

SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS IN THE FAMILY THAT ARE SIGNIFICANT
FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF GIFTEDNESS IN VHAVENDA CHILDREN

by

THINAMAANO ELIKANAH LUMADI

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SUPERVISOR: DR S.J. KOKOT
JOINT SUPERVISOR: DR M.E. VAN HEERDEN

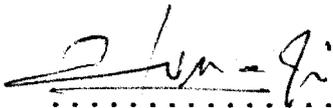
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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved wife, Thanyani Gladys and my sons, Munangiwa Lovejoy and Bono Michael. They trusted in my ability and constantly prayed, encouraged, loved and supported me during the period of this study. Their understanding strengthened me when I found it difficult to be a husband, father, researcher and an educator at the same time.

Parents are bows from which their children as living arrows are sent forth.

Kahlil Gibran

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SUMMARY

This study focuses on the identification of traditional and modern sociocultural factors revealed by traditionally-orientated (rural) and modern (urban) Vhavenda people that define the Vhavenda cultural context, and establishes how the Vhavenda view giftedness from their own sociocultural perspective. The literature study reveals that Vhavenda school children are disadvantaged with regard to socioeconomic level, education and geographic isolation. Definitions of intelligence were reviewed as well as those of giftedness that consider sociocultural perspectives.

An idiographic, qualitative study was conducted with informants from rural and urban areas. Results show that the sociocultural context of both traditional and modern Vhavenda is characterised by modern rather than traditional sociocultural factors which influence the development, nurturance and manifestation of giftedness in Vhavenda children. Vhavenda learners (13-15 years old) revealed some frequently observed characteristics of giftedness. Consequently, some identification measures of disadvantaged gifted children hold promise for the identification of gifted Vhavenda learners.

Key words: Sociocultural factors, family situation, giftedness, intelligence, identification, disadvantaged children, Venda, academic performance, ability, initiation schools.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1 INTRODUCTION

All human beings are born into a social world (Mönks 1996:258). Parents consider their major task to be educating their children so that they can become part of their societies and to realise their inborn potential (Mönks 1996:258). It follows that parents will bring up their children according to the values that they consider important in their particular society. The children's development will thus be influenced not only by their genetically endowed abilities but also by the culture of the family and the greater society in which they find themselves. This is expressed by Mönks (1996:259) when he writes: "Development is always twofold: it is always a nature-nurture process, an interaction between inborn abilities and the existing environment".

A percentage of children in all cultural groups have greater potential than others for high achievement in areas of human endeavour. Many terms have been used to describe these children at the top end of the ability range, including "gifted", "talented", "exceptional", "able" and "genius" (Welding 1998:3). Regardless of the terminology used, identification of these children remains a problem because cultural influences will effect the manifestation of potential and developed abilities. As Kang (1997:249) writes: "[T]he concept of a talented child differs sharply in different countries", while other writers stress the possibilities of different areas of achievement being valued within different cultures in the same country (Haasbroek 1988; Clark 1992:437; Kokot 1992:165). This has particular relevance for South Africa where we find many different cultural groups.

The Vhavenda is a small group of people living in the Northern Province of South Africa. The own, unique customs,

beliefs and practices that make up a culture (Resnick & Goodman 1994:109) serve to identify this group as unique. Being a separate group, what are the sociocultural values and practices in the Vhavenda family that lead to the development of high abilities in their children? This study attempts to answer this question.

2 AWARENESS OF THE PROBLEM

The researcher is a guidance teacher at a secondary school where he has contact with many school children. As he is interested in finding solutions to crises experienced by children in education, many children who were thought to be impossible were referred to him for counselling. Many of those children were labelled as "problematic", "disobedient", "disrespectful", "funny" and "provocative" by teachers.

The researcher realised that many of these children were academically high achievers and that, in many cases, the above labels did not apply to them. In certain instances, it was found that teachers become emotional when unable to respond satisfactorily to challenging questions asked of them and tend to label these children "difficult" as a defence against their own inadequacies.

The researcher became aware that highly able children tend to develop problems very quickly when they are taught together with average children. When they master what is taught to them at a faster rate than the other children do, they start to show boredom and play. This is interpreted negatively by the teachers. The same applies to them when they ask a lot of questions to get clarity on a point.

Because of this experience, the researcher became interested in the issue of development and manifestation of giftedness in Vhavenda school children. The fact that gifted education for white children in South Africa has been relatively well researched (Olivier 1985:67), served as an incentive to the

researcher to try and ensure that the education of gifted black children in South Africa is researched, taking into consideration the children's various sociocultural backgrounds.

The researcher became aware that gifted children in South Africa and other countries are identified through developed identification instruments which are not "culture free" but which are products of certain cultures (Clark 1992:236, Gage & Berliner 1992:54). It therefore became clear that for gifted Vhavenda children to be identified, an identification approach which takes into consideration the Vhavenda's sociocultural background should be developed. This identification should be based on the Vhavenda's global cultural context. But before such an identification approach could be designed, the factors that define the sociocultural context and which influence the development and manifestation of giftedness should first be identified.

As a result, it is necessary to investigate and establish sociocultural factors that could define the backgrounds of each of the various black ethnic groups of South Africa. These factors could then form the basis for compiling identification approaches, each suitable for a particular group aimed at identifying potentially gifted or gifted school children who are members of that group, i.e. of the same origin and culture. This research seeks to investigate and establish such sociocultural factors with regard to the Vhavenda.

3 EXPLORATION OF THE PROBLEM

Giftedness is a difficult and controversial concept surrounded by many problems. A myriad of questions are linked with the concept of giftedness. Such questions include: Who is gifted? What is gifted? How should giftedness be defined? and so on.

In the 1950s the identification of gifted white and black learners in the USA came under attack as the politicians saw it as a way of perpetuating segregation between whites and blacks (Tannenbaum 1983:28). The criticism was directed at the use of the middle-class white based IQ test which was said to disadvantage the already disadvantaged American black minority group. The instrument disregards the sociocultural factors of American blacks. When the identification instruments based on the middle-class white culture are used to identify American blacks, very few children are classed as gifted (Ritchet 1985:69).

Tannenbaum (1983:27) indicates that, to eliminate discrimination, American blacks were allowed to sit with whites in the same classroom. However, the problem was that the two groups could not possibly compete with each other on a comparable footing under identical learning conditions. The disparity in readiness, motivation and support systems at home was too great.

It is widely accepted that IQ tests are culture bound. Gage and Berliner (1992:54), Clark (1992:222), Tannenbaum (1983:353) and Laycock (1979:157) indicate that no IQ test is culture free, since human behaviour is culture bound. These authors emphasise that the appropriateness of any test for any individual depends on that individual's access to the culture in which the test was developed. It is now clear that every cultural group should be tested using identification tools which were developed taking into account the sociocultural background of that group if the objective of effective and unbiased identification is to be met.

Tonemar (in Clark 1992:237) discusses the identification of American Indians for a gifted programme. The American Indian Research and Development Incorporation (AIRD) was formed to develop effective leadership within the American Indian community. This group was concerned that standardised test scores by themselves cannot measure total achievement. They

then suggested that the scores not be used as the sole source of evaluation of learner performance.

In addition, the group recommended that professionally trained psychometrists (preferably American Indian) administer the evaluation to American Indian learners, and that group achievement and intelligence tests be developed and normed with American Indian learner populations. "In an effort to gain a tribal perspective of giftedness and talent, AIRD surveyed tribal people asking them to list the characteristics of their tribe's gifted and talented learners. The results are being used as part of the gifted learner identification and selection process and will form the basis for a critical look at the curriculum. The goals of AIRD are receiving support from the tribal people, and the hope is that their efforts may eventually lead to an American Indian Gifted and Talented Academy" (Clark 1992:237).

If giftedness is considered in context, the sociocultural setting of the people concerned should be clearly defined. Children's cognitive processes can hardly function independently of their cultural environment since all the skills, capabilities and habits acquired are situated within and based on sociocultural background (Tlale 1990:1).

According to Hirst (in Tlale 1990:1), the abilities of children are influenced by their society's culture and their thinking is in harmony with their physical environment. This author believes that the mind is an adaptation to the environment in which people live and develops in constant interaction with the institutions which determine the structure of the society. For giftedness to become meaningful and effective to society, it should reflect the children's cultural life and the aspects considered significant by society. The latter would be developed by the process of socialisation.

The family in particular bears a major responsibility for the child's socialisation since it assumes the primary role of nurturing the child. Berns (1993:64) defines socialisation as "the process by which individuals acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions that enable them to participate as more or less effective members of groups and society".

The family exposes the child to certain cultural experiences available in society, it passes on its socioeconomic status through its ability or inability to provide or afford higher education for its children and because it functions as a system of interaction, the way it conducts personal relationships has a powerful effect on the psychosocial development of children (Berns 1993:51).

Regarding the identification of gifted children South Africa may be open to similar criticism as that levelled at dominant cultural groups in the USA as it is a multiculturally composed country. Kokot (1992:68) indicates that standardised media for the identification of gifted black pupils in South Africa do not yet exist. Although standardised IQ tests have been developed for use with some of the indigenous people, for example, the Xhosa and the Zulu, no such test has been developed for the Vhavenda. Gallagher (1985:28) advocates that each culture needs to define giftedness to meet its own needs and values, so the cultural aspect plays an important role in this regard. The call for the construction and establishment of identification instruments and procedures which take into consideration the sociocultural aspect of high potential black learners in South Africa is clear and needs to be addressed.

Thus it seems that, just as the concept of giftedness should be culturally relevant, an identification approach should be designed and developed from the perspective of the cultural patterns of the society it is meant for. In order to search effectively for giftedness in Vhavenda children, a sociocultural perspective of giftedness, talent and

intelligence should be established. The question of what giftedness, talent, intelligence, high ability, and special achievement are to Vhavenda people must be a focal point of this research.

4 DEMARCATION AND STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In the field of gifted child education, every ethnic group should be aware of its global cultural context that forms the basis for designing a socioculturally orientated identification approach which may be used to identify its gifted children.

This research will focus on determining traditional and modern sociocultural factors upheld by traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda people, in order to identify those sociocultural factors in the family that are significant for the development and manifestation of giftedness in Vhavenda children.

The research problem may therefore be stated as follows:

What factors upheld by traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children and their families

- (a) define the Vhavenda sociocultural context, and
- (b) influence the development and manifestation of giftedness?

The field of this study is limited to Vhavenda families and their potentially gifted school children who are in grade 8 and 9 (standard 6 & 7) found in rural and urban schools in the Northern Province area formerly known as Venda.

5 AIM OF THE STUDY

The aim of this research is to investigate the factors that influence the development and manifestation of giftedness positively or negatively in school children from both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda families.

The investigation will be essentially directed at:

- a) Identifying the characteristics or behaviours that are commonly found in families of Vhavenda children showing promise of high ability.
- b) Identifying traditional factors which are still maintained by both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children and their families.
- c) Investigating how traditional factors influence the development and manifestation of giftedness in traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children.
- d) Identifying recent factors which play a role in nurturing high ability.
- e) Investigating how recent factors influence the development and manifestation of giftedness in traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children.
- f) Determining whether any cohesion exists between the characteristics or behaviours that are said to be displayed by culturally disadvantaged children elsewhere in the world and those displayed by both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children.
- g) Establishing whether both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children display any of Gardner's seven types of intelligences, and

- h) identifying the factors that negatively influence giftedness of traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children.

6 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

6.1 **Factors**

According to Heller (1996:28) "culture" in the natural sciences refers to a set of external variables influencing behaviours in a culture specific way. In the social sciences, culture is considered to be "an integral part of human knowledge" (Heller 1996:28). The cultural variables influencing the development of giftedness in Vhavenda children are referred to in this study as "factors". This is because terms such as "values" are too limiting in scope or meaning.

Culture involves a number of factors that are characteristic of the social environment in which an individual grows up. These factors include history, language, literature, poetry, drama, art, music, philosophy, religion, science, law, ideas, morals, social organisation, values, beliefs, customs and traditions (Berns 1993:73; Ford & Harris 1992:200).

"Recent factors" refers to "newly acquired" factors in a particular culture. They are factors which have been recently adopted by a certain group of people. An example is the shift made by children from the practice of accepting every word from their seniors without questioning to a tendency to question everything not understood.

6.2 **Traditionally-orientated Vhavenda**

This group could comprise two sub-groups. Traditional Vhavenda refers to Vhavenda people whose lifestyle has changed little over the years, despite the influences of

modern times. These people have roots that are deeply cemented in their culture and they strictly observe their traditions. They are most frequently found in rural areas.

However, there are also traditionally-orientated Vhavenda. They are those Vhavenda people who have undergone a cultural change and have moved away from their traditions, although they would rather go back to their roots. Despite the fact that their culture has changed, they would like to maintain and live in their traditional culture and traditions. This latter sub-group, and not the former, is focused on in this study.

6.3 Modern Vhavenda

These are the Vhavenda people whose culture has undergone radical change and they are content to live in the present culture that surrounds them. They do not feel bound to observe the traditional Vhavenda culture. These people are more frequently found in urban areas.

6.4 Giftedness

Giftedness is a complex concept. It cannot be defined in a manner that covers all aspects of giftedness in all cultural groups. The definition needs to be dynamic, depending on the values of the society to which the term "giftedness" is applied.

Two definitions recognise the importance of culture and can therefore be used as a basis for this study. The first is that of Kokot (1992:45), who defines giftedness as an inherent potential, latent or realised, for above average achievement in one or more areas that have value for a specific culture. The second is derived from an expanded view of giftedness by Tannenbaum. This is discussed more fully in Chapter 3.

6.5 Intelligence

Intelligence is a complex concept with many different meanings. In this study the definition used is that of Gardner. He defines intelligence as "that ability to solve problems, or create products, that are valued within one or more cultural settings" (Margulis 1997:1).

6.6 Rural area

Rural area refers to villages where the traditional way of life seems to be strongly maintained. Hunting, use of firewood and traditional farming methods are still practised. Telephones, electricity and running water are limited to a few locations in this area.

6.7 Urban area

In this study, urban area refers to a modern settlement, that is, a small developing town composed of a shopping complex and houses with electricity, telephones and running water. A modern lifestyle is practised in this area although some people may still practise a traditional way of life to a limited extent. Because this small developing town is surrounded by rural villages, it is possible for children from rural villages to mingle with those who stay in the town.

6.8 Lifeworld

Children's lifeworld includes everything that has meaning for them, not only their geographical world but all their relationships with objects, ideas, people and even themselves (Van den Aardweg & Van den Aardweg 1988:141).

6.9 Family

A family is a social group usually characterised by common residence, economic cooperation, and reproduction. It includes adults of both sexes, at least two of whom maintain a socially approved sexual relationship, and one or more children, own or adopted, of the sexually cohabiting adults (Berns 1993:126).

7 METHOD OF RESEARCH

This is a qualitative study in which a literature study and fieldwork will be done. In the fieldwork, in-depth interviews will be conducted with selected subjects. These will comprise school children and their parents.

The researcher and the teachers of the school children will be participant observers. After making an observation, the teachers of the subjects will make use of a rating scale in order to ascertain the characteristics of giftedness displayed by the subjects.

8 RESEARCH PROGRAMME

- Chapter one has concentrated on the awareness, exploration and statement of the problem. The aims of the investigation have been stipulated. Some important concepts relevant to the study have been defined and the research programme has been outlined.
- Chapter two will deal with a brief historical background, the culture, values and demonstrated ability of the Vhavenda people, Vhavenda people's traditional education and modern Western education. It will also address some of the Western culture's influences on the Vhavenda people.

- Chapter three will give literature findings and related research on issues concerning the influence of sociocultural factors on giftedness.
- Chapter four will describe the research design. It will give the framework of the semi-structured questions of the interviews to be conducted among the traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda people.
- Chapter five will report the findings of the research.
- Chapter six will present conclusions and recommendations made.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE VHAVENDA PEOPLE

1 INTRODUCTION

According to Berns (1993:141), every culture or ethnic group in which an individual grows up is a macrosystem which has indirect effects on child-rearing attitudes and parenting styles. Levine (in Berns 1993:142) proposes that there are universal parenting goals which involve, firstly, ensuring physical health and survival, secondly, developing behavioural capacities for economic independence and thirdly, instilling behavioural capacities for maximising cultural values such as morality, prestige and achievement.

On the basis of his analysis of 250 societies, Murdock (Haralambos & Heald 1986:331) argues that the family performs four basic functions in all societies. These universal functions are sexual, reproductive, economic and educational or social. The family's societal functions are inseparable from the functions it performs for its individual members. When children's ability in music or art is admired and allowed to develop, it benefits the children themselves as well as the society at large. Parson (in Haralambos & Heald 1986:332) argues that it is the function of the family to mould children's personality in terms of the central values of culture to the point where they became a part of them. Clark (1992:428) indicates that child-rearing patterns influence the nurturance and development of the child's abilities.

The aim of this chapter is to discover what sociocultural factors in traditional Vhavenda families can be regarded as significant for raising children, developing and nurturing giftedness, and which individual abilities are encouraged in Vhavenda children.

In order to realise the aim of this chapter, the historical and sociocultural background of the Vhavenda needs to be explored.

2 A BRIEF HISTORICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL BACKGROUND OF THE VHAVENDA

African history, including that of the Vhavenda, consists of legends, traditions and tales handed down orally from generation to generation (Grove 1980:37). Due to this oral tradition the literature reflects conflicting accounts of the history of the Vhavenda (Loubser 1988:1). These differences exist because the informants of the various historians gave contradicting versions.

The majority of the Vhavenda people inhabit the area that was previously known as Venda. It lies along the Zoutpansberg mountains in the Northern Province (formerly known as the Northern Transvaal). Appendix I gives the geographical map of the area. According to The Republic of Venda's Statistical Report No.1 (1993:37), the 1991 census recorded the population of the Vhavenda found within the former Venda self-governing state as totalling 532 200 people.

2.1 Origin

The Vhavenda came from north of the Limpopo river led by their hereditary chiefs. They encountered the Vhangona people in the present Northern Province area whose land they invaded and whom they conquered (Van Warmelo & Phophi 1948:8, Transvaal Native Affairs Department 1905:62). According to Stayt (1931:250), the evidence concerning the origin of the Vhavenda is vague and fragmented. Ralushai (1977:22) points out that it is very doubtful if it will ever be known how, why and when the Vhavenda and other southern African blacks found themselves in great numbers in areas which are now historically associated with their settlements.

The Vhavenda oral tradition and works of both European and Vhavenda writers give accounts of pre-European settlements and Vhavenda migrations. Their probable places of origin were Egypt, the Lower Congo, the Great Lakes area, Zimbabwe and *Vhukalanga* (North).

It is through oral accounts that the theory of the Egyptian origin arose. The exponents of this view maintain that the Vhavenda originally lived in Egypt where civil wars following succession disputes caused the vanquished group to migrate southwards via the Congo and Zimbabwe to settle in the Northern Province. Ralushai (1977:22,24) indicates that his research found that this theory was supported only by literate old men, which led him to suspect that they might have been taught this theory in school.

Wessmann (1908:10) maintains that the Vhavenda originated from the Congo. His argument is based on the existence of a tribe bearing a Tshivenda name, speaking Tshivenda and practising similar customs. On the other hand, Lestrade (1945:xxiii) rejects the idea that the Vhavenda originated from the Congo, stating that "a mere similarity of names, however great, would not be sufficient reason to link up two tribes ethnically at all, certainly not as intimately as is implied here. The argument from language is similarly weak".

Lestrade (1945:xxiii) and Stayt (1931:14) agree that the Vhavenda originally lived in the area of the Great Lakes of East Africa, Nyasaland which is now Malawi. This view is based on the records of the Transvaal Native Affairs Department (1905:62). It is stated that the original Vhavenda were led southwards from a place which was near the sea, and situated in "a land of many rivers which all join and in one body rush to the sea. Our ancestors have told us that it was a warm climate, warmer than the Njelele (in the Northern Province), and that not far to the east were long pools of silent waters - they are unlike the sea because of their silence."

Mudau's (1940:10) account of the origin of the Vhavenda also points to the Great Lakes Region. He says that they lived "... at Matongoni, yonder up north, in a country of great rivers and lakes, in a country of dense forests and jungles; a country overflowing with water and with many forests and fruit, of bananas growing in many groves and of tubers and pea-nuts in great variety".

Van Warmelo (1935:9) and Stubbs (in Lestrade 1945:xxiv) indicate that the Vhavenda left Lake Victoria and immigrated to Zimbabwe, where they settled for a long time. This was where the Vhavenda acquired some knowledge of iron smelting and the use of stones as building materials. Their place of settlement was called Dzata. Friction between them and the Kalanga caused them to migrate further south, crossing the Limpopo and settling in the Nzhelele valley. Grove (1980:44) confirms that they built a new Dzata in the same style and with the same name as the first one. The Dzata ruins still exist today.

According to Ralushai (1977:29), the view that is widely expressed in oral tradition and written sources is that the Vhavenda originally lived in *Vhukalanga* or *Devhula* (the North). Most people mentioned that their forefathers, before entering the Northern Province, were living in *Vhukalanga*. By this they generally mean the land north of the Limpopo river. This is the view to which the researcher in this study subscribes.

2.2 Composition of the Vhavenda ethnic group

Attempts to establish the composition of the Vhavenda people have been made. However, instead of clarity, the result has been contradicting versions and the production of incorrect history by various researchers (Van Rensburg 1979:35).

Van Warmelo and Phophi (1948:8) maintain that the Vhavenda have lived in the same area of the Northern Transvaal for centuries. Living in this way, "the Venda developed in their institutions also a homogeneity which is striking when compared with that of the Sotho tribes to the South and South-West". They regard this as "the factor behind the uniformity of Venda culture as a whole".

In agreement with this statement, Marguard and Standing (in Grove 1980:36) indicate that the Vhavenda are "people of considerable ability who have lived in isolation and have preserved many peculiar ideas and practices of their own". In the 1950 Tomlinson Report (Grove 1980:36), homogeneity is attached to the Vhavenda in the Western and Eastern zones while the Vhavenda in the Southern zone have mixed greatly with the Tsonga and the Sotho speaking groups.

Ralushai (1977:5) criticises the idea that the Vhavenda lived in isolation and as a result developed a homogenous culture. He says: "To a casual observer, Venda society appears to be homogenous, but beneath this homogeneity lies a heterogeneity that is apparent in burial and other religious practices, as well as in hair and dress styles, language, initiation schools, diet, marriage relationships, etc".

Loubser (1988:14) denies that there is a form of a "pure" Venda culture that is closed, but indicates that there is evidence that neighbouring people (e.g. Sotho, Tsonga) became Vhavenda and vice versa. He argues that the fact that language and certain cultural symbols are common threads that distinguish people in time and space does not imply that language and other systems of culture are static entities.

