. And he was saying that while the child is here, he is learning. He is an absolute pleasure. He comes and visit his

mum's where they stay in a different area. He was saying that he fears for the life of this child. So, what we do is we challenge that the fact that this child that was so difficult we get in the family to look at the child through different lens. Where you see that that table he has made. He is a prefect. He is the top goal scorer. He is the highest achiever in the class or in the workshop. And so you reframing in the past an experience where a child was sent away to a naughty boy school to one where he's coming into a much more nurturing environment and we also then try and engage the family to look at renegotiating you know if he does something wrong over the holiday to phone us we'll send someone over there to do a restorative process over there. So, you went out to a party, you didn't come home all of that - how can we do things differently. You want him to be brought back to the centre immediately. What would it take for you to change your mind to give him another chance? And that for us is working restoratively. It is not a knee jerk to rectify through a corrective intervention. But is also to get a kid to take responsibility - that look the curfew was at 10. What could you have done differently? You didn't have airtime. What other options were at your disposal? So, it becomes an intervention and an opportunity to teach and obviously um parents are sitting with huge challenges in terms of employment. In terms of no one being at home in terms of supervision and coming home and finding that all of food for the night because the friends came there and they ransacked the whole kitchen - so kids get locked out. So we work differently um to try and restore balance and to look at roles and responsibilities because sometimes the child wants to take the role of a parent by saying, "I need to go and work for the family", "I need to be the man in the house". And for a kid of 14, 15, 16, it's an inappropriate responsibility. And so, we've got to look at what to teach more realistic way of engaging with the real need that there's no food in the house. So, we've got a programme where we get kids to work shadow and to earn monies and one of our kids from the marble's flats for example through a work placement while he was a student and learner over here. Finished 2 months ago, he is actually fully employed by works placement partners and um that is an intervention which is very helpful. It brings an income home. It takes him out to the boredom of being in a community that is so easily could be drawn into - into a life of crime. So, it's about doing more but with less resources with greater creativity and within a notion of caring for the child in the broadest possible way. We've got to stretch our understanding of what our role and responsibilities is. It doesn't always sit well with all of the staff, but the bulk of the staff recognise that you've got to do so much more as a person to maximize the time that the child is in your classroom, in your workshop, in your hostel. Um I always like - my phone is full of pictures where you will see a child walking - holding the hands of a childcare worker - or at a braai you'll see a childcare worker holding a child, hugging a child - in animated conversation - celebrating a child's birthday in classroom - having a little party. These things are not legislated for but it's the value add that you need to give when you have a centre like this, so that there is a deeper commitment to the well-being and reintegration of the child. Yes, there's a professional responsibility where you can't bleed and cry with a child as a professional person. But you need to feel, you need to care, you need to love. And our centre must be littered with random acts of kindness. A kind word - my god. Knowing you by name... Not you there - boy, lighty - dinges. If you don't know me how can you care about me? We do not confer value on a child by giving him a certificate. A child feels that, he connects do that. Now we are not all perfectly formed human beings. We all are frail. We all have our challenges. But you need to give in order that this child may live a kind different life. And it is not asking too much to have more patience, um for you to raise your bar on delivery. My kids will always tell me, you know dad, I sometimes wish I was a Circle boy because you get less cross with them than with us. And that is so. So, I sometimes get the balance wrong in terms of my own personal life as a personal disclosure and acknowledgment as well. But you rather do more than do less. Um a simple act like being able to come into the office and coming to ask for a sweetie or something, a fruit or something. They must be an openness which is an acknowledgement that you're not only placed here for the most narrow form of education. Educational needs can be met or stunted in a variety of ways. That you need to use each moment as possibly a defining moment that leads to some other shifts within a child. Once they have seen that light, transformation follows. Despair gets replaced by courage. And are all of us wired for this? Yes, I believe that. I believe that we are naturally wired for love. And that hate and hurt, and harm are things that are taught and sometimes learnt vicariously. So, these are tough spaces to enter. They are hard spaces. And that's why I attach a huge value two building in wellness into our staff development and connecting with our own inner spaces and the kind of peace that we need to create within our own environments because these environments extract a lot out of you. They take a lot out of you and you've got to replenish. You've got to find other places to energize and so that you can always give. But you also need to take care of the caregiver to take care of yourselves. And we need to find that wellspring for ourselves. The centre can only provide certain opportunities, but you also have to take good care of yourself so that you can take better care of children. If you're stukkend (*broken*) then it's very difficult to give because there's nothing that you can give. You are so far stretched and to the point of personal collapse that how are you even going to take care of someone else. So, this is not easy. I never call it work. This