Multiplicity of tribal groups is prevalent amongst the Vhavenda people. Each tribal group is composed of the various clans which are, in turn, composed of units of families. The basic organisational pattern of the traditional Vhavenda family is the extended family which consists of the husband,

wife or wives, children, grandparents, grandchildren, or any kin related to the husband, wife or wives who may live in the same homestead or nearby and are emotionally and perhaps economically dependent on each other.

Some of the tribal groups are Vhangona, Vhanyai, Vhambedzi, Vhalea, Vhatwanamba, Vhanzhelele, Vhafamadi, Vhakwevho, Vhatavhatsindi, Vhaluvhu, Vhalemba and Vhasenzi. Van Rensburg (1979:35) states that "each tribal unit was bound by common tradition and heritage. The major differences, however, disappeared with time and at present the nation is more or less homogeneous, speaking one language which is understood throughout the country". However, it should be mentioned that the Vhavenda language is characterised by various dialects (Ralushai 1977: 46). In *The Independent Venda* (1979:71) there is support for Van Rensburg's view in that the population of the Vhavenda is regarded as "ethnically fairly homogeneous".

This research will consider the Vhavenda as a fairly homogeneous ethnic group.

2.3 Contact with Western culture

Although the whites in South Africa first arrived in 1652 (Heydenrych & Carruthers 1984:72), it was only around 1820 that the first white man, Coenraad Buys, entered the Venda region and obtained permission from chief Mpofo to establish the Mara settlement. In 1836 the Voortrekkers led by Louis Trichardt, arrived.

In 1849, Hendrik Potgieter's party entered the region and founded the present day Schoemansdal town. The first mission station was built in 1863 by the Dutch Reformed Church in Madzhie's territory at Goedgedacht, but was later moved to Kranspoort by Stephanus Hofmeyr. Thereafter more German and Swiss mission stations were established in various places like Maungani in 1872, Tshakhuma in 1874, Lwalani in 1875, Mavhola in 1877 and Vari in 1879 (Van Rensburg 1979:37,54).

Venda, as the region where the Vhavenda are found used to be known, was one of the last regions of South Africa to fall under white rule. When the government of the Union of South Africa was formed in 1910, all political power and most of the land was held by whites in the country. Conflict between races has been a part of life in South Africa since the arrival of the first white settlers. From the middle of the 20th century, the conflict became violent, with black people in South Africa rebelling against the laws and policies of the South African government. Consequently, the leaders of the government hoped to end racial strife by giving black Africans their own territories to rule (Stevens 1989:16-17).

In 1959 black South Africans were separated according to tribal divisions and made to settle in ten special tribal areas. These areas were known as homelands. During the 1970s homelands could be declared independent, self-governing nations. The black citizens living in them became citizens of the new republics. Venda became the third homeland to receive "independence" on 13 September 1979 (Mncwabe 1990:12-13; Van Rensburg 1979:i; Stevens 1989:18).

Other nations refused to recognise Venda's independence because they regarded the "independent homelands" plan as an unjust policy that deprived black South Africans of their human rights and hopes of participating in South Africa's government. Stevens (1989:18) says: "The United Nations and most of its member countries have condemned Venda and other former homelands as "puppet states" created and supported by South Africa in order to keep the blacks from having any real power in South Africa".

Venda, like the other self-governing states and black homelands in South Africa, experienced problems like poverty, unemployment, lack of health care, inadequate education and continuing violence over racial issues until the changes brought about in South Africa after the all-inclusive April

1994 democratic elections. It is now hoped that the problems of this area may be solved.

The culture and values of the traditional Vhavenda are revealed when viewing the character and the abilities they demonstrated before they were influenced by Western culture. It is important at this stage to know the Vhavenda culture, values and demonstrated capabilities. Attention is paid to these issues in the following discussion.

3 SOCIOCULTURAL FACTORS AND DEMONSTRATED ABILITY OF THE VHAVENDA BEFORE THE INFLUENCE OF WESTERN CULTURE

The researcher was born and bred in Venda. He shares the culture and values of the Vhavenda people. When one becomes concerned about high ability or giftedness among the Vhavenda as an ethnic group, one quickly asks oneself questions of this nature: What are the things valued by the Vhavenda culture? Is there any demonstrated high ability that is acknowledged, developed and nurtured in the Vhavenda culture? Who are considered gifted or talented among the Vhavenda people? This discussion focuses on giving answers to these questions.

Several Europeans who were amongst the first to be in contact with the Vhavenda, and who had an interest in researching and recording the oral tradition of the Vhavenda history and culture, also included in their literature the high abilities demonstrated by the Vhavenda ethnic group. In reference to the Vhavenda's outstanding abilities, Bullock (in Ralushai 1977:34) writes "...they had (I think) reached a step higher in Bantu Barbarism than the indigenes of this colony (Rhodesia) or perhaps, it may be more correct to say they had not slipped so far back in the scale of culture".

3.1 General conduct and duties of children and youth

The following paragraphs concern cultural practices of the

The following paragraphs concern cultural practices of the Vhavenda before the influence of Western culture. However, it should be mentioned that some of these are still evident today.

From birth, children spent most of their first few years on the back of their mother or a mother substitute. From approximately the fifth year, children started, to a limited extent, to perform adult duties. The girls performed domestic duties and the boys herded the cattle. The achievement or failure of any child in the family was usually associated with the whole family. The family members could either be highly esteemed or despised depending on the ability or inability shown by children.

As such, Vhavenda families saw to it that their good name was maintained by trying to think, plan and decide for their children. Even matters that concerned an individual's life, like marriage, were arranged without the child's involvement. The betrothal matters lay in the hands of family elders. In this regard, Van Warmelo and Phophi (1948:53) state:

"...it is a young man's parents who know all the relatives who live far away, who have a good reputation, who are known not to practise witchcraft, and to have no blot on their name. ... a young person does not know where to select a wife and might easily choose from amongst murderers or thieves, and thus bring misfortune upon his family."

The quotation emphasises that good reputation was of value to the Vhavenda to an extent that human rights were violated. It was expected of the children and youth to excel in various areas in order to have a reputation that would reflect well on the whole family.

This is explained by the following practice: A tradition amongst the Vhavenda was that when girls grew up, they should

keep on pulling their labia minora so that they would be long in preparation for marriage. It was said that they were for the husband to play with. If the old women, when making an inspection, found that the labia minora were not sufficiently stretched, they would reprimand girls, saying: "Why don't you do what others are doing? Do you want our family to be disgraced when you go to the initiation school or when you get married?" (Ralushai 1977:141; Blacking 1969:90).

The behaviour of children was closely watched as they grew up. Children who were curious and hyperactive or restless were regarded as *vhana vha silingaho* (children who are always disturbing the order of things). They were labelled that way because children were expected to behave in a moderately active manner and not be too inquisitive. Young people were expected to show respect by greeting or saluting elderly people. Young girls and women knelt down when they greeted their elders and the young men had to sit down or take off their hats whenever they saluted their seniors. Any child or youth who proved constantly obedient was given the status of "*nwana-nwana*" (obedient or best child). Such children strived at all costs to live up to the standards set for them.

Traditionally, Vhavenda firstborn males were expected to take over the leadership of their father's families when their fathers died. They were thus trained throughout childhood to accept the responsibilities of leadership. In extreme situations these firstborns were addressed as their fathers and given the respect that their fathers received.

It was expected of adolescents to have acquired knowledge of their culture, moral values and some other skills. Girls should have acquired skills like cooking, collecting firewood, ploughing, grinding mealies, keeping oneself clean, etc. Boys should by then be able to look after livestock, hunt, help to construct huts, plough the fields, etc. The youth also had time in which they could engage in sport and games.

3.2 Sport and games

The Vhavenda youth participated in sport and games. There were no standing clubs but they grouped themselves as the need arose. A team leader could be self-appointed or chosen by the group. According to *The Independent Venda* (1979:39), sports for boys included *khororo*, a hockey-like game in which teams of approximately ten players each hit a wooden ball with golf-like sticks, and *thulwi*, a game in which one player threw a *dundu* (a bulb of a climbing plant about the size of a pumpkin) at players standing in a single file who would try to spear the *dundu* with sharpened sticks.

Other games still being played today, include *tsimbe*, where two standing opponents try to wrestle each other down; *mavili*, a game in which two opponents exchange blows bare-knuckled (they are also allowed to use their heads and knees); *mufuvha* and *mutoga*, in which pebbles are moved from one shallow hole to the next.

Mufuvha is a game that portrays a cattle raid, with stones representing cattle and a large board, made from a hollow tree trunk, representing the countryside. Four rows of square holes are cut out on this board; sometimes these shallow holes are scooped on flat ground. Stones or pebbles are moved from one shallow hole to the other. Groups of men would gather around to watch the game for hours, applauding a clever move. The player who first removes all of his opponent's stones is the winner (Stevens 1989:60-61; Stayt 1931:364). *Muravharavha* is one of the games played on a board or drawn on the ground. It has moves that can be compared with those of chess.

One of the girls' most popular sports is *khadi*, which involves skipping singly or in groups, using ropes made of tree bark or stems of climbers. Young women play *ndode*; which is played by two players sitting opposite each other. A shallow round hole is scooped between them. Up to twelve

small stones are placed in the hole. The one who manages to take out all these stones from the hole one by one without dropping the stone she throws up each time she takes out a stone from the hole is the winner (Stayt 1931:367).

The youth were taught the relationship between males and females by means of the *mahundwane* game. The children who participated in this activity were usually between twelve and fifteen years of age and had already taken part in initiation rites. They would build miniature villages in which temporary families were set up. They then acted out the roles of adults. This game prepared them for the future life as responsible men and women (The Independent Venda 1979:32; Stayt 1931:99).

Khube is another game still played by boys and girls together. Two opposition groups are formed. A mealie pip is hidden in one of the hands of the two or three people who lay their hands, held cupwise, on top of each other. Each person then holds up two closed fists and one of the opposition strikes the hand in which he guesses the pip is hidden. This is repeated until the pip is discovered, then the opposition takes its turn (Stayt 1931:98).

An individual who excels in these games is entitled *ngwena* (crocodile) which implies a champion. For example, in *mavili*, *tsimbe*, *mufuvha* and *muravharavha*, a *ngwena* from a faraway village could come to challenge the *ngwena* of the local village. If he defeated him, he was crowned a new *ngwena* of all those villages represented in that particular game or sport. This indicates that the Vhavenda have always recognised the ability, talent or intelligence of a person in games of strategy.

3.3 Industrial art

The Vhavenda are artistic people whose industries cover various fields like pottery, woodwork, basketry, wire work,

and iron smelting (Stayt 1931:52-62). This is also evident in Distant's (in Ralushai 1977:34) account of the Vhavenda in the Northern Province (Northern Transvaal). It reads: "The Mavendas (sic) by their industrial arts are thus more advanced in material progress than the Magwambas (Tsonga or Shangaan) with whom they were in contact".

Wessmann (1908:29) also indicates that the Vhavenda are "skilled in a great many crafts" and that "there is hardly any sphere of industry in which they do not show their natural aptitude and skills. They can produce earthenware pots and jars of most convenient and practical shapes, clothing and furniture. They tan skins...". Concerning children, he mentions that they "make their own toys, ... model cows, oxen and horses of clay, or construct little carriages of soft wood. With these toys which are most remarkably natural, they play in the roads" (Wessmann 1908:29).

The most prominent art amongst the Vhavenda was that of the forge. The Vhavenda are reputed to have one of the longest histories of iron smelting in Africa. Much pottery was also produced while *sila* (a coarse cloth) was woven from locally grown and handspun cotton (Minnaar, Offringa & Payze 1992:5).

Iron products were exported from the South-Eastern border where people needing these products came to fetch them. Old dilapidated furnaces which served for producing and melting iron could be found everywhere in the country. The ore was derived from the so-called iron-mountains on the other side of the Luvuvhu river and was carried in baskets to the places where it was treated. Some of the places are Tshimbupfe, Schuynshoogte, Welgevonden, Goedehoop, Morningsun, Happy Rest, Pea over, Kalkoven (De Vaal s.a.:46-47; Wessmann 1908:28).

The furnaces were about three feet in circumference and built of clay right into the ground. The interior of the forge

showed the creativity of the Vhavenda. A large flat topped stone served as an anvil, other stones were used as hammers and wooden sticks served as the tongs. For charcoal they used specially suited kinds of forest timber. The products made included agricultural implements, axes, arrowheads, assegais, knives, picks, sickles and many others (Wessmann 1908:28; De Vaal s.a.:47).

According to The Independent Venda (1979:29), the Vhavenda's artistic work includes claypots which are valued as household utensils for preparing, storing, serving and carrying food. They also make *zwikumbu* (calabashes) as containers for water and beer. In woodcraft, some important articles made are *ngoma* and *mirumba* (drums), *khamelo* (milk jugs), *ndilo* (round wooden plates), *zwiashi* (cups), *mpfo* (spoons) and *mituli* (pounding blades). Usually one of the best woodworkers lives in the vicinity of the chief's capital. He is responsible for executing the chief's orders like carving the *ngoma* (drum).

3.4 Music

The Vhavenda people have always had their own way of enjoying and excelling in music. Wessmann (1908:30), Mudau (1940:10) and The Independent Venda (1979:36) concur that the Vhavenda are very fond of songs and musical instruments of various sorts. These instruments are played by men and women. Music brings great pleasure and constitutes an important feature of their whole communal life. This is the reason why they enjoy collective music and dancing.

Music has also long formed the basis of the children's self discovery and knowledge of their place in society as they grow to adulthood. Through music, they learn how to behave in various situations. Girls have special songs as an accompaniment for doing chores, while boys sing in the veld while they look after cattle or goats. In dances like *matangwa* and *tshikona*, the young men blow the pipes and dance in a circle, while the girls sit in the centre watching them

and take turns at beating the drums (Mudau 1940:10; Van Rensburg 1979:54). Blacking (1964:76) points out that the skill in drumming is an important accomplishment for girls, but not as important as the ability to sing the solo part of a song.

Stevens (1989:61) similarly states that the Vhavenda are well known for the arts of singing and dancing and adds storytelling to the list of accomplishments. Nearly every adult was (and still is) known for his or her special skill with one particular song or story and was asked to entertain the village at feasts and celebrations. Any person who is realised to have the best singing or leading voice is entitled *nambi* (a singer who either has an outstanding singing voice or shows prominent skills for playing musical instruments, and who is often given an opportunity to display his/her ability either by leading the songs, singing a solo or playing his/her musical instrument while others are dancing or listening).

According to Blacking (1964:24), this good soloist (*nambi*) should have a loud, confident voice and a large repertoire of songs. He/she is honoured wherever he/she goes. His/her knowledge of the words of a song and his/her ability to improvise typical words or introduce an entirely new song makes him/her even more appreciated. On the other hand, the person who shows skilful ability in dancing is entitled *tshilombe* (one who shows outstanding coordination in dancing, performing admirably in time to the rhythm of the song or beat of the instrument). This good dancer, *tshilombe*, also learns to sing well with others.

Blacking (1964:77) indicates that the Vhavenda identify musical families, suggesting that their musicianship develops because of social and hereditary factors. If the child of a good Muvenda musician shows promise, it was said that *O tou mamela*: the child "sucked ability from the breast". This

implies that the Vhavenda attach importance to heredity in social skills.

Vhavenda children over the ages have been considered to be competent musicians who learn music by imitating the performance of adults, who correct their mistakes. Small children who show promise as dancers or singers are singled out for praise, particularly by members of their own families. In his observation, Blacking (1964:75) noticed that over the course of the weeks of training of the *tshigombela* dance, those who were specially pampered and praised improved greatly while others who showed talent but did not receive much praise made little or no progress and were soon ignored. This shows that where high ability is identified and encouraged amongst the Vhavenda, it develops, while where it is neglected, it does not evolve.

Amongst the Vhavenda musical instruments are *ngoma* (drums), *nanga* (flute or reedpipes), *mbila* (xylophone), *tshihwana* (musical bows), *khwatha* (horns) and *tshela* (rattles) (The Independent Venda 1979:36; Wessmann 1908:30; Van Rensburg 1979:59).

3.5 Eloquence and rhetorical ability in speech

Wessmann (1908:41-42) describes the ability revealed in the legal courts of the land. He writes:

"The Bawenda (sic) are fortunate not to need an advocate; for every man, woman, or child is his own advocate. All possess great rhetorical gifts, and can make long and eloquent speeches on the most unimportant topics. They possess simply astonishing memories; nothing upsets their countenance, nor are they embarrassed if they fail. They plead their case with assurance and speak with great skill, emphasizing their remarks with many gesticulations, although they have never read Quintilian nor Cicero. They never use

note-books, and their eloquence is in no way influenced by time nor place. So they need no one to second them. As perfection in any profession always begins at the base, they might, if properly schooled, easily attain great things in the art of speaking".

This extract contains some exaggerations that need to be addressed. The fact that Wessmann views the Vhavenda as a homogenous cultural group causes him to make scientifically invalid statements. With regard to an ethnic group, statements such as "all possess great rhetorical gifts", "nothing upsets their countenance", "nor are they embarrassed when they fail", "their eloquence is in no way influenced by time nor place", "they need no one to second them" are questionable.

Although these statements show an element of exaggeration, Wessmann was trying to express the outstanding ability in speech demonstrated by many Vhavenda. It has now been realised that literature (Ralushai 1977:34-35; Wessmann 1908:29; De Vaal s.a.:45-50) and oral tradition on the Vhavenda reveal a considerable degree of demonstrated ability also found in other ethnic groups.

3.6 Social life

The Independent Venda (1979:29-30) views the most important primary social grouping amongst Vhavenda as the nuclear family, consisting of the husband or father, his wife or wives and children. Traditional Vhavenda society encouraged big extended families. A man could marry several women and consequently have a big family.

The Vhavenda of the past proved to be people of remarkable character. The whole nation of the Vhavenda even today seems to resemble one large family which will not allow any great difference to arise between people, even the rich and poor. They are fond of sharing what they have with one another,

especially food. This is apparently based on the principle of equality. Sometimes sharing with relatives was a means of deflecting envy and avoiding accusations of using witchcraft to become more prosperous than one's station in life warranted (Wessmann 1908:29).

If someone needed assistance in hoeing his field or with any other work, he called his friends and neighbours to come and help him. Afterwards he would serve them beer which they enjoyed while singing and dancing (Blacking 1964:166).

There is a saying which goes *Vhana vha khotsi vha thukhukana thoho ya nzie* (The children of the same father share the head of a locust). This means that people should share whatever they have no matter how limited the things may seem to be (Blacking 1964:29; Stayt 1931:155).

If two parties wronged each other, another person was asked to act as a mediator to reconcile the two parties. When a woman with an illegitimate child married, the stepfather was expected to take the child as his own and not discriminate against him or her. He is constantly reminded of the Tshivenda saying which goes: *Wa kokodza luranga, mafhuri a a tevhela* (If you drag a pumpkin plant [mother of the child], pumpkins [children] follow) (Ralushai 1977:64).

Orphans have generally been received kindly and willingly by other families, especially if they have no relatives. Unknown visitors in the land were taken to the king's home where they were given food and shelter and then left to continue their journey. These are some of the principles that are valued to be of great importance.

Chieftaincy plays an important role amongst the Vhavenda. A discussion of leadership roles is therefore important.

3.7 Political life

Political leadership amongst the Vhavenda has always been carried by hereditary chiefs and headmen. This society has always been marked by several traditional political units of which the chief's territory is the largest. Chieftainship is still of special importance. The chief is considered the head of his territory. He possesses the highest legislative, executive and judicial power and no decision on laws concerning his territory may be binding without his consent (The Independent Venda 1979:25; Lestrade 1945:iii-v).

In the past, the Vhavenda believed that one is born a leader, hence the proverb *Vhuhosi vhu tou bebelwa* (One is born for the kingship throne). The chief did not hold his position on account of his prowess in warfare or because he was the most suitable person for the office, but filled his deceased father's position. Every person who became a chief or headman was given a new name representing his leadership. The meaning of the new name generally suggested how he should lead and handle his subjects. The Vhavenda subjects generally gave due respect to their leaders (Minnaar et al 1992:8; The Independent Venda 1979:24).

It should be stated that these days the chief is not an absolute monarch. He is in the first place bound by law and custom to act in certain well-defined ways and along certain well-defined lines and can not simply alter these age-old laws at will. Secondly, there are four other figures whose authority has to be respected at all times. They are *makhadzi* (father's sister), *khotsimunene* (father's brother), one of the king's sisters appointed as *khadzi* and one of his brothers appointed as *ndumi*. The latter two later assume the role of *makhadzi* and *khotsimunene* respectively (The Independent Venda 1979:25).

The chief's territory was divided into different *mivhundu* (districts). Each *muvhundu* (district) was under the control

of a *gota* or *nduna* (headperson). The districts were further divided into *zwisi* or *midi* (sub-districts or villages) under the control of a *mukoma* (subheadman or village head). The *mukoma* knew everybody and everything in his area. He kept the peace, settled smaller disputes and referred bigger cases to higher authorities. The Vhavenda people believed that the ability to be a good *nduna* or *mukoma* was inherited and that a successful leader was helped by ancestral spirits (Lestrade 1945:ix; Minaar et al 1992:8-9).

It should be noted that not all chiefs who were regarded as born to lead were successful (Stayt 1931:196). One of the Vhavenda chiefs whose leadership was outstanding is Makhado. Dzivhani (1940:40), Motenda (1940:161) and Wessmann (1908:116) mention that Makhado was known for being a chief with much influence and military skill. He was known as "The lion of the North" or "The bull of the North" and "The Night Fighter of Ha-Ramabulana". Makhado raided other villages such as those of chief Mphaphuli and the Vhalaudzi on several occasions. He also attacked the whites at Fort Edward and took their cattle, complaining that they had taken his land by force and had chosen the place they wanted.

3.8 **Battles, hunting and fishing**

During times of war, a specially brave warrior who succeeded in doing some deed of valour, such as killing an enemy in battle, received a reward. He may have been made a ruler over some villages, or presented with a woman by the chief. Such a person was given the status of *muhali* (the brave and fearless). Other people would congratulate him for his ability and usually address him by the title.

Stayt (1931:73) indicates that after a battle, captured women and children were distributed among the headman and warriors, and the victory was celebrated in a great feast and dance. Stayt (1931:73) also describes the following:

"At this war-feast any man who had proved himself a coward was decorated with the lungs of an ox hung around his neck and was dressed in women's clothes. He was then forced to eat portions of the lungs mixed with manure, and was paraded in front of the women and ridiculed by all the people. Any man who had killed an enemy was honoured and had a ring painted around one eye or a stripe painted on his forehead, an additional mark being added for each victim slain. If a man had killed ten of the enemy, he was privileged to sit on the big drum and to stop the dancing for a moment. If a warrior thought that the number of his kill had not been witnessed or might be discredited, he brought the right arms of his victims home as a proof of his prowess. This feast was also an occasion for a rite designed to inculcate bravery in the young generation;"

Amongst the traditional Vhavenda, there are still many great and clever hunters. They use snares and traps which are made with considerable cunning and ingenuity. Stayt (1931:76) mentions that an adept elephant hunter was honoured and respected by all men. Only the dexterous and courageous men dared to attempt the capture of this great animal.

With regard to fishing, Stayt (1931:81) explains the following:

"I encountered one small fisherman using an ingeniously fashioned rod: he had scraped away all the thorns, except the very end one, from a branch of the *wag 'n bietjie* tree: the end thorn pointed upwards, the whole forming hook, line, and rod combined; the child was fishing in a very remote part of the Nzhelele river, and I wondered whether he had obtained the idea of his rod from observing the white man fishing, or whether it originated independently in his own small brain. He landed a great many fish successfully, using tiny grubs of bait."

3.9 Religious life

While growing up, Vhavenda children were taught to respect a supreme being, Khuzwane, who had created all things. He was believed to have disappeared and to have left his footprints on a rock near the Luvuvhu river in the land of Lambani. A second god, who was the rewarder of good and punisher of evil, was Raluvhimba or Nwali. Only the chief could directly intercede with Khuzwane, Raluvhimba or Nwali on behalf of the tribe. A third god, Thovhela, was an intermediary between the Supreme being and man. The fourth level of worship was that of *midzimu* or *vhadzimu* (ancestral worship) (Wessmann 1908:80-81; The Independent Venda 1979:34).

Every success that came to the Vhavenda was ascribed to their ancestral spirits. It was said: "*midzimu yo lala*" (ancestral spirits are asleep, which implies that the ancestral spirits are at peace with people). When everything seemed to be going wrong, it was said: "*midzimu a yo ngo lala*" (ancestral spirits are not asleep, implying that the ancestral spirits are angry with people). To thank the ancestral spirits and keep them at peace with people, rituals were performed for them. Sometimes children would be taken to the traditional healer for protection from bad luck and bewitchment by jealous people (Wessmann 1908:80-81; The Independent Venda 1979:34).

Although a great number of the Vhavenda people today conform to a Christian conception of God, Minnaar et al (1992:8) indicate that ancestral spirits play a pivotal role in the Vhavenda society even today.

3.10 Proverbs, fairy tales and folklores

The wisdom of the Vhavenda could be found in their proverbs and fairy tales. There are many proverbs, fairy tales and folklores that hand down the culture, values and wisdom of

the Vhavenda from generation to generation. Many of them still exist today, and are considered an important tradition. Wessmann (1908:75) indicates that proverbs refer to the Vhavenda themselves, and use many examples from the animal world which refer to people. Among the animals mentioned are the dog, tiger, snake, hyena, elephant, antelope, chameleon, owl, goat, buck and grasshopper.

The proverb *Khangala ruda mato vuluvulu lo fa nga vhuhwavho* (Venomous mamba, have your eyes open; the puffadder died of meekness) encourages cleverness. In explaining this proverb, Khuba (1985:45) writes, "It is better for one to be veriferous than being polite. Clever people are wanted in each and every nation. We are aware that they have foresight and can give sound advice to the rest of the nation. These are compared with a clever snake which is always alert and awake. The meek snake is compared to those who seem to be contributing very little in life".

Hu ambuwa vhunanga vhukololo a vhu ambuwi (It is doctorship that goes beyond the boundaries but not royalty) is a proverb that emphasises ability and skill. According to Khuba (1985:31), "the fact of crossing is used to compare skill and competence to the right of birth. A skilled and competent person is more famous than the chief's children ... skills can be learn but not inherited. Therefore a skilled and competent person's services are sought far and wide whereas being a prince goes as far as the country's borderline."

With regard to the knowledge a person has, this proverb exists: *A hu aluwi muthu hu aluwa mbilu* (It is not the person that grows but the mind). "Muthu" stands for the body that we see as composing a person and "mbilu" represents the knowledge gathered in life. When the body looks young and the knowledge gathered is depicted as being greater in comparison to the size of the body, this proverb applies (Khuba 1985:45-46).

In emphasising the acquisition of certain skills, the Vhavenda used the proverb: *Vhabikela vhunanga vhutsila vha vhona nga mato* (They train for the medical profession while craftsmanship can be seen). This proverb stresses the fact that some abilities in life can be gained through training while other skills can be mastered by imitating. There are so many things overlooked in life yet which are useful, practical and simple. Through the art of accurate observation, one can learn most basic undertakings in life (Khuba 1985:45).

Nwana u kaidzwa mbado lufhanga u litsha nga ethe (The child is warned away from an axe and leaves the knife on his own). This implies that children who are rebuked for playing with the most dangerous things that could hurt or kill them will then stay away from many other dangerous things on their own.

Children's intelligence used to be stimulated mostly during the evening, when the elders and children related fairy tales and stories which were handed down from generation to generation. They also gave one another thought-provoking riddles, both short and long, to solve. Wessmann (1908:78-79) mentions two of these riddles. They are:

"First comes the king and then the subjects". This refers to the moon that is the first thing in the night sky to become visible after the setting of the sun, after which stars become visible only when it is dark.

The second riddle, longer, tells of a father and his sons: A father once asked his four sons whether they would help him if he should get into danger. "Yes", they answered in unison. The first spoke thus to his father: "I shall become a spy, and my eyes shall accompany you whenever you may go". "That pleases me", said the father. "And I shall become a thief, and help you with my art", said the second son. The third said, "I shall become a huntsman, and by a good shot help you

when you are in danger". The fourth wanted to become a sorcerer and also help his father.

They soon had occasion to fulfil their promises. The father's enemies were approaching to attack him. This the spy saw. He hurried to his father, warning him of the approaching danger in time to enable him to escape. Another time when the father had already been surrounded, the second son came and stole all the enemies' arms during the night so that they had to abandon their attack. But the father had a special enemy who wanted to kill him stealthily during the night. This danger was detected by the third son, who took his own rifle and shot the enemy dead in time. But the fourth son had also occasion to help his father. When the father was taken ill one day, and death was approaching, the sorcerer cured him by means of his witchcraft, and made him perfectly sound again.

And now the question: Which of the four sons did the most for his father? The key to provide a correct answer was to substantiate one's argument; depending on how well this was done, any answer could be correct.

4 HISTORICAL AND SOCIOCULTURAL BACKGROUND CONCERNING VHAVENDA TRADITIONAL EDUCATION

The traditional education of the Vhavenda was managed by parents in both the family home and initiation schools.

4.1 **Traditional education**

Children learnt by imitating their parents from as early as their fifth year. They usually copied their parents in performing adult duties.

The traditional system of the Vhavenda education ensures that every individual has social status and all contributions to the welfare of society are recognised. The main purpose of traditional Vhavenda education is to prepare children for a

lifestyle that can and should be followed by everyone. Matters receiving attention include handiwork, etiquette, acceptable behaviour, as well as information regarding childbirth, sex behaviour, and other guidelines to maintaining good interpersonal relationships (Blacking 1969:70).

Blacking (1969:70) writes that the casual observer may think that individuality is not highly valued because conformity is stressed. This author further indicates that many Vhavenda do not actualise their potential. The few who do are criticised and "dragged down to the level of their fellows" (Blacking 1969:70). However, the Vhavenda do not reject individualism; rather, they insist that individuals' action have social relevance. Mastery of skills or extraordinary ability should be used for the public good. On the other hand, should a person claim a particular talent without being able to prove it, he or she is suspected of arrogance and self-deception, which are contrary to the Vhavenda's concept of humanity.

Furthermore, Blacking (1969:71) points out that formal education in traditional Vhavenda society was never aimed at providing people with a means of making a living. Domestic skills were required in the family context and technical skills were taught by close kinsmen to serving apprentices. Formal public education aimed at teaching people about the intricacies of human relationships and also allowed young people to associate with others of the same age regardless of rank, family and/or clan affiliations.

4.2 **Initiation schools**

In addition to the forms of education discussed above, traditional Vhavenda children attended initiation schools, which still exist today, to prepare them for adulthood (The Independent Venda 1979:39). The chief feature of Vhavenda initiation schools is the learning of *milayo*. According to Blacking (1969:69), when referring to initiation schools,

milayo may be translated as "esoteric knowledge" or "wisdom" because, among other things, the meaning of rites, symbolic objects, rules of conduct and etiquette are explained.

The youngster who is able to recite *milayo* has reached the Western equivalent of a high school or university graduate. Knowledge of *milayo* serves to identify the status of Vhavenda even in areas where they are not known. In addition, *milayo* corresponds to some of the lessons learnt during initiation by emphasising certain themes and reminding young people of their new roles in the society (Blacking 1969:5,71,74).

Every child had to attend initiation schools. Appendix H gives more information in this regard.

4.2.1 *Thondo* : Boys' school

Thondo was an indigenous "school" through which all young boys had to pass before attaining manhood. It was boys' puberty school which is now obsolete. *Thondo* ran on a continuous basis with programmes that overlapped. Small boys entered in groups as groups of elder boys finished. The building of a *thondo* was usually constructed on the slope on the west side of the village, although it varied slightly with the position of each individual village (Stayt 1931:101).

As it was built on a slope, the upper end under the hill was dug away and the stones and earth were used for piling up a strong protecting wall at the lower end. Within this enclosure a large hut was built. This high wall which nobody was able to look over, was called *findi la tharu*, the belly of a python. The work of constructing the hut and wall was done by elderly, responsible men of the kraal. The plastering, smearing and carrying of water were done by four to six specially chosen women. Inside the *thondo* there were little wooden stools specially made for the *thondo* (Stayt 1931:101 -102).

Every boy in the area began to attend the *thondo* when he was seven or eight years old. Every evening after the daily work of herding cattle and goats, all the boys gathered together at the *thondo* for instruction before they went to sleep. They continued receiving instruction until they reached puberty. Soon after puberty, boys were released in small batches, and after the initiation ceremony, were attached to age-sets which formed regiments. During wars, public feasts and beer-drinking, it was customary for boys to be grouped according to their age-sets.

Stayt (1931:103) indicates that originally the *thondo* may have been intended only for the sons of the royal family and members of the aristocracy. They were trained in the laws and customs of the tribe to equip them to become good chiefs. This may have been the case in the distant past, but for a long time it has been customary for all boys, aristocrats and commoners alike, to receive tuition in the *thondo*. The boys' duty was to act as the chief's bodyguards and protect him in his capital in times of war while the men were out fighting.

The instruction in the *thondo* school was enveloped in secrecy and mystery. No one was allowed to enter the *thondo* unless he was a member. Boys who disobeyed the orders given in the school or who ignored the law of secrecy, were severely punished, and were formerly often killed. *Thondo* was essentially a military institution. To prepare the boys for the life of a warrior, they were subjected to physical hardening and mental discipline. On occasion everybody received punishment as part of his training to endure pain. Boys used to become proud of the marks left by the cane. They were also trained to obey instantly. The sound of the *phalaphala* (horn) had to make them leave everything and run to the *thondo* (Stayt 1931:104).

The Vhavenda preferred ambush and night attack methods in their warfare. These methods worked together with an

effective spy system. Hence an important part of the *thondo* training was instruction in stealth and individual daring.

Boys were given tasks like mat-making to perform in the school. These tasks had to be finished in a prescribed time. All tribal etiquette and rules of politeness were strictly enforced. Any boy reported for negligence in this regard was punished at night by the head of the *thondo*, who was called *Negota* (Head Councillor). Time was spent practicing dancing both at night and early in the morning. In the *thondo* each boy was given a new name by the old men which fitted the boy's disposition or which was meant to commemorate some current event. It became one of the most important of his many names and signified that he was a man (Stayt 1931:104).

When a boy became aware of his first nocturnal emission, he had to report the fact to *Negota*. When a sufficient number of boys was ready to go through the initiation rite (*vhutamba vhutuka*), they were allowed to leave the *thondo*. At this stage they were still called *vhatukana* (small boys) but after emerging from the *vhutamba vhutuka*, they would be referred to as *vhathannga* (young men) (Stayt 1931:105).

4.2.2 *Vhutamba vhutuka* : Boys' initiation

Vhutamba vhutuka (the washing of boyhood) is a ceremony which every Muvenda boy must go through on reaching puberty. The boys are mocked, jeered, severely punished, and forced into icy water where they must remain for three or four hours. After this physical hardening and endurance ordeal in the river, the boys are given sexual instruction and taught many of the tribal rules of etiquette and mode of life.

After this ceremony, the *vhatukana* (small boys) are referred to as *vhathannga* (young men) who are hardened and disciplined, ready to shoulder responsibilities as well as share the privileges of the warriors of the tribe. They are encouraged to indulge in playful familiarities with the girls

which, up to this stage, was strictly forbidden (Stayt 1931:107).

4.2.3 *Vhusha* : Girls' initiation

Vhusha is the ceremony that marks the passage from childhood to adolescence. It confirms and announces publicly a status that has already been acquired. When a girl experiences her first menses, she has to pass through this ceremony. Before the ceremony the girl is called *musidzana* (a small girl) and afterwards is always referred to as *khomba*. The term *khomba* means "dangerous" implying that sexual intercourse may now result in pregnancy. The initiates are given their first lessons on sexual matters (Stayt 1931:107, 124).

4.2.4 *Domba* : Joint initiation

Domba is a joint initiation which also marks the beginning of the premarital unions or mixing between matured girls and young men. The "school" is a general preparation for marriage, where boys and girls, who are usually separated, are brought together, and by means of symbols and metaphors, are together taught to understand the importance of sex, marriage and childbirth. They are also made aware and warned of the pitfalls, problems and dangers that they are likely to encounter in their lives (Stayt 1931:112).

Domba stresses the value of institutionalised motherhood, with all the checks and balances necessary to maintain the stability of the social system. It is the dramatic final stage in the series of "schools" which prepare girls for marriage. Figures are used to explain themes of marital fidelity expected of a Muvenda woman (Blacking 1969:150). According to Neetleton (1992:203), these figures appear to play a major didactic role in the inculcation of ethnic values and gender roles. Ethnic values are constructed, both in terms of behaviour, preference for marrying within the Vhavenda society, submission to chiefly authority, attendance

at traditional initiations, and the learning of particular formulae which identify a woman as a Muvenda.

Domba opens the door to full participation in the society of women by incorporating girls in informal age-sets. Seniority of age is an important principle of the Vhavenda social organisation, and as women grow older they become more powerful and respected and play a leading role in ritual and ceremonial activities (Blacking 1969:151).

4.2.5 *Murundu* : Boys' circumcision

Murundu was not an indigenous Vhavenda institution but was introduced to the Vhavenda by the Vhalemba and the Northern Sotho. This circumcision "school" lasts for three months and is always held in winter. Previously *murundu* could be held at intervals of about five years but this has now changed. It could be held annually. Formerly only the boys who reached puberty could enter, but today little boys as from seven to eleven years of age may be sent by their parents. Adult men may also enter the circumcision "school". The initiates are subjected to harsh treatment, hardships and privations, and go hunting nearly everyday. A great deal of time is spent in memorising *milayo* formulae (Stayt 1931:132).

4.2.6 *Musevhetho* : Girls' circumcision

Musevhetho was also introduced to the Vhavenda by the neighbouring Northern Sotho. It is no longer practised as it was before. Girls of all ages may attend this circumcision "school". On the appointed day, the girls are taken to a secluded place on the river bank, where an old woman performs the operation of cutting the clitoris. At the same time the girls are branded with a mark on the outside of the thigh. The brand acts as a password on future occasions and proves that its possessor has undergone the operation. After the ceremony at the river, the girls are joined by boys who have been through the *murundu*. They spend a fortnight at the

"headmaster's" kraal, dancing, singing, drinking beer, and feasting with sexual licence (Stayt 1931:137,140).

5 THE VHAVENDA'S RESPONSE TO CONTACT WITH WESTERN EDUCATION

It is necessary to trace how and why the Vhavenda people moved away from their traditional education, adopting the Western education.

The history of church and school in the former Venda self-governing state is so interwoven that it is really hard to separate one from the other. It was the missionaries who introduced these institutions. After great opposition by the Vhavenda to white settlement in this area, the German missionaries finally succeeded in making permanent settlements in 1871 at Maungani and in 1872 at Tshakhuma. In 1874, Tshakhuma Junior Primary School was started at Tshakhuma Mission Station. This was the first school in this area for the Vhavenda. Until 1925 only children of the converts attended school. The quarterly returns of 30 June 1913 show an average attendance of 46 children, while those of 1926 show an average attendance of 188 (Mathivha 1985: 67,122; Motenda 1940:58-59).

The children of the non-Christian Vhavenda parents who stayed on the farm owned by the mission superintendent were compelled to attend school. This resulted in many parents leaving this farm. It should also be borne in mind that even though some parents allowed their children to attend school, many parents did not allow girls to go to school as they thought that they may develop loose morals by mixing with boys.

According to Mathivha (1985:121), in order to keep children at school, the mission superintendent made an agreed with the parents that, to discourage laziness on the part of the pupils, a fine of a goat had to be paid to the superintendent for absence from school for a period exceeding a week.

In considering this agreement, it does not follow logically that the parents who were hesitant to allow their children to attend school would "agree" on the heavy fine that was supposed to be paid by them and not by the children who missed school days. On this basis, it may simply be inferred that the punishment was not agreed upon by all parents of schoolgoing children, or if such an agreement was reached, only few school-loving parents participated in the agreement. Furthermore, it may be concluded that the fine was not aimed at children themselves but at the parents, so that even those who did not like sending their children to school should strictly do so for fear of paying a fine.

Other schools were started when other mission stations were set up in various parts of this area. Some of the Vhavenda were interested in school because the German missionaries taught handiwork which included wood carving, basketry, mat-making, claywork, beadwork, needlework, laying out of a garden and cleaning of school gardens (Mathivha 1985:69).

When the Vhavenda parents started seeing the advantages of Western education, the number of parents who sent their children to school increased. In their everyday life, the Vhavenda people started to realise that some of the traditional values which they held had their own disadvantages and as such, needed to be adjusted to their changing needs. As a result, the number of parents who sent their children to school increased gradually. In support of this fact, The Independent Venda (1979:87) indicates that the enrolment figures of the Vhavenda school children increased year after year.

At this stage it is necessary to look at the present state of education amongst the Vhavenda school children.

6 THE CURRENT SITUATION OF VHAVENDA SCHOOL CHILDREN

In order to put the current situation of the Vhavenda school children in perspective, the situation is considered on the basis of the following factors which generally form part of every school child's situation (Ziv 1977:100). The factors are:

1. Attitude of parents (subculture) to dominant culture
2. Attitude of children towards their culture and authority
3. Use of language
4. Intellectual stimulation
5. Quality of education
6. Family structure
7. Conditions at home

6.1 Attitude of parents (subculture) to dominant culture

In South Africa the minority Western culture has been the dominant culture for a long time. On the one hand, people were interested in adopting this dominant culture while on the other hand, at certain stages, the Western culture was forced on people of other cultures. As workers, parents of these children have either had some of their original names changed or were given new names acceptable and common in the dominant culture by their masters.

From the researcher's experience, this seemed to develop a negative attitude in these parents who in turn transfer it to their children. The antagonistic attitude that the children bear to the culture within which they have to learn at school causes them frustration. Because of this negative attitude towards schooling, the manifestation of giftedness may be impeded. This needs investigation.

6.2 Attitude of children towards their culture and authority

The South African situation that was marked by discrimination and oppression by the dominant white culture has fostered a negative attitude towards authority. This was not applicable only to the authority of the South African government, but extended to the authority of the parents, especially those working for the government. For example, policemen at home used to be challenged by children on the basis that they were perpetuating the oppression of the white dominant culture. This has hardened the children to become non-conformists. Rebellion against parents is common among the Vhavenda school children. It must be indicated that the institution of a new government which even the Vhavenda accept as legitimate cannot wash away the attitudes of insubordination by children overnight, but will take a considerable time.

The other factor contributing to the challenging of parental authority by children is that parents are still clinging to their Third World culture while their children are crossing over to the First World culture. This reduces much of the expected respect and obedience needed between them. Although some of the Vhavenda children participate in their traditional cultural activities, they do this half-heartedly. It seems that the state of transition from a Third World to a First World society has stripped them of pride in their traditional culture. Wallace and Adams (1988:73) indicate that when a culture is in a state of transition moving from Third World to First World, there is often a rejection of the past cultural heritage because children view their culture as outdated, an attitude which parents view as a threat.

Some of the Vhavenda children may be suspended between cultures and live in a cultural void. Wallace and Adams (1988:72) in their study found that this crossing over to the First World culture goes along with the changing of values and norms. This suggests that there could be conflict between

parents and children regarding the observance of values and norms and the extent of parental authority.

6.3 Use of language

Vos and Brits (1990:44) view language as the symbolic expression of everything which exists within a nation. Therefore, mother tongue instruction is didactically expedient and pedagogically accountable because cognisance is taken of the origin, national character, identity, and the life and world view of particular people.

According to Lemmer (1993:146), language is a crucial means of gaining access to important knowledge and skills. It is a key to cognitive development and it can promote or impede scholastic success. Ovando (in Lemmer 1993:146) indicates that dropout rates among culturally diverse school populations in the United States show that minority pupils with a limited proficiency in the medium of instruction, English, are the ones who are most at risk of school failure. In terms of high ability, Resnick and Goodman (1994:115) believe that "(I)nequality of access to language is a serious impediment to the *development* of giftedness in children". Language could thus be a problematic issue to Vhavenda school children.

Before the educational changes brought about in the new South Africa, black schools in the former Venda self-governing state used to follow the language policy used in the administration of the Department of Education and Training (department of black education) of South Africa. These black children were instructed through mother tongue medium only during the lower primary phase. The beginning of the higher primary phase marked a sudden and abrupt transition to English as medium of instruction for the entire primary curriculum. This transition caused many problems which are still evident today in Vhavenda school children. The first problem is that of the disparity between the English

proficiency of these children and the proficiency required of them in order to master all school subjects through the medium of English. Secondly, teachers lack the English proficiency that is necessary for effective teaching (Lemmer 1993:149; Vos & Brits 1990:102; Squelch 1993:183).

It should also be considered that blacks reject mother tongue instruction. They view it with suspicion or as part of the former apartheid ideology intended to prepare different language groups for a separate existence. Moreover, parents and teachers actively discourage children from using the mother tongue because they believe that the children's English language skills suffer when they speak the home language. This may result in the child failing to master his home language skills (Lemmer 1993:153).

It remains the responsibility of parents to encourage their children in the good usage of their language. Unfortunately, some parents learn the languages of the major ethnic groups in South Africa, like Sotho, Zulu and others, so that they may no longer be associated with the minority Vhavenda cultural group. This might be evident in the inferiority complex that children seem to have with regard to their language and people. The media, more especially television broadcasting where Tshivenda and Tsonga languages share approximately thirty minutes per week, encourage children to learn other cultures and languages at the expense of their own, because most of the time that children watch television, they listen to other languages and learn the cultural values of other groups.