is certainly not, not something that you can take very likely. This is a very onerous responsibility to work with children. And this is not some sausage machine where so many kids get in and they get popped out and these are the successes, and these are our failures. It is not as arbitrary. It's a much more nuanced at times much more nebulous way of saying you know what we think we've worked here but we never really know to what extent we've impacted the lives of children. Many years later on you will have kids coming back here which they still do, continuously. And they either come back other with gratitude or they come back with a sad acknowledgement that if they're only listened um to what was taught and if they'd only grabbed the opportunity not to leave the school in September month and completed their grade 9 so that they could have gotten that certificate. But that to me there is no, there is no holy grail in terms of guaranteeing what you are doing. You can but only invest with goodness of heart and with assiduous labour um in the workshop of God. That is my deeper understanding of why I'm here, but I also know that I've got PERSAL number and that I work for a government department and I've got certain responsibilities that I must discharge. If I were to do that, I would only be for fulfilling a very small part of what calls me here to the centre. So, ask the staff, give what Caesar demands of you, but remember we are accountable to a greater entity, a sentient being in whatever way we understand that to be. And that we must ask what we have done with our lives in service to humanity and to children if this is your field of work. And you need to be able to give an answer which you must be happy with. I was blessed with an insight when I started working here – to say that if I'm no longer worthy of serving children and when I'm no longer happy here then God must give me the insight to check out. I've been here for close to 30 years so somehow, I still believe that that there's work to be done and that there's still a lot to do. But if you were to stay on here to get a pension date to ensure maximum pay out. I understand that's what people need to do. You become a shadow of what you can do in terms of positively affecting lives of children. And children pick that up. And they will give you the kind of hell that sometimes people fast track their exit then.

Interviewer: So many beautiful things you said. That's why I didn't stop you. Just in terms of how you select your teachers do. Or how did you and how do you select the teachers that work here?

Interviewee: Well, in terms of selecting staff I had very little choice, I mean we went over from the school of industry to the child and youth care centre essentially it was the same people that, that chose to stay on but in a new way of working. We were very happy that the people that were bought over challenge of ---- there was these 10 years of good training. But in terms of recruitment for people over here, we've not had an establishment for the last 5 years so there's no one that you can really recruit to come and work here permanently. So, if there's a vacancy for an English teacher we interview a few people and our questions are all centred on not only curriculum knowledge, but you know issues on your view of positive discipline um understanding the broader needs of children and what value do you bring. So, it's a much more people, person based to say look we are going to be making so much demands over and above that. And then secondly, we provide INSET training, um as you know that you did the Circle of Courage training – which is just scraped the surface. But there are on-going professional um courses that we present here. I can't say its courses, but we do interventions um on a Wednesday. We do staff development. We also have different departments giving input. We have health promotion activities – all of that. And we then enlist teachers to exceed just curricula requirements. And obviously because it's a contract basis, so if it doesn't work for us or if it doesn't work for the actual teacher they can even check out or we will do disengagement with them. And say look, um we're not happy that not all of these things were met. So, there's that. In terms of the bulk the people that we recruit for positions as childcare workers - that we interview quite robustly. And here essentially, we target community people. People that have worked with adolescents in church organisations, in soccer and stuff like that. So somewhere you need it through your community exposure be aware of children. Having a role like that and then there we do a very formal INSET programme for them. Because in terms of educational qualification many of the guys haven't even completed Matric but because senior certificate - but because there's a willingness to work with our children, we draw them from the different communities so that there is an identification with positive role models. So that recruitment we fully responsible for because the governing body is their employer. And then we do a probationary period of 3 months and then we offer a year contract which is renewed on a year to year basis.

Interviewer: And in terms of funding? How's the schools funded?