Since the new government policy accords equal status to all languages in South Africa, it can be expected that one day equal status of all languages will be put into practice although the practicality thereof seems difficult. Even though some of the parents insist on proper usage of the Tshivenda language, factors beyond their control, as mentioned, are washing their vision away.

6.4 Intellectual stimulation

Children's intellectual stimulation is also determined by the environments in which they find themselves (Resnick & Goodman 1994:115). Environment can be conceptualised as a vehicle for transformation. According to Van Greunen (1993:92), children who grow up in an environment that is characterised by a low economic and social status, a low level of education, unemployment, low status occupations and limited potential for upward or vertical social mobility, are caught up in a spiral syndrome of poverty and deprivation which impedes their intellectual stimulation. This applies to Vhavenda children whose environment according to Smith (1982:172), is almost rural, characterised mostly by the illiteracy and semi-literacy of parents.

While intellectual stimulation in traditional Vhavenda culture was effected by games, music, hunting, warfare and traditional education, modern Vhavenda children receive mental stimulation through a Western education system, with books and other teaching aids. However, it is necessary to consider the quality of education to which they have been exposed.

6.5 Quality of education

The black people were subjected to a separate education which was legalised by the passing of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 (Act 47 of 1953). With the establishment of national states or homelands and other territories given "independence" by the South African government, each homeland and independent territory had its own department of education to run its own education affairs (Mncwabe 1990:12-13; Vos & Brits 1990:54; Squelch 1993:176).

According to Squelch (1993:175), South African education has to a large extent failed to meet the needs of black learners.

The structure and organisation of the education system and the political, social and economic factors that have influenced and shaped its development have served to promote the interests of the dominant white group and ensured their participation in and integration into all spheres of society.

Due to the unequal nature of the education system and the social limitations it has placed on black learners, it has been rejected by large numbers of black learners, teachers and parents. It is generally considered by blacks to be inferior and designed to confine them to lower-class occupations. According to Mncwabe (1990:28), "the committee of South African Students (COSAS) considers that young black people are being educated to fulfil their cultural mandate according to how the white ruling minority perceives it in multi-racial South Africa, and that many problems arise because a deep chasm exists between the black child's educational attainment and his cultural development".

The education received by the Vhavenda school children is impoverished by the lack of educational provisions and facilities, constituting educational deprivation. In this regard, Eriksson (1985:393) and Squelch (1993:176) indicate that the concept "educational deprivation" must be seen within the context of the extreme inequality in educational opportunity for black children in South Africa. Such education is beset by problems of overcrowded classrooms, insufficient and poorly qualified teachers, sparse furniture and equipment, limited resources, high dropout rates and poor examination results.

Smith and Le Roux (1993:36) indicate that because of overcrowding and lack of funds, conditions are poor in many black schools, particularly in rural areas. Because of the problems indicated above, pupils may have to sit on the floor because there are no desks. Most of the children have to share textbooks, and teachers who are overworked and

underpaid may also not be able to give individual attention to pupils as classes are very big.

The following is what may be considered a "typical situation" in the former Venda self-governing state. Sam Mavhina is a secondary school in which the researcher is a teacher. The school is situated in the rural area which was proclaimed in 1986 to become part of the developing town, Thohoyandou, in the former Venda self-governing state. At the beginning of 1998, the school had an enrolment of 854 learners of grades 8 to 12. It has only seven usable classrooms to accommodate all of its learners. As there are no administration offices, one of the seven classrooms is used as a staffroom, storeroom, principal's office and for some other purposes.

After these children are squeezed into the remaining six classrooms, grade 8a, 8b and 8c are left to be taught in the open under the trees, while grade 9a, 9b and 9c are accommodated in prefabricated classrooms that are not conducive for teaching and learning. There is no library, laboratory for science learners, hall, permanent toilets, etc. Out of 21 staff members, more than half have qualifications which are not relevant to the fields in which the teachers are placed. In cases where few textbooks are available in a subject, the so-called "textbook" method of teaching is the order of the day. This implies the teacher reading the textbook and the children memorising the information. This is pure rote learning which does not promote intellectual stimulation. With regard to black education, Mncwabe (1990:22) states that:

"Deep concern is expressed about rote learning, lack of broadening of the mind, lack of encouragement given to pupils to develop initiatives and skills of independent thinking. Pupils have limited opportunities for problem solving and thus they concentrate on abstract theory and verbiage for examination purposes. The system

itself is examination oriented in spite of a huge failure rate, which leaves two thirds of the candidates who write the Standard 10 examination frustrated. Even those who pass Matric are viewed by employers as overtly compliant, docile and too dependent on structures of authority. This has been the average perception of the products of the school system for blacks in South Africa."

Cultural clashes between home and school exacerbate the poor quality of education. As a way of paying respect, the Vhavenda children should not speak to their seniors while standing but should be on their knees or seated. It is also disrespectful to question their seniors when an "order" or "advice" is given to them. They should not look their seniors directly in the eyes during the course of the conversation, as a sign of respect. They are expected to do no more than carry out an instruction or a suggestion given to them.

On the other hand, at schools where the dominant culture rules, teachers are primarily responsible for the transmission, interpretation and reproduction of the cultural values, norms and heritage of the dominant group with a view to assimilating subdominant groups into the mainstream culture and establishing cultural homogeneity and supremacy. The cultural heritage, histories, experiences and contributions of the subcultural groups, in this case the Vhavenda, are excluded or marginalised and in the process their cultures become devalued (Squelch 1993:178). Mphahlele (in Mncwabe 1990:28) believes that one of the main causes of the present education crisis is that blacks receive their education in schools of their own cultural groupings which, in reality, offers only limited recognition of their own culture.

To show respect in a school situation, children have to stand to talk to their seniors. They are expected to ask questions whenever there are things they don't understand.

Talking with the head twisted to the side would be an insult to the teacher. Educational deprivation, coupled with cultural clashes at school, inhibit the release of potential of the children in this situation, and there is no motivation towards excellence and effective intellectual stimulation.

This brief description has been given to present the global view of the conditions in which the Vhavenda school children receive their education. Out of the "typical situation" given, one can judge for oneself as to how much worse the conditions could be in the furthest parts of this rural former self-governing state. It now becomes important to focus on the conditions in the home.

6.6 Family structure

The researcher has categorised Vhavenda families as follows:

- The families found in rural areas who maintain the traditional way of life. They cultivate fields, farm cattle, goats and sheep.
- The families of which the husbands work in urban areas, staying either in hostels or rented houses in the townships. Their children and wives remain at home in the rural areas.
- The families of which the parents work in urban areas, staying at or near their working places, leaving their children at home in the rural areas in the care of their grandparents, uncles or any other relative.
- The families found in rural areas with either one or both parents travelling to work every working day in industrialised or business areas like Shayandima, Sibasa, Dzanani, Thohoyandou, Louis Trichardt and Messina.

- The families that reside together permanently in urban areas with both or one of the parents working.

Smith and Le Roux (1993:37) point out that millions of black people spend their entire working lives as contract labourers who are denied the right to live with their families permanently. The children of breadwinners are left in rural areas, and as a result, children see their fathers approximately only once a year.

As the area formerly known as the Venda self-governing state is a rural area, a higher percentage of male parents work in the urban area. Smith (1982:172) reports that in 1979 some 71 000 Vhavenda were employed as migrant labourers outside the "borders". The figure represents more than half of the economically active Vhavenda. The hard facts are that too many Vhavenda families have absentee breadwinners. The society is lopsided. Consequently, many families are headed by single parents.

In some cases mothers are employed somewhere in the vicinity, while quite often, the mothers also leave to seek employment in the cities, leaving the children on their own or with grandparents. As a result, children do not get the attention of their parents. They lack discipline and good morals.

Because of the separation of husband and wife, with the husband coming home on average only once a year during festive seasons, many problems surround these families, leading to a high percentage of family breakups. Children coming from these families are faced with considerable problems which they themselves cannot solve but which leave them frustrated, which in turn naturally affects their performance at school. Drastic changes in the family structure cause attenuation of family ties. This indicates a trend of moving away from the traditional family situation. Children respond to the authority of their parents but are no longer obedient to the guidance and instruction given to them

by their grandparents and other relatives (Smith & Le Roux 1993:38).

6.7 Conditions at home

The conditions at home could be viewed against the background of Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory (Maslow 1987:15-23).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs is made up of five categories of needs. Starting from the most basic, they are:

1. Physiological needs
2. Safety needs
3. Belonging and love needs
4. Esteem needs
5. Self-actualisation need

For the gratification of the safety needs, physiological needs need to be satisfied first. This means that for every category of needs to be gratified, the preceding needs should be gratified first. There is no organism that craves the satisfaction of love needs before its physiological needs are met. The organism is dominated and its behaviours organised by unsatisfied needs.

6.7.1 Physiological needs

These are needs for the satisfaction of hunger, oxygen, thirst, sleep, activity and excretion (Benhard & Walsh 1990:87; Maslow 1987:16). These physiological needs are the most prepotent of all needs. A person who lacks food, safety, love and esteem would most probably hunger for food more strongly than for anything else.

Vhavenda children's conditions at home are generally poor. Due to poverty, many children's physiological needs are not satisfied. They suffer from malnutrition and undernourishment which cause poor health. A child whose physiological needs

are not satisfied can therefore not be expected to self-actualise and demonstrate any ability.

6.7.2 Safety needs

These are the needs for security, stability, dependency, protection, shelter, clothing, etc. Once children's physical needs are met, they are faced with safety needs. Due to the fact that many fathers work and stay away from home, and that the mother could also be working, many Vhavenda children feel insecure, especially when they are in a position of having to make decisions that their parents ought to be making.

Poverty affects the ability of parents to meet their children's safety needs. They may be unable to construct a reliable roof over the heads of their children. Those who are not employed cannot even clothe their children who also lack their parents' protection. As failure to satisfy these needs would mean an inability to self-actualise, it makes it difficult to tap the ability of these children (Maslow 1987:18-20).

6.7.3 Belonging and love needs

Love, affection, and belonging needs emerge after the gratification of the physiological and safety needs. In the past, the Vhavenda culture has encouraged polygyny and the bearing of many children. This was regarded as the "wealth" of a man, and a great number of children added status to a man (Van Warmelo & Phophi 1948:297). Because of this, many homes are overcrowded with children. Some of the children are put in the care of their grandmothers and other relatives. As such, children don't experience the love, affection, belonging, care and nurturing that their parents ought to have given them. The failure of gratification of these needs may bring frustration to children (Maslow 1987:20-21), which inhibits the manifestation of giftedness.

6.7.4 Esteem needs

Every person has a desire or need for a stable, positive evaluation of him or herself for self-respect or self-esteem, and needs the esteem of others. This is the desire for achievement, mastery, prestige, status, fame, glory and appreciation. When this desire or need is satisfied, a person develops feelings of self-confidence, strength and capacity. Failure to meet these needs produce feelings of inferiority, weakness and helplessness, and discouragement (Maslow 1987:21-22).

Some of the Vhavenda school children feel that their culture, language, values and even their illiterate parents are inferior. This could partly be due to the failure of parents' encouragement in being proud of one's own culture, language and values. However, it has been pointed out earlier that the Vhavenda are generally people who pursue prestige, reputation, status, fame, strength, etc. The implication is that gifted children may thus be identified amongst them.

6.7.5 Self-actualisation need

Self-actualisation refers to people's desire for self-fulfilment. That is, to become everything that one could potentially become (Maslow 1987:22). The conditions in the homes of many Vhavenda school children do not allow them to reach this highest rung on Maslow's hierarchy of needs, since their conditions, as stated, are a hindrance to the gratification of some of the needs preceding this one.

6.8 **Summary**

The discussion above focussed on finding out whether the Vhavenda recognise those who show ability in any area of human endeavour, identifying those who are regarded as gifted, and establishing the Vhavenda's cultural values.

The discussion showed that the Vhavenda as an ethnic group demonstrate ability in various areas of human endeavour. It is possible that they recognise and encourage the development of high ability, regarding such people as talented or gifted. Many Vhavenda have been given titles which refer to exceptional demonstrated abilities or giftedness. Some of the titles are: *nambi*, given to an exceptional singer or instrument player, *ngwena*, a champion on a particular game or sport and *muhali*, a brave and tactical warrior. Extraordinary ability or mastery of a special technique is seen as a "gift" which a grateful individual should cherish and use for the public good.

In the past, the Vhavenda's traditional education allowed children to develop their abilities by way of imitating parents or experts in various fields. They were also exposed to "wisdom" by way of *milayo* learnt in initiation "schools".

The current situation of Vhavenda school children in the dominant culture poses several threats to the survival and development of their abilities.

Factors considered significant for raising children in the traditional Vhavenda culture are as follows:

- 1) General social success of the ethnic group, eg prowess in physical warfare
- 2) Co-operation, ie helping one another
- 3) Good reputation of an individual and the whole family
- 4) Competition for a good cause
- 5) Artistic creativity, ie woodwork, claywork, iron smelting, etc
- 6) Rewarding the ability used for the benefit of the nation or family
- 7) Industrial success, ie production of agricultural implements and other useful tools
- 8) Performing music for pleasure and accompaniment when performing certain duties

- 9) Dancing to express happiness and to show ability
- 10) Games and sport, for displaying certain skill and gaining status
- 11) Strong drive for excellence, ie individuals wanted to gain the title of exceptional ability in various fields
- 12) Hard work for your family and nation
- 13) Learning by imitating and serving apprenticeship (good role models)
- 14) Determination to succeed and have a bright future
- 15) Self-reliance, self-confidence, positive self-concept. This could be seen in the determination of speakers in traditional court proceedings.
- 16) Responsibility of children, when they become adults, in looking after their parents, brothers and sisters
- 17) Desire for unity within the ethnic group by maintaining culture, for example, language, tradition, initiation schools and certain ceremonies
- 18) Securing a good life for children by deciding for them to an extent of undermining their individual rights
- 19) The father's responsibility in providing shelter and food for his family, but with the help of family members (eg ploughing fields)
- 20) Equality between the rich and poor, ie prevention of distinct class division
- 21) Living in peace, happiness and harmony and ironing out differences peacefully and as soon as possible
- 22) Respect and obedience to gods and one's seniors
- 23) Tidiness and cleanliness of individuals
- 24) Exercising discipline and never challenging it - applicable especially to children

These are the indicators that should be observed in the Vhavenda school children to find out if they still hold to these factors or whether they have shifted away from them. How these cultural characteristics influence giftedness in Vhavenda school children should also be investigated.

Chapter 3 investigates definitions of giftedness and sociocultural factors concerning giftedness as found in literature.

**CHAPTER 3: DEFINITIONS OF GIFTEDNESS AND FACTORS THAT
INFLUENCE ITS DEVELOPMENT AND MANIFESTATION IN
CHILDREN**

1 INTRODUCTION

Giftedness at the highest level can be found in every cultural group (Sisk 1996:211). However, the incidence of identified giftedness does differ from group to group because of differing values, attitudes and opportunities. Thus the question of culture arises. Sisk (1996:212) reminds us that gifted behaviour may manifest in different ways, depending on cultural and class differences.

What is valued in culture is produced by culture (Clark 1992:435). The context in which each individual grows up has powerful factors which influence everybody, most often in ways of which we are unaware. Culture, together with situational or environmental factors, announces our membership of particular groups, our values, and our biases. The school is a cultural setting with rituals and customs, with rules for speaking and taking turns. Some students come with knowledge of that culture, others struggle to learn its ways (Gage & Berliner 1992:167-8).

There has been a growing concern in many countries regarding the identification of gifted children amongst culturally disadvantaged groups. This is due to the limited number of culturally disadvantaged children who participate in gifted children programmes in various countries (Richert 1985:69; Sisk 1996:211).

There are several factors that contribute towards the small number of culturally different children in gifted children programmes. Hadaway and Marek-Schroer (1992:73) point out that differing cultures, ethnicity, language background and

socioeconomic levels are amongst those which confound the assessment and identification process.

Baldwin (1985:226) discusses the basic themes which define various populations, and how goals for their education determine the most effective instructional system and ways of evaluating the process and products of that system. This discussion is based on the following three assumptions (1985:226):

1. Giftedness exists in all human groups, and does not manifest itself in a manner that can be genetically ascribed to that group. Culture and environment play important roles in a person's developing a penchant for certain activities and skills, but highly developed specific behaviours associated with a particular group do not provide the basis for assuming that these represent the innate capabilities of the group.
2. Techniques other than usual standardised tests can be used to identify the gifted.
3. Behaviours that may be unique or special to a cultural group can serve as accurate indicators of a high-level capacity to conceptualise and organise phenomena.

This chapter will explore definitions of giftedness that may be relatively culture free. Cultural factors which have a far reaching bearing on the development of giftedness will be examined and the use of traditional and non-traditional procedures of identification of culturally disadvantaged gifted children, will also be investigated.

It is essential to first focus on the concept of intelligence which for quite some time has been confused with giftedness. A clear distinction between and understanding of intelligence and giftedness will be of great help to this study as it progresses.

2 INTELLIGENCE

Intelligence is a polymorphous concept: it has many different meanings which are not universally agreed upon. There is not, and there can never be, a single irrefutable and universally accepted list of human intelligences. Furthermore, intelligence cannot be equated with giftedness although it is one aspect of giftedness. The concept of intelligence, however, cannot be ignored because giftedness is still largely understood in terms of an exceptional ability to master academic tasks and manifests so often in terms of behaviour labelled as "highly intelligent" (Kokot 1992:16; Olivier, Oosthuizen & Wiechers 1991:27).

2.1 Definitions of intelligence

Davis (1983:434) defines intelligence as "[t]he ability to learn quickly, solve problems, understand complex and abstract issues, and generally behave in a reasonable, rational and purposeful manner". Clark (1992:10) acknowledges intelligence as the result of the development and interrelationship of all functions of the human brain that can be enhanced or inhibited by the interaction between inherited abilities and opportunities provided by the environment. It is a composite or combination of human abilities which includes a capacity for insight into complex relationships, all of the processes involved in abstract thinking, adaptability in problem solving and capacity to acquire new abilities.

Gardner's (see Chapter 1, section 6.5) brief definition of intelligence is valuable in that he includes reference to the individual's cultural setting.

2.2 Perspectives of intelligence

The concept intelligence is laden with meaning and experience and is still being researched from different perspectives and

by means of different methods. According to Kokot (1992:17), views or definitions on the nature of intelligence can be divided into four perspectives. They are:

- The psychometric perspective which tends to view intelligence as either a general ability or a number of special abilities, identified through factor analysis.
- The anthropological perspective which is predominated by concepts such as individual-in-totality and man-in-the world.
- The information-processing perspective which considers the functioning of the cognitive domain.
- The developmental perspective in which intelligence is regarded as the development of cognitive structures.

A brief discussion of each perspective will be presented.

2.2.1 Psychometric perspective

2.2.1.1 Intelligence as a general ability

The views in this category are generally more theoretical than empirical in nature because the observations are incidental rather than the result of planned empirical studies. The definitions are often given from a personal or particular view of life or man and this results in the definitions of intelligence in this category being often one-sided, and incomplete. Intelligence is seen as monogenetic, that is, as a result of the development of a general or unitary factor (g). It is seen as a total concept whatever the nature of this one generally accepted potential may be.

Opinions on this perspective include those of Binet (Rose 1971:180) who considers intelligence to be the ability to learn. Terman (in Spearman 1970:22) regards intelligence as

the ability to think abstractly and Spencer (in Spearman 1970:6) considers intelligence as the ability to adapt to one's environment.

The importance and value of these more theoretical views lies in the fact that they introduced the notion of intelligence into education and have thereby legitimised it. The resultant contribution to the construction of IQ tests is also of importance to education.

2.2.1.2 Intelligence as a group of special abilities

Researchers in this school of thought suggest that intelligence is the sum of a number of special abilities. As in earlier views, intelligence is seen as the ability to think; hence researchers focus on the special aspects of thinking.

Spearman was the first person to attempt to define the essential nature of intelligence by means of factor analysis. Anastasi (in Anderson & Helmick 1983:11) says the following about factor analysis: "The principal object of factor analysis is to simplify the description of data by reducing the number of necessary variables or dimensions". Factor analysis is thus really an analysis of the contents of intelligence tests and not of personal abilities.

Spearman's theory assumes that there is a common ability, the general factor (g) involved in all intellectual activities as well as a multitude of specific factors (s) which are found in a particular intellectual activity. The g-factor is possessed by all individuals, (although in varying degrees), and underlies all mental activities, whereas every mental activity involves at least one s-factor. Spearman's idea of a g-factor corresponds to some extent with the old idea of intelligence as a general ability (Olivier et al 1991:32; Kokot 1992:19).

Thorndike and Thurstone (in Kokot 1992:18-19), on the other hand, move away from the g-factor idea and maintain that intelligence is made up of the many specific abilities. Thorndike mentions abstract ability; mechanical ability and social ability. Thurstone asserts that intelligence consists of a number of primary mental abilities which can be grouped into factors namely:

- Verbal ability
- Numerical ability
- Spatial ability
- Verbal fluency
- Memory
- Reasoning
- Speed of observation

Further research indicated that these seven factors are not entirely independent of each other, suggesting that there is an additional, lesser or second-order factor underlying all of these factors. The factor analysis trend reached its peak with Guilford, who saw intellect as being made up of a small number of memory functions and a large number of thought functions. He designed a conceptual model of intelligence which allows for 120 separate abilities within three major dimensions. These constitute five operations, four contents and six products. Operation dimension includes cognitive memory, divergent thinking, convergent production and evaluative abilities (Kokot 1992:19,20).

These processes take place within four broad classes of content, namely figural, symbolic, semantic and behavioural. The various processes occurring within different classes of content are connected to the so-called products, namely units, classes, relations, systems, transformations and implications (Olivier et al 1991:33-34; Kokot 1992: 20-21).

Criticism was levelled by other researchers against Guilford's model. However, Guilford in particular contributes

to a better understanding of the student and learning process. His view indicates that man is not a stimulus-reaction being or even a memorising being, but rather a thinking being, that is, a cognisant, memorising, convergent-thinking, divergent-thinking and evaluating being.

The factor analysis finding also implies that individuals can differ greatly in many aspects of intelligence. Thus a person may achieve in a certain field or fields of ability, but not in others. This has certain special implications for diagnosis, instruction and vocational guidance (Kokot 1992:22; Olivier et al 1991:34).

2.2.2 Anthropological perspective

Before the twentieth century it became evident that the results of tests of cognitive abilities could not portray the total person. By 1895 Binet (in Butcher 1972:10) mentioned that there were tests that could measure the whole personality. These included tests for cognition, as well as tests of aesthetic attitudes, moral attitudes and will power. Eysenck's model includes the concept of personality and Guilford (1968:12) writes:

Are the intellectual abilities the only sources of success? Obviously not. There are also sensory and perceptual abilities and there are psychomotor abilities, all of which may play their roles in various endeavours. There are also traits of temperament and of motivation that can make their contribution.

All these statements indicate that intelligence is a wider concept than cognitive ability and that it must not be seen as an isolated ability, but should always be viewed in relation to the total personality. Intelligence cannot simply be defined in terms of cognition for this would be an operational definition that completely ignores the

constitutive aspects of the concept (Kokot 1992:23; Olivier et al 1991:40).

Anthropological approaches have greatly contributed to the constitutive definition of intelligence. According to these, the emphasis falls on the individual as a totality. The view of man as a totality developed further and led to the idea of the person as a whole in relationship to his or her world. This implies that people never exist as a totality in isolation, but always stand within and in relation to a world. When we consider the intelligence of children, their own human totality and the whole child-world of the past, present and future as well as that of their fellow human beings, objects and even God must be taken into consideration (Kokot 1992:23-24; Olivier et al 1991:40).

A further development in this regard is the view that the spiritual dimensions of human beings have special significance for the concept "intelligence". The spiritual side of the person is the seat of norms, values, conscience and so on. According to this approach, intelligence involves not only the whole person in dialogue with his or her world, but also a person with values, for whom the application of intelligence must lead to responsible decision making (Kokot 1992:24).

2.2.3 Information-processing perspective

This perspective focuses on the way that people process information: the processes whereby contents are assimilated into the cognitive structure. Whereas factor analysis is task orientated, focusing on test content, the information processing approach is directed to the person, determining how he or she performs an intellectual activity. The methods used in this approach include introspection, task analysis and thinking aloud sessions. The componential theory developed by Pelligrino, Glazer and Sternberg (Kokot 1992:24) is based on information processing. According to this view,

intelligence can be classified by function and level. Function refers to what the component in intelligence actually does and level indicates the degree of complexity or difficulty of the planning or decision making being undertaken.

Sternberg (in Kokot 1992:24) distinguishes five different types of elementary information processes, namely metacomponents, performance components, knowledge-acquisition components, retention components and transfer components. These may be explained as follows (Kokot 1992:24-25):

- "Metacomponents are high-level control processes used for making important decisions during problem solving. They include ordering, according to priority, the following:
 - * alternative approaches to problems or deciding just what the problems are that have to be solved and their importance relative to each other
 - * establishing a knowledge base and tentative, sequential strategies that may eventually lead to a solution
 - * deciding on the strategies that are likely to work best for the individual problem solver
 - * representing information in ways that are most appropriate for the discipline being studied
 - * applying time, effort, and resources most economically
 - * developing an approach that is flexible and open-minded enough to allow for mid-course adjustments.

- Performance components are used for carrying out tasks. They rely on such competencies as:
 - * encoding the terms of the problem and gleaning information that will be needed for the solution
 - * inferencing, or building conceptual relationships and drawing conclusions
 - * mapping, or seeing commonalities between domains of knowledge

- * applying knowledge by formulating predictions from a familiar to an unfamiliar domain
 - * comparing proposed predictions with alternative possibilities
 - * justifying the preferred prediction over the alternatives
 - * responding to the problem by expressing the solution in terms that others can understand.
- Knowledge-acquisition components are processes used to master newly acquired information. They may be identified as acquisition, retention and transfer components. Acquisition components are skills needed to learn new information; retention components are skills involved in retrieving previously acquired information; transfer components are the skills required for generalising information from one context to another.
 - Retention components are processes that restore precious previous experience to memory.
 - Transfer components which are used to relate acquired information to new situations."

2.2.4 Intelligence as cognitive development

Piaget (Kokot 1992:25; Olivier et al 1991:43) developed a theory of intellectual development. His view of the intellectual development of the child was based on the following assumptions:

Firstly, four factors contribute to the child's development. They are maturation, experience of the physical environment, the influence of the social environment and the factor of equilibrium, which serve to regulate the growth of cognitive structures from simple schemes in infancy to the complex coordinated structures of adulthood. This equilibrium factor is referred to as "the child's own self-regulatory processes,

which basically means that the child is an active participant in the construction of his own intelligence" (Wagner & Sternberg 1984:182).

Secondly, Piaget believed that intellectual development occurs in stages and that the various stages succeed one another according to a particular pattern. Thirdly, he maintained that although the development rate may differ from child to child, the stages and the order of succession are universal.

The vital facet of Piaget's theory of cognitive development is that differences in the child's mode of thought have been identified at the preschool, primary school and secondary school levels. Piaget distinguished four different phases and as the child proceeds from one phase to another, the cognitive structure of the preceding phase is reorganised and extended to accommodate the cognitive structure and requirements of the next phase. His research indicates that, from birth, a human being proceeds through a fixed succession of four distinguishable cognitive developmental phases, in which, according to Van Rensburg (in Kokot 1992:26), "the child's learning is governed by distinctive modes of thought".

Children have an important role to play in their cognitive development. For them to progress through the sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational stages, they submit to the pressure of the environment. During this interaction with the environment, children assimilate and accommodate information.

Much criticism has been levelled against Piaget's theory; nevertheless, it is still valuable as an indication of the cognitive development of the child, even though the ages of each stage may be inaccurate and given the fact that individual children of the same age may be at different levels.

Piaget's theory of cognitive developmental stages has important implications for the understanding and education of gifted children. In response to the question of whether or not gifted children progress more rapidly through these stages than non-gifted children, Barbe (in Kokot 1992:26) indicates that gifted primary school children begin to search for the abstract in their lifeworld, thus widening their horizon, at an earlier stage than the average child; they also appear to have a cognitive ability which enables them to grasp ideas in a manner that differs from the average child.

2.2.5 A new look at intelligence

Howard Gardner, a Harvard professor of Education, has contributed greatly towards shattering the "fixed IQ" myth (Dryden & Vos 1994:343). He (1993:25) indicates that the psychometric, anthropological, information-processing and development of cognitive structures approaches focus on a certain kind of logical or linguistic problem-solving ability. All ignore biology, none come to grips with the higher levels of creativity, all are insensitive to the range of roles highlighted in human society. As a result these facts have engendered an alternative point of view that focuses precisely upon those neglected areas.

In his theory of multiple intelligences (MIT), Gardner (in Dickinson 1997:1) argues that human beings have evolved to be able to carry out at least seven separate forms of intelligence. Gardner proposes that people use at least seven relatively autonomous intellectual capacities to approach problems and create products. He suggests that although they are not necessarily dependent on each other, these intelligences seldom operate in isolation. Every normal individual possesses varying degrees of each of these intelligences, but the ways in which intelligences combine and blend are as varied as the faces and personalities of individuals.

According to Hoerr (1997:1-2), Gardner has identified an eighth intelligence, the naturalist intelligence. The naturalist is described as the individual who is able to recognise fauna and flora, to make other consequential distinctions in the natural world, and to use this ability productively in hunting, farming and biological science. Simply, it is the ability to discern, identify and classify plants and animals. With regard to this intelligence, Hoerr (1997:3) indicates that "[o]ur work with the naturalist intelligence is just beginning. (Candidly, I still grapple with how it is different from and similar to the logical-mathematical intelligence.)" Thus, the researcher will not concentrate on this naturalist intelligence but will only focus on the seven intelligences.

The seven intelligences are given as follows (Gardner 1993:73-238; Margulis 1997:1-2; Dryden & Vos 1994:343):

Linguistic intelligence: This is defined as the ability to use words effectively, both orally and through the written word, highly developed in people such as Winston Churchill, J.F. Kennedy and acknowledged writers. Linguistic intelligence incorporates rhetoric (convincing others to take a specific course of action), mnemonics (using language to remember information), explanation (informing others using language), and metalanguage (using language to talk about itself).

Logical and mathematical intelligence: This is defined as the ability to reason, calculate and handle logical thinking (eg a scientist). One using this intelligence to its fullest potential must have sensitivity to logical patterns and relationships, statements and proportions, functions, and other abstract mathematical concepts. This intelligence is used in categorisation, classification, calculation, inference, generalisation, and hypothesis testing.

Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence: This is defined as expertise in using one's whole body to express ideas and feelings (eg actor, mime, athlete, dancer), and the ability to use one's hands to transform and produce things (eg sculptor, surgeon, craftsperson, mechanic, etc), as well as excel in sport.

Visual-spatial intelligence: This is defined as the ability to perceive the visual-spatial world accurately (eg as a hunter, scout, navigator or guide), and to perform transformations upon those perceptions (eg as an interior decorator, architect, artist, or inventor). Included within this intelligence is a sensitivity to form, space, shape, colour, line, and the relationships that exist between these elements. Also included is the ability to visualise, and then graphically represent that visualisation.

Musical intelligence: This is defined as the capacity to perceive, discriminate, transform, and express musical forms (eg as in a composer), and includes the sensitivity to pitch, rhythm, tone, colour and so forth, needed to sing and play musical instruments.

Interpersonal intelligence: This is defined as a "social" intelligence, or the ability to perceive and make distinctions in the moods, motivations, and feelings of other people (eg as a salesman or teacher). One can execute one's interpersonal intelligence by being sensitive to gestures, facial expressions, and voice; and by having the ability to respond effectively to those cues in some pragmatic way (eg to influence a group of people to follow a certain line of action).

Intrapersonal intelligence: This is defined as the ability to access one's inner feelings. This intelligence includes having awareness of own inner moods, possessing an accurate picture of one's self (by examining one's own strengths and weaknesses), by acknowledging and understanding various intentions, temperaments, desires, and motivations. Another

facet of intrapersonal intellect is the capacity for self-discipline, self-understanding, and self-esteem.

These seven types of intelligences may be considered by some as representing "traits" or "talents" rather than disparate intelligences (Dryden & Vos 1994:343). However, Gardner makes the following point: "If critics were willing to label language and logical thinking as talents as well, and to remove this from the pedestal they currently occupy, then I would be happy to speak of multiple talents. But I strongly resist any attempt to use a contrast between intelligence and talent as a veiled attempt to ignore or minimize the range of critical human abilities" (Dryden & Vos 1994:343).

Gardner (in Dryden & Vos 1994:340-352; Allen 1997:1) proposes that gifted/talented children who have any of the seven types of intelligences display the following characteristics.

1. Linguistic

Children with this kind of intelligence enjoy writing, reasoning, reading, listening, spelling, telling stories, word games or doing crossword puzzles. They have a good memory for trivia and may be good public speakers and debaters although some may prefer written communication.

2. Logical-Mathematical

Children with a high logical intelligence are interested in patterns, categories and relationships. They are drawn to arithmetic problems, strategy games and experiments. They like abstract thinking being precise and organised. Computers, problem-solving and experimenting in a logical way will also be enjoyed.

3. Bodily-kinesthetic

These children process knowledge through bodily sensations. They are often athletes, dancers or good at crafts such as sewing or woodworking. They show exceptional control of their bodies, good reflexes and

learn by participation in the learning process. They tend to remember through doing rather than observing or listening.

4. Visual-Spatial

These children think in images and pictures. They may be fascinated with mazes or jigsaw puzzles, or spend free time drawing, building with lego or daydreaming. They use metaphors, have a sense of gestalt, can use maps, charts and diagrams easily and may use all their senses for imaging.

5. Musical

Musical children are always singing or drumming to themselves. They are usually quite aware of sounds others may miss. These children are often discriminating listeners who are sensitive to pitch, rhythm and timbre as well as the emotional power of music.

6. Interpersonal

These children are leaders among their peers, are good at communicating and seem to understand others' feelings and motives. They negotiate well, enjoy cooperation, have many friends and can "read" social situations well.

7. Intrapersonal

These children may be shy. They are deeply aware of their own feelings and are self-motivated. They show self-knowledge, are sensitive to their purpose in life, have intuitive ability and may want to be different from the mainstream.

2.3 **Synthesis**

From the foregoing discussion it seems that theories of intelligence have attempted to, verbally and numerically, conceptualise and ultimately categorise levels of the human ability to think and reason. While all theorists concur that

all humans have these abilities and can all be described as "intelligent", not all individuals share equal measure of all the components said to comprise intelligence (or intelligences).

The literature revealed that the Vhavenda encouraged characteristics which correlate with those displayed by children who have any of Gardner's intelligences. The intelligences are linguistic (Chapter 2, section 3.5), musical (Chapter 2, section 3.4), visual-spatial (Chapter 2, section 3.2), bodily-kinesthetic (Chapter 2, section 3.1, 3.2 & 3.3) and interpersonal (Chapter 2, section 3.6).

Is it thus possible to say that giftedness is "high intelligence" or mere possession of more "intelligences"? The following section will deal with the meaning of the concept giftedness.

3 DEFINITIONS OF GIFTEDNESS

Freeman (1979:3) declares that in definitions of giftedness throughout the ages, the concept of intelligence, although it is not all embracing, is the crucial thread which runs throughout. The term "giftedness" has been traditionally used to refer to people with intellectual gifts. Giftedness has also been translated as high intelligence. Many definitions of this concept abound. Some definitions of giftedness may be said to be distorted for various reasons. They may concentrate on only one or a few aspects of giftedness omitting others. They may neglect the culture of the people who are to be identified.

3.1 Distorted definitions of giftedness

In the USA early definitions of giftedness were linked to performance on the Stanford-Binet Intelligence Scale which was developed by Lewis Terman during World War I. Children who scored above an agreed upon point such as 130 or 140 were

called gifted. IQ was taken as the absolute measure of intelligence and consequently giftedness. This reflects the significance given by the Western world to intellectual functioning. It established a tradition of rewarding intellectual abilities more than any other human abilities (Freeman 1979:2, George 1992:7, Kirk, Gallagher & Anastaslow 1993:123).

Two of the factors that necessitated a shift from IQ orientated definitions of giftedness are the following. Firstly, it was revealed by research that the use of IQ tests in the identification of gifted children resulted in many individual gifted children as well as specific types of giftedness being overlooked. As IQ measures identify only one kind of giftedness, other measures are needed to measure special abilities and talent in a number of different areas of giftedness (Kokot 1992:163, Khatena 1992:57).

This dissatisfaction with the use of IQ only led to definitions of giftedness that included more than IQ which, according to Khatena (1992:7), stemmed from the early work of Thurstone on primary mental abilities and Guilford as expressed in his Structure of Intellect Model(SOI). Perspectives started to broaden and giftedness was no longer viewed as a high IQ only, but was seen as multidimensional.

Secondly, the use of IQ tests for the gifted in a certain population results in a bias against disadvantaged and culturally different minority groups. The standardisation of most commonly used IQ tests has been done within the major culture of the middle-class segment of an industrialised white society. Many researchers believe that such bias makes these tests inappropriate as a measure of ability for children reared outside the Anglo culture (Persson 1998:22; Vialle 1996:461; Gage & Berliner 1992:222; Laycock 1979:157)

In this regard, Haralambos and Heald (1986:190) present the following examples from research findings: The first example

refers to the study undertaken by the Canadian psychologist Klineberg who gave an IQ test to Yakima Indian children living in Washington State, USA. The test consisted of placing variously shaped wooden blocks into the appropriate holes in a wooden frame "as quickly as possible". The children had no problem with the test but produced low scores because they failed to finish within the required time. Klineberg argues that this does not indicate low intelligence but simply reflects the children's cultural background. The Yakima do not place a high priority on speed as the Western culture does.

The second example refers to Porteus, whose research concerned Australian Aborigines. When IQ tests were administered to them, they were reluctant to perform the task and found it difficult to understand Porteus's request that they take these tests as individuals. This was attributed to the fact that Aborigine culture states that problems should be solved not by the individual but by the group. Important problems are discussed by the tribal elders until an unanimous decision is reached. This is similar to Vhavenda culture as indicated in Chapter 2, section 6.8.

These findings indicate a clear and urgent need for a multidimensional definition of giftedness and other ways of identifying giftedness. This led to intensive research which still continues.

A shift from an IQ orientated definition does not imply completely doing away with IQ measurements, but using them where suitable, that is for the cultural group for which they were intended. Kokot (1994:4) shows that IQ tests have certain value if they are correctly used. They measure a general intellectual ability or kind of mental strength needed for the abstract thinking ability that is required for high level intellectual tasks.

Regarding the school children of the Vhavenda culture, the application of an IQ orientated definition of giftedness and the use of IQ tests designed for middle-class whites could not serve the purpose but would further complicate the identification process. An appropriate definition of giftedness that could embrace the Vhavenda culture of these school children needs to be developed.

Wallace and Radloff (1992:117) maintain that the First World notions of giftedness cannot automatically be applied in Third World situations, because the individualistic nature of Western-based schooling contrasts sharply with the cooperative non-individualistic nature of Third World Zulu (or Vhavenda) culture in particular.

The view of giftedness as a social attribute results in it being interpreted as a status rank. Giftedness is not treated as an inherent characteristic that is the essence of the individual but as a trait ascribed to the individual by a social group (Pendarvis et al. 1990:4). This trait theory has led to some authors using the two terms "gifted" and "talented" as synonymous. Webster (in Khatena 1992:5) defines gifted as "having a natural ability or aptitude, talented", and talented is defined as "having talent, gifted". Similarly Hagen (1980:1) believes that the term gifted should always be used attached to some particular field such as music, language or science as we always infer giftedness by observing the characteristics or behaviours of a person that are related to achievement in a particular field.

This trend has resulted in narrow and limited definitions of giftedness because they focus on only one characteristic or ability of individuals whereas giftedness in any area most probably results from complex interaction of many characteristics and intelligences of an individual.

Definitions of giftedness most often recognise achievement, outstanding performance or involve professional eminence.

Persons of high ability whose "light is hidden under a bushel" are not likely to be regarded as gifted. The word giftedness is said to connote a matured power rather than a developing ability (Piiro 1994:9). This view cannot be accepted in developing countries composed of many educationally disadvantaged groups.

Some definitions of giftedness are broadened for the sake of covering a wider field and accommodating many children. This constitutes an attempt to cope with the changed political climate around the concept of giftedness (Silverman 1993:10). It is in this way that definitions are distorted to attempt to address certain problems.

In view of this, a consideration of definitions of giftedness that take a sociocultural perspective is warranted.

3.2 Definitions of giftedness that take a sociocultural perspective

All cultures include individuals who excel, and who have special abilities (O' Tuel, Swanson & Elam 1997:532). Each culture defines giftedness in its own image, in terms of the abilities that the members of that culture value at that time. This is supported in Australia by the Revised Policy for the Education of Gifted and Talented Children in Northern Territory Schools (1992) which states that "recent research has revealed that any concept of giftedness is a product of a society at a particular time" (Forbes-Harper 1997:483). Because of this, the meaning of giftedness has shifted throughout history according to the interests and preconceptions of people using the term. For example, at the height of the Roman Empire a truly gifted man would be expected to conquer other nations whereas a contemporary Roman might aim for the Nobel Prize (Persson 1998:22; Freeman 1979:1).

A non-specialised society may focus on the ability to hunt and insist that the most gifted and talented person among them is the one who is the best hunter. Similarly, a warring tribe will extol the expertise of the one among them who best has the ability to do battle. From a society's definition of giftedness, we learn that the exceptional person is often defined by individual ability and society and societal needs (Kirk et al. 1993:123, Freeman 1979:1).

George (1983:230) indicates that if "giftedness" is perceived as a "state" or "trait" solely belonging to the majority culture into which a select few "others" are allowed to enter and become isolated, then it may not be thought of by the culturally different parent as highly desirable for the child.

3.2.1 Sociocultural giftedness

It should be noted that the term "gifted" is used differently in various fields. It is used to describe an all-round high level of ability in children as well as specific abilities. Even in the same field of activity, children are called gifted at different levels of achievement. In some schools, it is used to describe a child's high performance in relation to that of the rest of the children in that particular school, which may be poor. In the same way, some children in highly selective schools who are regarded unintelligent in relation to their schoolmates would be considered gifted in another school. Thus the value of the term "gifted" could be judged in relation to its social origins as well as implied potential (Freeman 1979:2).

According to Roy (in George 1983:222), limiting the definition of giftedness to the academic area only seems particularly inappropriate to other cultural groups whose experiential background is rich in areas other than school academics. Kitano and Kirby (1986:29) advocate an early definition proposed by Witty which encompasses all gifts

valued by society. ".... [W]e consider any child gifted whose performance, in a potentially valuable line of human activity, is consistently remarkable".

Giftedness according to Thompson (in Khatena 1992:6) is a complex multifaceted quality of human functioning that takes many different forms depending on the circumstances in which individuals grow up and the multiplicity of tasks and rewards that exist for them in a rapidly changing and imperfectly predictable world.

Khatena (1992:6) proposes two approaches for looking at giftedness:

- (a) relating giftedness to the universe of exceptional and extraordinary characteristics or qualities of the individual either acquired through inheritance or environment and
- (b) seeing giftedness as determined by the needs and biases of the cultural group of which the individual is a member.

He goes on to emphasise that no definition of the gifted is adequate if it does not consider the interactive nature of the individual's excellence and society's needs and requirements. This interaction between the individual and the environment is well expressed by Benedict's (in Khatena 1992:6) statement that culture shapes people but at the same time people shape culture since culture is produced by people.

Newland (1976:12) believes that defining giftedness is necessarily a responsibility of society, with the society having to both explicitly and implicitly make apparent the extent to which it needs the gifted. Every society needs a percentage of gifted children to take the leading and evolutionary roles in various fields of the society in the

process of development. It is necessary at this stage to look at some definitions, perspectives and manifestations of giftedness that are culturally based and those that are argued to be less influenced by certain cultures.

3.2.2 Giftedness in Kenya

According to Yussufu (1983:354-355), when one looks at giftedness in Kenya, one can see the influence and impact of cultural and ethnic motivations on its manifestation. Areas which are strongly influenced by these motivations are those of artisans and craftsmen. They have achieved both national and international renown because Kenya believes very strongly in maintaining its traditional past and as such encourages traditional arts of its various cultures such as Akamba wood carvers and basket weavers, Kisii soapstone carvers, music, dance and many others. The environment created in this way is conducive for the development of giftedness or talent.

To promote music or dance in Kenya, the inhabitants organise music and drama festivals which embrace all age groups and cultures. They encourage originality of material in music, drama and dance. Emphasis on promotion of talents is placed on those things which are culturally highly esteemed (Yussufu 1983:355).

3.2.3 Maori conceptions of giftedness

Reid (1989:37) indicates that the Maori place less value on intellectual and academic traits. The kind of "cleverness" they esteem is epitomised in the moral speech making and oration and in lobbying and politicking on tribal councils.

The characteristics which the Maori prize are much more people-oriented, and are related to interpersonal relationships. The warmth, security and support for the community are all important.

According to Reid (1989:37), the Maori's conceptions of talent are similar to Getzel's "life talents" - talents not so much for doing something, but rather of being something. The Maori are concerned with cultural identity, being of service to others, coping with dignity and a certain style, more especially in times of crisis: birth, marriage and death. The attitudes, beliefs and values of the Maori about so many things pertinent to giftedness are different from those held by Europeans.