Interviewee: Look funding is an absolute nightmare because the department pays the salaries of staff but because there's an entire occupational class which is not recognised. We have to raise about probably between 1.1 and 1.5 million just to employ support staff. And then we've got to make up essentially 3 to 4 million which includes the childcare workers in order just to stay open and meet the basic needs of the centre. Our budget is skewed because we only get funding from the Western Cape Education Department for the educational component. Which is about 1.7 million but because we do not get funding from DSD in terms of their norms and standards it means that we fall short on the broader hostel and programmes component which takes a lot of money. Our kids are going to a leadership camp for 2 days. It is serious money that we cannot access from a budget that doesn't make allowance for that. So, we raise money in order to make that possible. The policy that we follow is a simple one - the money follows the child. So, whatever our kid needs in terms of their broader education - the bulk of our expenditure goes in there. So, the funding model is completely distorted, and we obviously need interdepartmental budget sharing. If we just received two million from DSD, 90% of the stress that we go through which is just navigating our way, would disappear - would absolutely disappear. But we've been very blessed in that, in the 5 years, the school has been very resourceful in optimising our developmental assets. Even broken stuff we market, and we hire out and we hire out halls and facilities that we don't utilize. But obviously it places tremendous stress on our board of governance and centre management to stay financially afloat. That is a huge stressor.

Interviewer: You recently went through an audit. Could you maybe tell us about the outcomes? What was said? What needs to be improved? What works?

Interviewee: The audit was from the Department of Social Development and obviously we, a Department of Education school. So, there's a misalignment between the audit instrument and our practice. But what was very, very encouraging. Number 1 is, I must compliment the audit team for taking a very developmental view and actually acknowledging that whilst our practice was different and the instrument didn't necessarily capture everything that we are doing here that they found the school to be a very well-run school. And that our, in the bulk of our understanding of the Children's Act and our responsibility to children were being met and that we are fully compliant in some areas and partially compliant - because it's a different environment. It was a big learning exercise for them as well to see that we do things completely different to DSD organizations. The non-compliance that we got are things that can be rectified immediately, that for example you 'll see as you drive in here now that there's a sign up that says this is a gun free zone. That was a non-compliance wish I could transform with in literally one week. So, my commitment to the non-compliance is to turn them into compliance because we want to be registered as a full facility. Other things are outside of my control, you know, that our board needs to be constituted formally in terms of the Children's Act because we are a school. We've got a board of governance which is done according to the Western Cape Education Act not in terms of the Act, No. 38 of 2005 which is the Children's Act and then gives you how the board gets constituted. So I'm having follow-up meeting with the audit team tomorrow but really for me is to be completely constructive and see what are the steps that we need to take in order to not compromise on our ethos and moral but also to get compliance in terms of areas as an organisation - we are a learning organization. So, we can do things differently and if there is that we need to polish up we will do that. So, it was for me a good barometer of where we are at, and if we within a DSD audit could perform at a satisfactory level and with an acknowledgement there are some places where the audit reflected commendable. I'll give you access to read through that audit report. It was good. So, I'm having a follow-up with just a small number of people. Because the idea is not to look at um you know, you didn't capture this that or the other. You know it's not too major in my eyes but just to get the overall sentiment and see how we take the process forward.

Interviewer: Ok, I'll just ask my last question then. So, after the 30th of October 2017 what is in your view the ideal status the Circle could be in after that date?

Interviewee: Look a very, very difficult thing because obviously it's impacted at different levels of administration and of power. All that we've done is to place ourselves in the position to render a service to children in a way that really makes a difference in their lives and to optimally utilize staff allocated over here. So, here's not a story that there are people sitting under trees doing nothing as was the case with two of our other centres where there are no children and staff not gainfully employed. So, we are staying in the set up formally as a functional delivering fulfilling of core brief as an institution of care and of learning. Decisions obviously have to be taken at a different level because we've lost the court case and because we've lost that court case we've only got interim registration

there has to be discussion at different levels of power within the province between Education, Justice, and Social Development are still want this institutional form to exist beyond this point. Because obviously we are an anomalous entity in that we are a school - as a service provider to DSD. We are child and youth care centre with its primary focus on being a special needs school. So, there'll be a lot of debate I think happening outside of our centre for me it's just to continue making the best of every day. And doing the best that we possibly can and to continue to work incrementally and progressively towards achieving an optimal learning and care environment for children. A welcoming environment and an empowering environment. Our motto is developing youth, empowering our nation. And so, we'll obviously try and influence through discussion with our district about the need for a continuation of our centre to serve this target audience and also to be enlisted in the broader prevention and early intervention of children in mainstream education and so in a reconstituted view of our role. We could be seen as a resource for the Education Department or Social Development. And that is something that we have done informally. We used to do this as a school of industry. That much, I mean it's obviously not in the public domain. But this has been our approach even during this school of industry days. To be a telephone call away for the community if they need help in schools in the area. So, there is a very deep commitment to an active citizen and to make our centre a centre for the community and to recognise that all children are our responsibility, not just.

Interviewer: Thank you!