Success in White New Zealanders' terms, namely, the achievement of wealth, an advanced education and a high status occupation, is not accepted as the Maori way. Working from different values and experience, the Maori emphasise different criteria (Reid 1989:32).

3.2.4 Mönks's definition

Mönks extends Renzulli's concept of a triad definition by adding a second triad. Renzulli's triad definition indicates that gifted persons who make truly valuable contributions to society always demonstrate three critical factors, namely, above average ability, task commitment and creativity, which all work together with no over-emphasis on any one. The second triad added by Mönks to Renzulli's triad definition consists of school, family and peer group.

Furthermore, he substitutes the term motivation for Renzulli's task commitment due to his belief that motivation encompasses personal attributes such as perseverance, task commitment and a need for achievement. Mönks (in Kokot 1992:37) believes that an individual personality does not develop in a social vacuum and is largely dependent on stimulation from the social environment.

Giftedness is therefore seen to be the result of a favourable integration of internal and external factors.

Mönks (Kokot 1992:38) thus sees the prerequisites for the realisation of gifted potential as being the following:

- an inner drive
- external stimulation and support from the social environment
- harmony between the six abovementioned factors, namely, motivation, creativity, above average ability, family, peer group and school

3.2.5 Clark's view of giftedness

Clark (1992:6-7) believes that giftedness may manifest itself in many ways, such as outstanding cognitive ability, academic aptitude, creative behaviour, leadership ability and ability in visual performing arts. The expression of giftedness depends on both the genetic patterns and anatomical structure of the individual and on the support and opportunities provided by that individual's environment. The opportunities provided in the environment to develop these genetic programs allow some children to enhance their abilities to the point of giftedness. The absence of environmental opportunities inhibits the development of these genetic endowments. The growth of giftedness depends on the interaction between our biological inheritance and our environmental opportunities to use that inheritance. High levels of intelligence or giftedness are, therefore, the result of a dynamic, interactive process.

Clark (1992:8) defines giftedness as "a biologically rooted concept that serves as a label for a high level of intelligence and indicates an advanced and accelerated development of functions within the brain, including physical sensing, emotions, cognition, and intuition". She goes on to add that "such advanced and accelerated function may be expressed through abilities such as those involved in cognitive creativity, academic aptitude, leadership, or the visual and performing arts. Gifted individuals are those who

perform, or who show promise of performing, at high levels in such areas and who, because of such advanced and accelerated development, require services or activities not ordinarily provided by the schools in order to develop their capability more fully".

3.2.6 Tannenbaum's psychosocial definition of giftedness

Tannenbaum's (1983:86; 1991:27) definition of giftedness in children highlights the potential for becoming critically acclaimed performers or exemplary producers of ideas in spheres of activity that enhance the moral, physical, emotional, social, intellectual or aesthetic life of humanity.

He emphasises that those who have the potential for succeeding as gifted adults require not only the personal attributes that are often mentioned in definitions of giftedness but also a "filigree of factors" which are essential for the expression of giftedness (Tannenbaum 1991:28). This "filigree" is discussed in more detail below. Kokot (1994:19) developed these factors into a "mathematical metaphor" of giftedness that is given below.

$$\text{giftedness} = \text{intellectual factors} + \text{social factors} + \text{chance factors} \\ \text{emotional factors}$$

Kokot (1994:19) defines the word "emotion" to encompass more than feelings, and includes temperament and moods. The position of emotional factors in the "mathematical metaphor" as the denominator emphasises that it is an important function or component of each of the three groups of factors constituting the "numerator". The vital role played by emotions in the lives of all humans renders it "as the catalyst of all striving, fulfilments or achievements" (Kokot 1994:19).

The definition of giftedness as a complexity of factors could be applied to school children of the Vhavenda culture. However, a brief elaboration of the "filigree of factors" referred to above is needed. These factors of giftedness are briefly described in sections 3.2.6.1-3.2.6.4 below.

3.2.6.1 Intellectual factors

Intellectual factors are divided into superior general intelligence or general ability (Tannenbaum 1991:30) and special aptitude.

(a) Superior general intelligence

This refers to general intellectual ability which can partly be measured by IQ tests. It is roughly defined as the g-factor which Tannenbaum (1991:30) further defines as "some kind of mysterious mental strength denoting abstract thinking ability and shared by a variety of specific competencies". Kokot (1992:20) summarises it by way of a metaphor and then goes on to explain each component as follows:

$$\text{intelligence} = \frac{\text{power} + \text{tactics} + \text{content}}{\text{emotional aspects}}$$

"Power" refers to intellectual quickness or rate of learning which is determined by one's genes and is found in the structure of the brain.

"Tactics" refers to thinking skills or an individual's knowledge of how to use the mind and skills. The role of a stimulating environment is important in this case as the skills referred to can be taught and exercised by mental activities.

"Content" means that the individual has a rich knowledge base. Operation of power and tactics in an environment rich in knowledge enriches the child.

The emotional base is important because, in order for the child to gain and retain knowledge, there should be interest, motivation, curiosity, will, etc.

(b) Special aptitude

Thorndike (in Tannenbaum 1991:32) points out that special aptitude is not only responsible for particularising the area of an individual's competence but also helps to determine the individual's degree of success in a particular area of competence. While IQ tests measure general intelligence, aptitude tests identify special strengths and weaknesses in different fields of ability. The seven special abilities recognised by Thurstone (Kokot 1992:18-19) are listed in section 2.2.1.2.

These special abilities or aptitudes may be similar to Gardner's multiple intelligences which were discussed in section 2.2.5. Tannenbaum (1991:34) still adheres to those abilities that can be statistically identified (such as from the work of Thurstone, Vernon, Guilford and Carroll) but he acknowledges that factor analysis is not the only means of recognising special abilities. He mentions that Gardner's intelligences were revealed through "clinical and neurological insight" (Tannenbaum 1991:34).

3.2.6.2 Social factors

Giftedness requires an environment in which a cultural climate of nurturance, urging, encouragement and pressures exists that will allow it to mature. The most important environments in this regard are family, peer group and community.

(a) Family

For giftedness to be realised and achieved, parents need to encourage their children to achieve at and away from school,

to develop good language usage and to allow opportunities for enhancing children's learning opportunities outside school. In Vhavenda families, there is a great need to make parents aware of their responsibilities.

At present, the achievement of the child is still seen as the sole responsibility of the school. This is natural in view of the high illiteracy rate amongst Vhavenda parents. Despite the educational deficiencies of Vhavenda parents, research by Goertzel and Goertzel (in Tannenbaum 1991:33) indicates that achieving individuals do emerge from families and situations that are far from ideal. This confirms that giftedness could be found in Vhavenda children.

(b) The school

With regard to the manifestation of ability, the degree of difference made by the school to a potentially gifted child is still debated. While some hold the view that the school can only help by clearing away obstacles that stand in the way of high achievement, others who base their argument on empirical evidence conclude that the school can make a great difference with regard to the achievement of a potentially gifted child.

Once the idea of school gained full acceptance amongst blacks in South Africa after a period of rejection, it came to be regarded as a place where children should be entirely transformed from what they were before. It was expected that they should gain knowledge of almost everything, adopt good morals, accept responsibility, etc. As such, the school was expected to take advantage of the "go-ahead" given to it by parents, regardless of the cultural conflict that could exist.

(c) Peer group

The peer culture can affect the social climate in a classroom making it either comfortable or impossible for individual children to do their best. Consequently, parents and teachers should continuously encourage positive attitudes towards academic and cultural achievement. This also applies to Vhavenda children.

3.2.6.3 Chance factors

Luck and fortune may make the difference between success and failure; the unexpected and unpredictable may affect the course of human development. Although it may be debated, limited research done on chance factors suggests that they may be responsible for the variance that is found when comparing the development of individuals. Though it sounds mysterious, it is a fact that some people seem to be in the right place at the right time. The smile and frown of fortune can be witnessed in many fields and in all cultural groups where individual high achievers have been "discovered" seemingly by chance.

3.2.6.4 Emotional factors / Nonintellective aspects

Tannenbaum (1991:34) uses the term "nonintellective aspects" to describe the affective dimension of individuals as it includes personality traits and more commonly recognised emotions. However, the researcher prefers the term "emotion" in agreement with Kokot's (1994:24) assertion that it reminds one of the importance that feelings play in children's growth and development. The unique emotional life that is inherent in giftedness should not be ignored or neglected in favour of intellectual stimulation.

Attention will now be given to some of the nonintellective or emotional factors.

a) Meta-learning orientation

As used here "meta-learning" refers to a person's mind set or intellectual impulse. It is an adaptive mechanism in school situations and elsewhere. The awareness of the "name of the game" helps the gifted to decide on the right solution and to form an impression about what kind of solution would be acceptable. The gifted constantly tune in to what teachers, mentors or critics expect of them and they direct their considerable abilities accordingly.

Consequently, gifted learners understand how to select data so that they work with manageable and relevant facts and ideas that lead to outcomes, without jumping to hasty solutions. Achievement therefore depends on willpower, courage, cognitive power and perseverance. Some children, with exceptional mental strength but who come from disadvantaged backgrounds, are demeaned or pitied for cognitive deficits when in reality that fault is traceable to poor meta-learning habits that prevent proper release of potential. In this regard, an indispensable factor is motivation (Tannenbaum 1983:154-156; 1991:36). The role of this concept thus deserves attention.

(b) Motivation

Motivation to achieve is so important that Renzulli (1986:9) takes high "task commitment" as one of only three characteristics of giftedness. Amabile (in Tannenbaum 1991:34), in differentiating between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, indicates that children and adults perform more creatively when the urge to excel comes from within rather than from without. Tannenbaum (1991:34) maintains that the origin of the desire to achieve makes a difference in outcomes.

Achievement motivation is situational: it could manifest at school, among peers and at home. Factors such as race, sex,

and social class differences determine circumstances in which achievement motivation manifests itself. Motivation has an influence on the formation of the self-concept (Tannenbaum 1991:34).

(c) Self-concept

Kokot (1994:32) states that the self-concept is the subjective image we each have of ourselves and that we spend our lives maintaining and enhancing. A strong drive among the gifted to excel, and succeeding at it, should provide them with better self-concepts. It is strongly influenced by one's perception of what others think of oneself, as well as one's perception of oneself. Kokot (1994:32) further believes that the findings of the "sometimes lower and sometimes higher" self-concepts amongst gifted children may be explained by the fact that the self-concept is not a single entity, but involves self-judgement, of many aspects of being human. We call these aspects identities (Kokot 1994:14).

It seems that a high self-concept is constructed through risk taking behaviour. If there is no desire to venture, the apparent confidence of children may amount to little more than bravado or self-delusion. Sometimes the gifted appear arrogant, but if they did not believe in their exceptional abilities, they could not invest maximum effort for yet another extraordinary accomplishment.

The emotional factors discussed here are among the most important that figure in achievement. Tannenbaum (1991:34) mentions that nobody knows for sure whether, and to what extent, these attributes are causes, companions or consequences of successful achievement.

In addition to the abovementioned factors, Tannenbaum's definition of giftedness does not appear to be closely related to a specific culture hence it could accommodate giftedness from the Vhavenda cultural perspective.

3.2.7 Dabrowski's developmental potential

According to Silverman (1993:13), developmental potential is the potential for self-actualization and higher level development. It is constituted by the strength of overexcitabilities along with special talents and abilities. The term "overexcitabilities" (OEs) translated from Polish means "superstimulatability". It describes an expanded awareness and a heightened capacity to respond to stimuli of various types.

Dabrowski postulates five modes of mental functioning represented by so-called psychic overexcitabilities (OEs). They are Psychomotor, Sensual, Imaginational, Intellectual and Emotional. The strength of these overexcitabilities - particularly Imaginational, Intellectual and Emotional OEs - is positively related to advanced emotional development in adulthood and also of the person's giftedness (Silverman 1993:13; Piechowski & Colangelo 1984:80).

The ways in which these overexcitabilities express themselves are attended to here.

3.2.7.1 Psychomotor overexcitability (P)

It may be seen as an organic excess of energy, or heightened excitability of the neuromuscular system. Individuals with this gift of extra physical energy are "doers". They are highly active, constantly on the go and love movement. Surplus energy is shown in rapid speech and gestures, marked enthusiasm, love of fast games and sports, nervous habits, impulsiveness, restlessness, capacity of being active and energetic drivenness (Silverman 1993:13; Piechowski & Colangelo 1984:80).

According to Piechowski (1986:192), the earliest sign of Psychomotor OE is less need for sleep in infancy. Gifted children who are high in psychomotor energy show few other

symptoms of hyperactivity but are simply very active. When interested, they are capable of focussing attention and intense concentration. Aimless activity seems to occur most often when there is insufficient mental stimulation.

3.2.7.2 Sensual overexcitability (S)

Sensual OE is expressed by heightened experience of sensual pleasure and in seeking sensual outlets for inner tension. It is also marked by desire for comfort, luxury, stereotyped or refined beauty, and pleasure in being admired. It may also be expressed in simple pleasure of smells, love to touch different texture, cherish the memory of certain foods, hearing and seeing (Silverman 1993:15; Piechowski & Colangelo 1984:82).

In infants, this OE can be expressed in throwing off blankets, extreme reactions to clothing, intense reaction to noise, immediate crying when diapers get wet, colic and food allergies, enhanced sensitivities to foods and pollutants (Silverman 1993:15).

3.2.7.3 Imaginational overexcitability (M)

This OE is recognized through rich association of images and impressions, inventiveness, vivid and often animated visualization, use of image and metaphor in speaking and writing, vivid dreams that can be retold in detail, living in the world of fantasy, predilection for fairy and magic tales, poetic creations, imaginary companions or dramatising to escape boredom. It is closely allied with creativity (Silverman 1993:16; Piechowski & Colangelo 1984:82).

Children high in Imaginational OE have a great sense of humour, experience nightmares, are attracted to science fiction and science fantasy, mix truth and fiction, have imaginary companions, etc (Silverman 1993:16).

3.2.7.4 Intellectual overexcitability (T)

This OE is particularly correlated with intellectual giftedness. It is associated with an intensified activity of the mind. It expresses itself by persistence in asking probing questions, desire for knowledge and analysis, emphasis on logic, and theoretical problems that have more to do with striving for understanding and truth than with academic learning and achievement.

Other expressions are: a sharp sense of observation, independence of thought (often expressed in criticism), symbolic thinking, development of new concepts, striving for synthesis of knowledge; a capacity to search for knowledge and truth, introspection, extensive reading and moral concern (Silverman 1993:16; Piechowski & Colangelo 1984:82).

Piechowski warns that intellectual OE is not the same as intelligence. Not all intelligent individuals have high levels of intellectual OE or are intellectuals. For example, there are those individuals with high IQs who excel in practical intelligence but have little interest in cultural events, literary pursuits, or learning new theories (Silverman 1993:16).

3.2.7.5 Emotional overexcitability (E)

Emotional OE appears to be the most important of the overexcitabilities (Silverman 1993:16). It is recognised in the way emotional relationships are experienced, in strong attachments to persons, living things or places, and in the great intensity of feeling and awareness of its full range. Characteristic expressions are: strong affective recall of past experiences, concern with death, fears, anxieties, depressions, there may be an intense loneliness, and an intense desire to offer love, a concern for others, inhibition (timidity and shyness) and excitation (enthusiasm) (Silverman 1993:16).

There is a high degree of differentiation of interpersonal feeling. Emotional OE is the basis of one's relation to self through self criticism, self evaluation, self judgement, which go on with a sense of compassion, sensitivity, empathy, responsibility and responsiveness to others (Silverman 1993:16; Piechowski & Colangelo 1984:82). The heightened levels of sensitivity do not disappear with age. Gifted adults retain their emotionality and they are often perceived as being "too sensitive". Dabrowski maintained that when Emotional, Imaginational and Intellectual OEs surpass Sensual and Psychomotor OEs in strength, there is greater developmental potential to attain high levels of personality development (Silverman 1993:17).

Dabrowski's developmental potential theory asserts that gifted children have the capacity for self-actualization and high level emotional and moral development more than others. This definition of giftedness could accommodate giftedness from various cultural perspectives including the Vhavenda.

3.2.8 Persson's taxonomy proposal

Persson (1998:22) emphasizes that giftedness should encompass a broader understanding of human behaviour. It should recognize value in more endeavours within any culture than in intellectual virtues only. Persson agrees with Olson (in Persson 1998:22) that intelligence should be related to culture and suggests that intelligence should be considered a skill in a cultural medium.

Consequently, there must be a shift from the current influential frameworks on the nature of giftedness to new ones that are wider in scope and better equipped to explain and hone human competence. This will make it possible for individuals to be regarded as gifted in domains other than the traditionally academic ones (Persson 1998:22).

The turn to models of human behaviour which are sensitive to cultural diversity and modifiable provides for a flexible taxonomy of behaviours to be adopted. According to Persson (1998:22-23), the criteria for developing such a taxonomy of gifted behaviours should include at least the following considerations.

- "A reconceptualisation of giftedness shifting emphasis from intellectual potentials into overt competent behaviours.
- An outline of competences believed to, and forecasted to benefit society not only materially but socially and culturally also.
- Such a taxonomy will also need to have a *heuristic* function, i.e. it should suggest a possible direction of research and development where such is evidently needed and/or entirely absent.
- As research accumulates such a taxonomy must be modifiable in content and structure, thereby to some extent serve as an arbiter in terms of which behaviours will be considered as particularly valuable in a societal, cultural and future perspective".

Persson (1998:23) warns that this taxonomy will need to have a controlling function and that to focus competence and to foster potential researchers and educators must adopt broader perspectives regarding high ability or giftedness.

Section 4 will examine intellectual, social and emotional factors that may be significant for the development of giftedness.

4 FACTORS THAT POSITIVELY AND NEGATIVELY INFLUENCE THE DEVELOPMENT AND MANIFESTATION OF GIFTEDNESS IN CHILDREN

Every cultural and ethnic group instils both liberating and limiting attitudes in their children before they enter the school situation. This is also the case with every family

from every area of the country, regardless of the culture. Families who want to help their children to become all they can be need to be aware of any limiting practices in their culture in order to reduce them as much as possible. It is not necessary to limit the ties the child has with the culture. With awareness of what facilitates and what inhibits growth, families can find a way to strengthen positive attitudes and abilities (Clark 1992:436).

4.1 Factors that positively influence the development and manifestation of giftedness in children

Pressley (in Clark 1992:146) believes that the gifts and talents of children cannot be actualised without the encouragement, support and environmental opportunities provided by parents and teachers. In agreement with Pressley, Bloom (1982:511) reports the following: "Without extremely favourable supporting and teaching circumstances over more than a decade the children would not have been likely to reach the levels of attainment for which they were selected ... The most striking in talent development is the very active role of the family, selected teachers, and sometimes the peer group in supporting, encouraging, teaching, and training the individual at each of the major stages in his or her development".

It was further discovered that "the values and interests of the parents" provide great encouragement and further cultivation of abilities in children (Bloom 1982:520).

4.1.1 Characteristics commonly found in families of gifted children

According to Clark (1992:96), the following characteristics are commonly found in families that produce children with highly actualised potential and self-esteem:

- Parents accept their children as individuals, are loyal sources of support, and openly express acceptance.
- Parents set clear limits based on each child's ability to understand consequences; goals are clear; success is expected as a right of the child.
- Parental guidance is reasonable, realistic, and appropriate to each child.
- The family tends to be liberal and flexible, but not permissive.
- The family is aware of the environment and relates to the environment in a caring, protective way. Children are helped to see their part in the natural order and to respect this unity.
- Parents are relatively self-assured, are on good terms with one another; they accept responsibility for their own actions.
- Parents lead active lives outside of the family and do not rely on their families as the sole or necessary major source of gratification and esteem.

Van Tassel-Baska (1989:34,35), in her report of families of successful low socioeconomic-status gifted learners, mentions the following characteristics:

- Parents encourage and monitor progress.
- The family views socioeconomic circumstances as motivators to succeed.
- Successful learners perceive their families as a major source of encouragement and influence.
- The message learners received from their families is "You must work hard, get an education, and achieve what your parents and grandparents did not".

Gross (1993:109,112) indicates that the parents of gifted children:

- have an educational status that is significantly higher than that of the general population

- occupy professional and managerial positions to an extent far exceeding their proportion in the general population.

While the characteristics given above depict the climate of the family, these are not the only factors that positively influence the development of giftedness in young family members. Further factors are discussed below.

4.1.2 Factors revealed by gifted children and their families

According to Gross (1993:115), the studies of the families of highly gifted children undertaken by Terman, Hollingworth, Getzels and Jackson, Shelldon, Silverman and Kearney, Bloom and Sloane reveal that parents communicate and instil the following:

- Achieving the highest levels of scholastic success.
- The desire to broaden knowledge and a love of reading.
- The desire to fulfil one's potential through exploration of the world.
- Persistence and hard work.
- Encouraging general intellectual questioning.
- Choosing role models.
- Family pride in achievement.
- Reward for a job well done.
- Doing one's best and striving for excellence.
- Competition.
- Cooperation - helping one another.

In a recent study by Zixui (1997:605-606), another attempt was made to analyse successful parenting methods or strategies that impact on the development of young gifted children.

Zixui found that families educate their young children in various ways:

- Parents acquire certain things in daily life, for example, natural and social surroundings such as food, animals, plants and so on, to develop their child's intelligence and broaden their knowledge.
- Parents educate through play and games.
- Parents educate through competition; by encouraging children to solve riddles, to win games, and so on.
- Parents educate through arousing interest and/or responding to the child's expressed interest.
- Parents are good at responding to the child's natural curiosity and present new challenges when new stimuli arouse the child's interest.
- Many parents help the child to use tools or materials such as dictionaries or reference books to develop and encourage self-study at an early age.

The role of parents in the developmental processes of gifted children is summarised by Zixui (1997:605-606) as follows:

- To discover the superiority of the child. It appears that parents and grandparents are highly sensitive to signs of potential ability in the child.
- To encourage the child's interest and curiosity.
- To set a good example to the child.
- To design and guide the child's development. Zixui found that some parents deliberately planned to develop potential. For example, a child seen to be "clever" was fostered by the parents to develop scientific interests and skills.
- To be a teacher and a friend.
- To provide an environment conducive to talent development and the opportunities to develop talent. For example, artistic talent would be fostered by visits to galleries and music or art lessons.
- To be a coordinator of social development, for example, overseeing the child's growing ability to deal with interpersonal relationships.

In the following discussion the factors cited by Gross will be discussed in more depth. It will be seen that some of Zixui's findings concur with those of the researchers in Gross's study.

4.1.2.1. Achieving the highest levels of scholastic success

Orroyo and Sternberg (1993:33) report that contact with school objects like toys, books, pencils and puzzles before they enter school familiarises children with essential information about the purpose and possible alternative uses of objects commonly used in schools. It also allows children to develop and practise basic cognitive skills. Zixui (1997:608) believes that intellectual development is stimulated by the earlier contact with articles in everyday life.

According to Clark (1992:147), the ability to learn rapidly allows a gifted child to achieve at the highest level. The evidence that learning rates can be altered by appropriate educational and environmental conditions suggests that very favourable learning conditions provided in the early years can markedly influence learning rate.

Gustin (1985:294) reports that the parents of the highly gifted children in his study believe that it is important for their children to develop their own interests, but expect them to do well in school. Most of the children were aware, even in elementary school, that eventually they would be going to college, illustrating the expectation of school success. Zixui (1997:609) finds that most parents firstly arouse interest, then encourage and satisfy the child's interests. Eby and Smutny (1990:55) maintain that creativity is enhanced by allowing children to experience what it means to make a choice. In this way, children begin to take responsibility for their choices, and responsibility is necessary for scholastic success.

James (in Orroyo & Sternberg 1993:39) emphasises that when disadvantaged children learn to adapt their behaviour to the values and demands of the school, they begin to accomplish required tasks successfully. Their achievement attracts the attention of teachers, and greater opportunities for success are made available to them. Hunsaker (1994:74) points out that disadvantaged children's giftedness can be manifested if the students have supportive teachers and principals who encourage them and monitor their progress.

4.1.2.2 Desire to broaden knowledge and a love of reading

In agreement with the findings of Van Tassel-Baska (1983:131-134), Gross (1993:156) reports that in her study of fifteen highly gifted children, the most highly favoured activity was reading. A gifted high school student wrote the following with regard to her giftedness and reading:

"When your mind feels restrained and boxed in on four sides with superficial teachers, boring school days and no challenge whatsoever, I recommend the world's best antidote. This secret remedy is simply reading. Books truly open up whole new worlds. When your own life becomes dull and monotonous, you can easily delve into someone else's through books. I can throw myself, mind and body, into a good book and watch reality slip away. There is so much to be learned - limitations at school shouldn't stop you. Remember, books are a great place to visit, and, you know, sometimes I wouldn't mind living there."

Clark (1992:110) believes that when children are made aware of nature and participate in environmental projects for which they are required to read widely, they develop a sense of autonomy, deeper understanding and appreciation of nature. In this way the desire to broaden their knowledge is fanned.

Gross (1993:83) reports that the precocious development of speech and reading are extremely powerful indicators of possible giftedness. However, it is not clear whether early ability to read is the precursor of a love of reading and knowledge or whether a love of knowledge motivates the child to learn to read early.

4.1.2.3 Desire to fulfil one's potential through exploration of the world

Clark (1992:90) indicates that in some studies done, the children who showed precocious development of speech and movement also displayed explorative and inquisitive behaviour. She further reports that children who learn to walk approximately two or three months earlier than their peers are more likely to be gifted. Clark (1992:90) declares that unreasonably applied limits and controls on these children can cause frustration, resulting in an aimless, internally unmotivated child. She stresses that allowing a baby to freely explore an environment made safe by placing dangerous items out of reach is the single most important action in ensuring intellectual growth.

Both Biesheuvel and Olivier (in Van Heerden 1992:208) indicate that black children do not get full scale intellectual stimulation from their lifeworld at home to prepare them for the school system which is based on the Western culture. This is due to inefficient exposure at home to some cultural goods which are important in the school context, for example some kinds of toys, furniture and household utensils. In addition, the simplicity of their daily routine differs from what is encountered in school. Badenhorst, Schoeman and Thembela (Van Heerden 1995:62-63) agree that the Western cultural goods such as reading matter, a radio, electricity, some types of furniture, domestic utensils and toys are important for the individual's intellectual development, particularly with regard to knowledge and language.

4.1.2.4 Persistence and hard work

Renzulli (1986:9) regards "task commitment" as one of the characteristics of giftedness. Hard work, therefore, should be valued highly by gifted children if they are to manifest their potential for giftedness. Clark (1992:147) indicates that for giftedness to be nurtured, the person concerned should have an unusual willingness to do great amounts of work. Zixui (1997:609) stresses the importance of the example set by parents in modelling responsibility, persistence and singleminded devotion to a task.

4.1.2.5 Encouraging general intellectual questioning

Modern schools encourage children to question so that they may develop intellectually. When children answer questions they are expected to present their ideas in a focused and sequential manner, practise skills of learning, meet the demands for exactitude and give correct answers.

At school, children are carefully taught the specific meaning of words; they are treated as conversationalists from infancy and questioned about the referential meaning of words and knowledge of facts (Lemmer 1993:157). Hence, children are put in a position of analysing, synthesising and questioning the content so that they can well understand it.

4.1.2.6 Choosing role models

Gustin (1985:294) mentions studies in which it was found that many parents of gifted children have professional qualifications. They are seen as role models and instil in their children the value of choosing a role model in order to achieve even greater heights than those attained by this role model. All cultures need role models and leaders. This notion is supported by Zixui (1997:609) who quotes the Chinese proverb "example is better than precept".

4.1.2.7 Family pride in achievement

The families of gifted children derive family pride from the achievement of their gifted child (Sloane 1985:440). Studies of the family background and family characteristics of highly gifted children emphasise the unusually warm, close and mutually supportive relationships enjoyed by these children and their parents (Gross 1993:239). Zixui (1997:609) maintains that parents are not only educators of their child but also helpful friends.

4.1.2.8 Doing one's best and striving for excellence

Concerning the values espoused by the parents of highly gifted children, Sloane (1985:440) wrote: "Doing one's best - whatever the task - was very important in these homes. It was not enough to stay busy. Emphasis was placed on doing the best one is capable of".

This drive to do one's best forms part of what Renzulli (1986:9) regards as task commitment, one of the characteristics he believes make up giftedness.

4.1.2.9 Reward for a job well done

Referring to Bloom's study of the parents of gifted children, Sloane (1985:440) indicates that these parents set high standards for the successful completion of a task. Once these goals are attained, there is pride in achievement: the reward for a job well done.

The reward serves as a motivation to the children, who then persevere, work hard and become committed to their work. This commitment is one of the characteristics which promote the manifestation of giftedness (Renzulli 1986:9).

4.1.2.10 Competition

The desire to attain high academic achievement introduces the aspect of competition among learners at school. Gross (1993:240) reports that the academic self-perception of gifted children is significantly influenced by the recognition of these children's remarkable gifts. It is strongly established through competition with other children who have similar giftedness.

Gross (1993:241) compares two groups of learners: the first group comprised three children who were working in class, at levels which did little to challenge their intellectual or academic abilities. They completed the work with ease and their performance was well beyond that of their classmates. Their academic superiority had never been challenged and they had no classmates whose intellectual ability approached their own and with whom they might compare themselves or compete.

The second group was composed of three other gifted children who had been academically and intellectually challenged, and who displayed more modest but still positive levels of academic esteem. In a spirit of competition, these children compared their academic performance at school with that of colleagues who were several years their senior. They still outperformed their classmates, but they had to work to achieve their success.

It may be inferred that competition, which calls for hard work by gifted children so that they may attain the highest level of academic achievement, influences the realisation of giftedness. Zixui (1997:608) points out that encouragement and ability to compete begins in the home.

4.1.2.11 Cooperation - helping one another

After many years of study and serving the exceptionally gifted children, Hollingworth (in Gross 1993:211) became

convinced that these children should be permitted to mix with other learners at similar stages of intellectual, social, and emotional development. Hollingworth mentions the case of a child who was consistently rejected by other children until he was transferred to a special class for gifted children, where he could make social contact with other children who shared his abilities and interests. Within a short time he was one of the most popular and respected class members.

According to Clark (1992:110), research shows that when children are exposed to sharing times, social outings, group games and cooperative activities, these children can increase their cooperative social interactions, improve their ability to overcome obstacles and to talk to peers, and can decrease negative behaviour. This allows them to grow in social problem solving.

4.1.2.12 Synthesis

This discussion has indicated a number of factors present in the lifeworld and personalities of gifted children and their families. Some of these factors are also found in Vhavenda culture (Chapter 2, section 6.8). These common factors are listed as follows:

- Cooperation (No 2).
- Competition (No 4).
- Reward for a job well done (No 6).
- Adults as role models (No 13).
- Encouragement of interests such as music and art (Nos 5,8&9).
- Playing games with children (No 10).
- Family pride in achievement (Nos 1,3,6&7).
- Drive for excellence (Nos 11&14).
- Hard work for the family and the nation (Nos 7&12).
- Positive identity and independence (No 15).

4.1.3 Recent factors revealed by Zulu school children in South Africa

According to Wallace and Adams (1988:72), the majority of Zulu children live in poor socioeconomic conditions and can be considered to be grossly disadvantaged. The Zulu children are deprived of their own culture, they are in a state of transition, they are changing ideologies, moving from largely pre-literate to a literate world, changing their societal structures, changing their whole way of life from a Third World society based largely on rural subsistence farming to a Western oriented First World society.

Figures illustrating the extent of underachievement are as follows: "In 1985, only 16% of the total year group of Black South Africans in Kwazulu High Schools reached Std 10, only approximately 1 in 3 (ie 5% of the year group) of those reaching Std 10 gained a pass in Senior Certificate, and only 1 in 13 (ie approximately 1% of the year group) gained a level of matriculation which would enable them to apply for university entrance" (Wallace & Adams 1988:6).

The researcher wonders if the 1% who succeeded perhaps acquired new values or factors that influenced their success.

In a study by Van Heerden (1995:73-74), certain factors were found to influence academic performance of black university students. They are:

- The desire for personal and financial advancement.
- The desire to broaden knowledge.
- The desire to increase personal prestige in the community.
- Value attached to the external tokens of academic success, such as wearing of an academic gown.
- The value placed on praying to God for assistance in studies because study is associated with the Western culture (and thus God) rather than with ancestor spirits.

It is possible that some of these factors may also affect the success of school children so some will be discussed in more detail as follows:

4.1.3.1 Desire to broaden knowledge

Perhaps successful Zulu children were aware that they were moving from a largely pre-literate to a literate world, and so had to cultivate and nurture the desire to broaden their knowledge. They had to develop a love for reading.

4.1.3.2 Desire to increase personal prestige in the community

Wallace and Adams (1988:73) indicate that because the Zulu children's culture is in a state of transition from a Third World to a First World culture, there is often a rejection of the past cultural heritage which is regarded as a burden to be discarded. Young persons become alienated from those adults who are still deeply embedded in the past culture. This constitutes the youths' attempt to attain a respected position in the community which they regard as having a culture.

4.1.3.3 Desire for personal and financial advancement

The Zulu children in the study by Wallace and Adams (1988) lived in poor socioeconomic conditions. To escape this unpleasant condition, it is possible that a Zulu child had to develop a desire for financial independence and personal advancement in the socioeconomic arena. This desire possibly encouraged successful children to work hard.

4.1.3.4 Questioning attitude

Although not listed by Van Heerden (1995:73-75), the researcher believes that a questioning attitude may also be a significant factor. The Zulu culture emphasises respect towards older members in society and this causes many pupils

to accept without questioning what they are taught at school. They listen passively and seldom question when they do not understand (Wallace & Adams 1988:73). Those children who succeeded may have had to go against their culture and adopt a questioning attitude whenever they wanted clarity on any aspect.

This study will investigate whether Vhavenda school children are also influenced by these factors or not.

4.2 Factors that negatively influence the development and manifestation of giftedness in children

A social environment that does not meet the personal needs of the child can inhibit the manifestation of giftedness. Orroyo and Sternberg (1993:29-33) mention factors that negatively influence the nurturance of giftedness which may be found in the family situation of the culturally different minority groups:

- Disadvantaged children reside within environments devoid of challenges to creativity and resourcefulness. Their milieu has a limited range of possible activities and options at their disposal. It is therefore difficult for these children to master the various intellectual and artistic tasks traditionally associated with giftedness.
- The absence of objects such as books, toys, puzzles and pencils in the home does not prepare children for their eventual confrontation with the behavioural requirements of the classroom. The children's basic cognitive skills are thus not developed and practised.
- Many disadvantaged children enter the school environment with a host of cognitive abilities and behavioural expectations they have learned at home, but that are not necessarily valued by the school.

- Verbal interactions among disadvantaged parent-infant dyads also do not fully foster the development of cognitive abilities valued by the school.
- Parents who cannot speak English are unable to foster English language skills in their children.
- There are considerable discrepancies between the communication patterns of parents and children from culturally diverse and socially disadvantaged backgrounds and the modes of communication most commonly valued in schools.
- Many disadvantaged children come from environments in which direct questioning is avoided, eye contact is considered to be impolite, and concepts of comparability and relativity are not taught.
- Disadvantaged children avert their eyes when they are spoken to. They are able to attend to several concepts at once and shift focus among them, they are emotionally expressive and they are spontaneous. In contrast, the school emphasises self-control, uses direct questioning, insists that children attend to ideas in a focused and sequential manner and show their interest in instruction by maintaining direct eye contact with teachers.
- The type of discipline administered by parents may not encourage children to develop an inner locus of control, which may lead to a lack of self-motivation and problem solving skills.

5 DISADVANTAGED GIFTED CHILDREN

Plenty of terms exist which refer to more or less the same things in the field of disadvantaged gifted children. Reissman (1962:6) asserts that the terms disadvantaged, culturally deprived, educationally deprived, underprivileged,

lower class, and lower socioeconomic group are synonymous. Fantini and Weinstein (1968:6) add to these terms: culturally different, working class, slum culture, inner city dwellers, culturally handicapped, culturally impoverished, experientially deprived, educationally disadvantaged, children of the poor, poverty and many more.

According to Ritchert (1987:151), the National Report on Identification prepared for the U.S. Department of Education regarded groups who are disadvantaged to include, amongst others, racial and cultural minorities, rural and urban populations, and female, preschool, or handicapped gifted learners.

It is the purpose of this section to determine whether the Vhavenda school children could be seen as disadvantaged or deprived in certain areas in comparison with other groups. For the sake of clarity, some of the terms used will be defined as the discussion progresses.

5.1 The culturally diverse/different

Sato (1974:573) defines culturally different as "membership in a culture other than the dominant culture in society", while Bruch (1975:164) regards culturally different people as "those cultural or subcultural groups whose cultural environment differs from that of the mainstream or general culture". Baldwin (1978:1) defines cultural diversity as "a condition of racial, ethnic, language or physical differences from a dominant culture".

In South Africa, various population groups have dissimilar cultures. Haasbroek (1988:100) defines culturally dissimilar gifted children as those "who, as regards background, origin, language, values, attitudes and aspirations, differ from the

dominant cultural group to such an extent that it affects the manifestation of their giftedness".

Examples in this regard include:

- Learners whose home language is not the same as the language medium of the school they attend or the community in which they live.
- Learners from a poor socioeconomic background who find themselves in a more favourable environment (eg by becoming boarders at a boarding school).
- Learners whose parents belong to a particular group (eg miners, migrant labourers, construction workers) which could virtually be described as a subculture.
- Learners whose values, attitudes, aspirations and norms differ drastically from those of the community owing to the influence of their parents as primary educators.
- Learners residing in remote, isolated rural areas where there is little culturally enriching stimulation.
- Learners from culturally deprived homes or environments.

The Vhavenda children are from a minority ethnic group within the majority of blacks in South Africa. Although whites are a minority compared to blacks, their culture is dominant in the South African society (Kokot 1992:164). There is a significant difference in the values and attitudes of African and Western cultures (Wallace & Adams 1988:73).

The Vhavenda children's cultural environment, race, ethnicity and language differ entirely from the white dominant culture and race. As indicated in Chapter 2, section 6, the term

"culturally different" can appropriately refer to Vhavenda school children.

5.2 **Culturally deprived/disadvantaged**

Reissman (1962:3) defines cultural deprivation as "those aspects of middle-class culture - such as education, books, formal language - from which these groups have not benefited". Ogbu (1978:44) views children to be culturally deprived when they come from home and neighbourhood environments that do not provide them with adequately organised stimulation for normal development.

The 1964 Chicago conference on compensatory education for cultural deprivation defined culturally deprived learners as "the students whose early experiences in the home, whose motivation for present school learning and whose goals for the future are such as to handicap them in schoolwork. This group may be defined as those who do not complete secondary education" (Bloom et al 1965:4).

This group is referred to as culturally disadvantaged or culturally deprived because "the roots of their problems may in large part be traced to their experiences in homes which do not transmit the cultural patterns necessary for the types of learnings characteristic of the schools and the larger society" (Ogbu 1978:45).

Brooks (in Haralambos & Heald 1985:202) regards the culturally deprived child as

"...essentially the child who has been isolated from those rich experiences that should be his. This isolation may be brought about by poverty, by meagreness of intellectual resources in his home and surroundings, by the incapacity, illiteracy, or indifference of his elders or of the entire community. He may have come to school without ever having had his

mother sing him the traditional lullabies, and with no knowledge of nursery rhymes, fairy stories, or the folklore of his country. He may have taken few trips - perhaps the only one the cramped, uncomfortable trip from the lonely shack on the tenant farm to the teeming, filthy slum dwelling - and he probably knows nothing of poetry, music, painting, or even indoor plumbing".

Some of Vhavenda children's experiences handicap them in schoolwork. In Chapter 2, section 3.1, it was mentioned that due to respect, the children do not question their elders. Wallace and Adams (1988:73) point out that such disadvantaged children are subject to a "banking" concept of education whereby the teacher fills them with knowledge which they do not have to think about but learn by rote and reproduce in tests.

In Chapter 2, sections 3 and 4 it was established that the Vhavenda culture promotes social identity and oral tradition. However, in the modern school when children become literate, they have to embark on solitary reading which has not been part of their culture. At school, children learn through visual and written modes about Western literature, attitudes and factors which seem to encourage and reward individual rather than social achievements (Wallace & Adams 1988:73).

Similarly, black American families also taught different language skills at home that are irrelevant to the demands of the school and American society (Inkeles 1968:54-56). However, Ford and Harris (in Piirto 1994:543) found that academically achieving black American adolescents preserved their cultural and social awareness but also assumed majority culture achievement standards.

Smilansky (in Eriksson 1985:392) stresses that the "crisis syndrome" experienced by the "culturally disadvantaged" is the transition from the old culture to the new "modernised"

Western culture. The "crisis" occurs in that people are estranged from the old culture, yet are incompetent within the "new" culture to which they aspire.

As indicated in this discussion, it could be concluded that the Vhavenda school children are culturally disadvantaged. The following section evaluates whether or not the Vhavenda can be considered as disadvantaged in the socioeconomic arena.

5.3 Socioeconomic deprivation

Baldwin (1978:1) views socioeconomic deprivation as a condition of legal or de facto denial of social interaction with the dominant culture combined with substandard housing and jobs. Manni, Winikur and Keller (1984:25) indicate that socioeconomically deprived communities suffer all negative effects of poverty. These include inadequate prenatal, perinatal, and postnatal care, general health care, poor nutrition, substandard housing, unemployment and underemployment, disorganised family structure, social interaction and child-rearing practices, linguistic differences, and the alienation of minorities due to poor self-image, motivation and anxiety.

Fantini and Weinstein (1968:13) show that economically disadvantaged groups have a low income and so lack money to buy adequate food, clothing and shelter. Most of these children live in shacks, ramshackle apartments, tenements or in singleroomed homes. They tend to lack the simplest public services like adequate garbage collection, a guaranteed water supply, or functioning sewers. One parent is often absent from home, alcoholic or unemployed. Both parents may be working, leaving no one at home to supervise the children. In the USA, this is more characteristic of the black Americans than other disadvantaged groups (Maker & Schiever 1989:209).

The home conditions of Vhavenda school children, discussed in Chapter 2, section 6.7, seem to mirror the above descriptions. Children suffer from malnutrition and undernourishment. There is a lack of proper shelter, children are found in single parent families due to family splitups, or one or both parents work far from home.

The Human Sciences Research Council (Mundell 1992:195) estimates the illiterate population of all black adults in South Africa at 47%. Given this figure, and considering the fact that the Vhavenda are situated predominantly in rural areas, it may logically be inferred that the unemployment rate amongst Vhavenda adults is high.

Mundell (1992:197) gives the findings of the Motau report with regard to economic and social conditions at the homes of children (who attended sample schools) with unsatisfactory 1989 Std 10 results. Indicators identified were: poor home circumstances, socioeconomic problems, poor study facilities at home, no privacy and broken homes.

Reissman (1962:36) points out that among the socioeconomic deprived groups "the family may be extended. The home typically includes aunts, uncles, grandparents, all of whom may to some degree play a parental role ... In the Negro family the grandmother often plays the most decisive role". To some extent this is also found in the Vhavenda families as indicated in Chapter 2, section 6.6.

With an awareness that Vhavenda children are socioeconomically deprived, it is now necessary to investigate their position with regard to educational deprivation.

5.4 Educational deprivation

Eriksson (1985:393) maintains that the concept of educational deprivation "must be seen within the context of the extreme

inequality in educational opportunity for black children in South Africa. Such education is beset by problems of overcrowded classrooms, underqualified teachers, sparse furniture and equipment, limited resources, etc".

He further indicates that before 1981, black gifted children received no official recognition or special education. He regards the black children in South Africa as educationally deprived in this sense since "not only have they experienced inadequate general education, it has not been appropriate to their learning characteristics".

Luthuli (1982:110) supports Eriksson's view of the bad conditions in black education, stating that a large percentage of academically and professionally unqualified teachers, heavy teaching loads of teachers, overcrowded classes and poorly paid teachers are some of the elements which need to be addressed.

Black Americans seem to have experienced more or less the same problems in their education. Ogbu (1978:53) mentions that critics of the educational opportunities for blacks often stress that "black children are segregated into predominantly black schools and that resources available in such schools are inferior to those found in predominantly white schools".

It should be kept in mind that for many generations, American society provided blacks with inferior education because blacks were defined as inferior to whites and thus not in need of the same kind of education. This went on until 1954 when the United States Supreme Court's desegregation ruling of 1954 in *Brown V. Board of Education, Topeka, Kansas* meant in effect that blacks and whites legally had to be given the same kind of education within a single school system (Ogbu 1978:105,120).

South African blacks, having embraced Western education and shifting away from their traditional, informal education, were exposed to inferior education. The introduction of the 1953 Bantu Education Act was seen by its critics as having a primary objective to "suppress the Bantu by providing educational opportunity that trains them to be nothing more than 'hewers of wood and drawers of water'" (Rose 1970:41).

The Eiselen Commission, on whose recommendations the Bantu Education Act was based, had expressed the idea that the education of a black child should be based on the idioms of black culture. In this regard, Luthuli (1982:82) declares that "no group or individual is able to interpret the philosophy of life of another people objectively unless he is part thereof". As suggested by the Eiselen Commission, the Bantu Education motive was that blacks should remain within their communities and serve their own people. Luthuli (1982:82) views this move as being based on an apartheid (segregation) policy unacceptable to blacks.

Wallace and Radloff (1992:117) confirm Luthuli's (1981:41) view that South Africa is undoubtedly experiencing a crisis in education. Many black children have no access to primary education. Most of those who do are in large classes with underqualified teachers and the dropout rate is very high. In this disadvantaged majority, the dropout rate increases through high school. The advantaged minority mostly proceeds on to tertiary education.

Schools in low socioeconomic areas are poorly equipped and poorly staffed. According to Hofmeyr (1989:22), impoverishment of the homeland areas is also reflected in the difference in unit education costs. Per capita provision expenditure for Department of Education and Training schools (for blacks) in 1986 was R182 while R62 was spent in schools of the self-governing states (both figures excluding salaries). Venda as a self-governing state had only R62 per capita to spend in its schools. Within the whole context of

South Africa, these comparative figures indicate how the Vhavenda children have been educationally deprived.

The first democratic election held in April 1994 carried with it the promise of equal education for all in South Africa. However, past discrimination on various levels does not necessarily cease when statutory and other discriminatory measures are lifted (Ackermann 1991:8-9). In order to address this problem, remedial and compensatory measures need to be applied to the deprived and disadvantaged. In this respect, the geographical position of the Vhavenda cannot be ignored. Presently the area is part of the Northern Province, which is regarded as the poorest of all provinces in South Africa.

5.5 Geographic isolation

Baldwin (1978:1) defines geographic isolation as "a condition of being geographically located away from the mainstream of society". Because of the homeland system mentioned in Chapter 2, section 2.3, the Vhavenda ethnic group inhabits the northern part of the Northern Province, an area which is predominantly rural, some distance away from the various main resources of South Africa, such as factories, industries, mines, good universities, colleges, and other institutions.

Because of this isolation, the environment is less stimulating for the cognitive development of children. The geographic position tends to make school children feel incompetent because they are alienated from the mainstream society whose culture dominates their teaching-learning process. As mentioned above (section 5.4) government expenditure on schools was limited for a long period. As such, the combination of these factors could well hamper the development and manifestation of giftedness.

The possible effects of social and geographical isolation are discussed by Bailey, Knight and Riley (1997:66) as follows:

- Some rural families may be less than positive in their attitude toward education, perhaps seeing it as a challenge to their existing values and beliefs.
- Gender stereotypes may be more likely to affect expectations about subject and career choices.
- Identification of gifted individuals may be seen as threatening to a community with a strong egalitarian ethic.
- Where distances between schools are great there may be fewer opportunities for talented learners to come together for centralised programmes.
- Small rural schools may not have a sufficient number of talented learners to justify having special programmes for them. The number and expertise of teachers will also affect the curriculum.
- A relative lack of resources for information, such as libraries, tertiary institutions and industry may affect the actualisation of children's potential.
- There is often a lack of support personnel, including counsellors, who are needed to help cater for the needs of gifted and talented children.

However, Elliot (in Bailey, Knight & Riley 1997:67) notes that rural isolation also has positive aspects, one of which is the need of isolated children to be independent, flexible and able to proceed at their own rate. Their parents are often highly dedicated and are interested in helping them.

5.6 **Summary**

The discussion above, based on literature findings, has established that the greater majority of Vhavenda school children may be described as culturally disadvantaged, culturally deprived, socioeconomically deprived, educationally deprived, and geographically isolated. This conclusion follows an evaluation of Vhavenda school children by looking at the descriptors and characteristics discussed above and comparing them with the situation of the Vhavenda.

Against this disturbing background, one is faced with the difficult task of searching for gifted behaviour in Vhavenda school children. In order to do so, it is necessary to consider the identification approaches towards culturally disadvantaged gifted children.

6 THE USE OF TRADITIONAL MEASURES IN THE IDENTIFICATION OF CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED GIFTED CHILDREN

Traditional measures involve psychoeducational tests - for example, IQ and achievement tests (Assouline 1997:89). Although the argument against the use of these tests rages, they have not even met with global acclaim for use in assessing culturally privileged children. Assouline (1997:89) writes that the "trend towards authentic assessment implies that traditional testing is somehow false or artificial, and the results not useful".

Keeping this in mind, surely the difficulties associated with the use of traditional methods with disadvantaged children are compounded. A survey of existing procedures and instruments for identifying giftedness, submitted as part of the National Report in the USA, revealed the following questionable practices (Ritchert 1985:69).

- Several categories of giftedness are not addressed in identification procedures.
- Equality in education equity is not upheld in the identification of significant subpopulations.
- Identification instruments are used to identify categories of giftedness for which they were not designed.
- Instruments and procedures are used at inappropriate stages of identification.
- Multiple criteria are combined inappropriately.

Coleman (1985:93) points out that if standardised tests are used in the conventional manner, many culturally different children will probably not be identified as gifted. Nurcombe (1976:10-11) mentions numerous problems that hamper the application of Western intelligence tests to other ethnic and cultural groups. These include:

- Obvious language difficulties that cannot be corrected by direct translations.
- Correct performance in the usual test requires exposure to a common educational system.
- The inappropriate combination of multiple criteria.

According to Fishman et al (1967:157), standardised tests present three principal difficulties when they are used with culturally different or disadvantaged minority groups. They stand as follows:

- They may not provide reliable differentiation in the range of the minority group's scores.
- Their predictive validity for minority groups may be quite different from the predictive validity for the standardisation and validation groups.
- The validity of their interpretations is strongly dependent upon an adequate understanding of the social and cultural background of the group in question.

Mwamwenda (1993:277) cites the research findings concerning the difference in IQ scores between black and white children in the USA: blacks score about 10 to 15 points below the average for white Americans. To explain the difference, he gives the following reasons:

- IQ tests were developed by middle-class whites especially for children of the same class.
- Black children have not been exposed to situations where they can acquire the skills measured by such IQ tests.
- Black children do not have the motivation to do their best on such tests.
- Black children do not respond positively when tests are administered by whites.
- Black children often lack self-confidence and self-esteem.
- The English spoken by blacks does not facilitate their performance, especially on the verbal component of the IQ tests.
- IQ tests do not measure black children's talents and experience which are clearly demonstrated in their way of learning, reasoning and solving problems in an environment that is not only challenging, but even often threatening.

Wallace (1988/89:108) criticises the use of intelligence tests, pointing out that they are designed to measure and predict learners' abilities and skills on certain aspects of school-based learning. She further states that IQ tests are based on a Western style, middle-class curriculum which prepares learners for a traditional academic university education.

It is argued that although IQ tests limit giftedness to academic achievement, they are fair indicators of the extent to which a child will achieve in the academic sphere. Wallace (1988/89:108) goes on to stress that this emphasis on precise definition measurement fails to take into account the following:

- The global and developmental nature of intelligent and creative behaviour.
- The adaptability of any learner in an optimum learning environment.
- The need for all learners to experience a curriculum that is personally enriching and thus provides opportunities for all learners to demonstrate "giftedness" and "creativity" in many spheres at different times in their development.
- The need for an education system that emphasises the growth of all learners as integrated and fully functioning individuals and as worthwhile contributing members of community.

The current identification procedures present major difficulties when attempting to identify disadvantaged and culturally diverse gifted children. These difficulties are perpetuated by the reliance on the use of teacher nominations and use of IQ cutoff scores. Indeed, the current definitions of giftedness usually place great emphasis on standardised achievement tests or ability tests (Tonemah & Brittan, 1985; Zappia, 1989; Barkan & Bernal, 1991; Rogers & Oppenheimer, 1991; Seeley, 1993; Levine, 1995; Sisk, 1996). The use of IQ only in identification reduces the multifaceted, complex phenomenon called giftedness to a single factor (Frasier 1991a:235). Rather, each decision concerning a gifted child should be made in light of all available data (De Haan & Havighurst 1961:44).

Gardner and Ramos-Ford (1997:58) echo these views in their discussion on "intelligence-fair" assessment. They write that most tests rely on the child's language and logical-mathematic capabilities *as a means of tapping capability in other domains*. Gardner and Ramos-Ford (1997:58) are working

towards an assessment battery that does not "confound intelligences". For example, they do not support the habit of testing a child's understanding of numbers through a verbal exchange: "If Tom has two apples and Emma has three, how many apples do they have altogether?" Instead the child may be required to play a board game which elicits a demonstration of understanding of number concepts and number manipulation.

This approach holds promise for identification of giftedness within domains of knowledge. Unfortunately it is not yet freely available as research and development continues.

Frasier (1991a:235) calls for the reevaluation of current practices if there are to be improvements in the identification of culturally disadvantaged gifted children. The focus should be on non-traditional identification measures that could tap an individual's potential for high achievement.

7 THE USE OF NON-TRADITIONAL MEASURES IN THE IDENTIFICATION OF CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED GIFTED CHILDREN

Non-traditional methods are not categorised anywhere. They describe all attempts to identify gifted children without using standardised tests. Typically, they include multiple measures over time (O' Tuel, Swanson & Elam, 1997:532-535). This section investigates non-traditional measurement instruments and/or approaches that are used with culturally disadvantaged children.

Richert (1985:70) believes identification procedures should reflect current research and eliminate inequity by using a variety of methods of identification. Giftedness should be viewed as comprising many dimensions. Measures that go beyond academic achievement must be used to find learners whose abilities are not indicated by tests and school performance. This means that both informal and formal data must be used, and that such data be valid.

Some recommended instruments for use in disadvantaged populations are:

- Scales for Rating Behavioral Characteristics of Superior Students (Richert 1991:89)
- System of Multicultural Pluralistic Assessment (SOMPA) (Matthew et al 1992:346-348)
- Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (Richert 1991:89)
- Portfolios (Valeri-Gold, Olson & Deming 1992:299-302; O' Tuel, Swanson & Elam 1997:525)
- Mitchell's Gifted/Talented Student Behavioral Scale (Mitchell 1988:124)
- Frasier Talent Assessment Profile (F-TAP) (Frasier 1991a:239-242)
- The Overexcitability Questionnaire (Piechowski & Colangelo 1984:80-88)
- Authentic Performance Tasks; such as problem solving, interviews and other observations (O' Tuel, Swanson & Elam 1997:535)

It may be relevant at this stage to discuss positive traits and characteristics of giftedness exhibited by children who are affected by cultural diversity, socioeconomic deprivation, educational deprivation and other factors.

Curry (1981:15) indicates that black people in both Africa and America share characteristics which point to certain cultural uniformities and commonalities. Based on the findings of Curry's research, and considering that the South African blacks, in particular Vhavenda school children, are culturally disadvantaged and socioeconomically deprived (like black Americans) the positive traits and characteristics of giftedness shown by disadvantaged gifted children could, with caution, also be applied to determine potential giftedness among Vhavenda school children.

Although identification instruments and procedures designed for these disadvantaged children could be used for identification of gifted Vhavenda school children, it should be kept in mind that the findings of research do not overrule the fact that differences are evident in every population group (Kokot 1992:165).

Gallagher and Kinney (in Frasier 1991b:25) maintain that gifted learners from all cultures hold the following mental talents in common:

- the ability to meaningfully manipulate some symbol system held valuable in the subculture
- the ability to think logically, given appropriate information
- the ability to use stored information to solve problems
- the ability to think by analogy
- the ability to extend or extrapolate knowledge to new situations or unique applications.

In Chapter 2, section 4.2.4, paragraph 2, it is shown that the Vhavenda traditional education was full of use of symbols which emphasised the values and norms of their culture. The information discussed in that paragraph suggests that the Vhavenda people have the mental abilities that match those mentioned above. It can therefore be assumed that certain Vhavenda would possess these abilities at levels that could be classified as "gifted".

Shade's (1978:80-86) studies of black high achievers revealed that they:

- were goal oriented
- possessed great confidence
- felt positive about themselves
- felt in control of their destiny
- had high levels of aspirations
- possessed confidence in their ability to accomplish their

goals

- were highly original and creative.

Hilliard (1976:35) developed the "who" and "O" checklists which were designed to screen giftedness in black populations. These checklists reflected his synthesis and evaluation of the learning styles exhibited by children from black American backgrounds. The characteristics on the checklists are that black American people:

- tend to view things in their entirety and not in isolated parts
- seem to prefer inferential reasoning to deductive or inductive reasoning
- tend to prefer novelty, personal freedom and distinctiveness
- tend to approximate space, number, and time instead of aiming for complete accuracy
- appear to focus on people and their activities rather than on objects
- have a keen sense of justice and quickly perceive injustice
- in general tend not to be "word" dependent, but are proficient in nonverbal as well as verbal communication.

Sisk (1988:140) points out that it is important to take the positive traits of the gifted among the disadvantaged and use these as general screening devices and as part of a comprehensive identification procedure. Such positive traits include:

- high mathematical ability
- alert curiosity
- independence of action
- initiative, anxious to do new things
- fluency in nonverbal communication
- imagination in thinking
- learning quickly through experience

- retaining and using ideas and information well
- showing a desire to learn in daily work
- originality and creativity in thinking
- varied interests
- responding well to visual media
- ability to generalise learning to other areas and to show relationships among apparently unrelated ideas
- resourceful ability to solve problems by ingenious methods
- imaginative story telling, language rich in imagery
- mature sense of humour
- responsive to the concrete.

According to Spicker (1992:61), positive characteristics of the disadvantaged rural gifted children are that they:

- may show exceptional ability in one subject and average to below average in others.
- have written products that may be of high quality in content but of poor quality in grammatical form, spelling, and handwriting.
- are more likely to demonstrate their strength outside the classroom, e.g. auto and tractor repair, knowledge specific to their rural environment, creativity related to 4-h projects, talent in music and performing arts.
- are likely to perform better on nonverbal than verbal tests.

Torrance (1989:271) indicates that blacks possess the following positives or characteristics:

- ability to express feelings and emotions
- ability to improvise with common materials
- articulateness in role playing and story telling
- enjoyment of and ability in visual arts
- enjoyment of and ability in creative movement, dance and

dramatics

- expressive and colourful speech
- fluency and flexibility in nonverbal media
- enjoyment of and skill in small-group (cooperative) learning and problem solving
- responsiveness to the concrete
- responsiveness to the kinesthetic (movement)
- expressiveness of gesture and body language
- humour
- richness of imagery in informal language
- originality of ideas in problem solving and invention
- creativity

Mitchell (1988:164-165) gives the following indicators which he believes are characteristic of the culturally different gifted children. These children:

- possess keen powers of observation
- enjoy intellectual activities
- are interested in cause and effect relationships
- exhibit a questioning attitude
- display an intellectual curiosity
- enjoy doing things in new ways
- have good verbal abilities
- like to work on complex problems
- concentrate well
- are interested in creative endeavours
- are fluent in idea development
- are able to elaborate on ideas
- experiment with ideas and hunches
- have a strong self-concept
- learn from mistakes and/or failing situations
- tolerate ambiguity
- are resourceful
- have a good imagination
- have an advanced vocabulary for age or grade level
- possess much information
- ask provocative questions

- like to attempt difficult tasks
- have a good reasoning ability
- catch on quickly
- retain and use new ideas and information
- work well independently
- become absorbed in tasks
- enjoy challenges
- adapt readily to new situations
- are social leaders
- have ability in fine arts and/or practical art
- display mature judgement
- transfer learning from situation to situation.

According to Renzulli and Hartman (in Mitchell 1988:165), culturally different minority gifted children:

- are often bored with routine tasks
- are interested in "adult" problems such as religion, politics, race, and so on
- are self-motivated
- require little direction from teachers
- are uninhibited in expressing opinions
- are individualistic
- enjoy the aesthetic characteristics of things
- do not fear being different
- carry responsibilities well
- enjoy being around other people
- enjoy athletic participation
- have many interests.

The usefulness of these positive descriptors, traits and characteristics displayed by gifted black Americans in the screening and identification of potential giftedness among Vhavenda school children is limited since every subculture has certain areas or aspects which are emphasised over others. Some areas of differences are:

- environmental factors

- language
- sex role stereotyping
- life goals of children
- teacher-learner relationships.

The literature findings indicate that some of the descriptors and characteristics listed above match the characteristics and behaviours displayed by traditional Vhavenda children and their families (Chapter 2, section 6.8).

8 SYNTHESIS

It has been established that Vhavenda school children are seen as a minority cultural group within the larger South African context, and one which is additionally disadvantaged in terms of socioeconomic level, education and geographic isolation. However, definitions of giftedness do exist which are broad enough to encompass culturally different and disadvantaged children.

Vhavenda families show characteristic behaviours that may be described as factors positively influencing the development of giftedness, which is observed in many Vhavenda children. The problem of identifying gifted children is not unique to Venda. Many communities around the world have produced lists of indicators of giftedness in order to facilitate such identification since teachers and parents remain uncertain about identifying characteristics.

In order to synthesise the research reported this far, the following attempts to integrate the definitions of giftedness considered relevant for this study as well as the lists of identifying characteristics used with disadvantaged children.

Tannenbaum's view of giftedness (section 3.2.6 of this chapter) refers to, amongst others, general abilities, special aptitudes and non-intellective aspects. These are considered by the researcher as being highly relevant for

identifying giftedness. Gardner's Multiple Intelligences Theory (MIT) (section 2.2.5 of this chapter) describes certain intelligences which can be considered as special aptitudes, in terms of Tannenbaum's view. Renzulli's (section 3.2.6.4 of this chapter) emphasis on motivation (task commitment) and Dabrowski's focus on overexcitabilities (section 3.2.7 of this chapter) can be merged with Tannenbaum's non-intellective aspects.

The following classifies the items on the lists of characteristics of disadvantaged children (section 7 of this chapter) in terms of these theories:

8.1 Special aptitude

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- demonstrate their strength outside the classroom, eg auto and tractor repair, knowledge specific to their rural environment, creativity related to 4-h projects (Spicker 1992)
- master one subject yet achieve at levels that are average or below average in others (Spicker 1992)
- perform better on non-verbal than verbal tests (Spicker 1992)

8.2 Gardner's intelligences (or special aptitudes)

8.2.1 Linguistic

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- produce written products that may be of high quality in content but of poor quality in grammatical form, spelling and handwriting (Spicker 1992)
- display imaginative story telling, and language rich in imagery (Sisk 1988; Torrance 1989)
- have good verbal ability (Mitchell 1988)

8.2.2 Logical-mathematical

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- think logically, give appropriate information (Gallagher & Kinney in Frasier 1991b)

8.2.3 Visual-spatial

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- show ability in fine arts and/or practical art (Mitchell 1988; Spicker 1992)
- enjoyment of the ability in visual arts (Torrance 1989)

8.2.4 Musical

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- show talent in music (Spicker 1992)

8.2.5 Bodily-kinesthetic

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- exhibit creative movement, dance and dramatics (Torrance 1989)
- show expressive gestures and body language (Torrance 1989)
- enjoy athletic participation (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988)

8.2.6 Interpersonal

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- are social leaders (Mitchell 1988)
- enjoy being around other people (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988)

8.2.7 Intrapersonal

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- feel positive about themselves (Shade 1978)

- possess confidence in their ability to accomplish their goals (Shade 1978)
- have a strong self-concept (Mitchell 1988)
- do not fear being different (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988)

8.3 Nonintellective aspects/factors

8.3.1 Motivation

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- show goal-oriented behaviour (Shade 1978)
- show a desire to learn in daily work (Sisk 1988)
- have varied interests (Sisk 1988)
- enjoy doing things in new ways (Mitchell 1988)
- like to attempt difficult tasks and complex problems (Mitchell 1988)
- are individualistic (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988); work well independently (Mitchell 1988); independence of action (Sisk 1988); require little direction from teachers (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988)
- carry responsibilities well (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988)
- are self-motivated (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988)

8.3.2 Overexcitabilities

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- show a keen sense of justice and quickly perceive injustice (Hilliard 1976)
- show a mature sense of humour (Sisk 1988)
- express feelings and emotions (Torrance 1989); are uninhibited in expressing opinions (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988)
- have a good imagination (Mitchell 1988)
- enjoy challenges (Mitchell 1988)
- are often bored with routine tasks (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988)

- are interested in "adult" problems; that is, religion, politics, race, etc. (Renzulli & Hartman in Mitchell 1988)
- have keen powers of observation (Mitchell 1988)

8.4 **General ability**

Disadvantaged gifted children:

- meaningfully manipulate some symbol system held valuable in the substructure (Gallagher & Kinney in Frasier 1991b)
- use stored information to solve problems (Gallagher & Kinney in Frasier 1991b)
- extend or extrapolate knowledge to new situations or unique applications (Gallagher & Kinney in Frasier 1991b)
- view things in their entirety and not in isolation (Hilliard 1976)
- are generally not "word" dependent, but proficient in nonverbal as well as verbal communication (Hilliard 1976)
- learn quickly through experience (Sisk 1988)
- retain and use ideas and information well (Sisk 1988)
- improvise with common materials (Torrance 1989)
- show originality of ideas in problem solving and invention (Torrance 1989)
- are able to elaborate on ideas (Mitchell 1988)
- learn from mistakes and/or failing situations (Mitchell 1988)
- ask provocative questions (Mitchell 1988)
- have good reasoning ability (Mitchell 1988)
- catch on quickly (Mitchell 1988)
- retain and use new ideas and information (Mitchell 1988)

In Chapter 4, the empirical research will be planned in order to test whether potentially gifted Vhavenda school children show these characteristics or not. In addition, the research will be designed to investigate whether the high ability of the subjects of this study is influenced by those factors in the family which are said to be conducive to the development of giftedness.

CHAPTER 4 : RESEARCH DESIGN

1 FORMULATION OF THE PROBLEM

From the exploration of the problem, supported by the information gained in the literature study, the following question needs to be answered:

What factors upheld by both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda:

- (a) define the Vhavenda sociocultural context, and
- (b) influence the development and manifestation of giftedness?

2 AIMS OF RESEARCH

The general aim of this research is to investigate the factors that influence the development and manifestation of giftedness either positively or negatively in school children from both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda families.

The investigation will be essentially directed at:

- a) Identifying the characteristics or behaviours that tend to be commonly found in families of Vhavenda gifted children.

In Chapter 3, section 4.1.1, the characteristics which are commonly found in families of gifted children are given. Clarification is needed as to whether these are shown by families of culturally disadvantaged Vhavenda children.

- b) Identifying traditional factors which are still maintained today by traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda

school children and their families, and how these factors influence their giftedness.

The factors considered significant in the traditional Vhavenda culture for raising children which also influence the development of giftedness are briefly given in Chapter 3, section 4.1.2.

- c) Identifying recent factors and how they influence giftedness in both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children.

Chapter 3, section 4.1.3, gives the recent factors that influence academic performance of Zulu children. It will be determined whether these recent factors also apply to the Vhavenda or not.

- d) Determining whether any cohesion exists between the characteristics or behaviours that are said to be displayed by culturally disadvantaged gifted children and those displayed by the traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children who are the subjects of this study.

In Chapter 3, section 8, characteristics of giftedness displayed by the culturally different minority groups are listed. This study will investigate whether these characteristics are displayed by Vhavenda children, and to

- e) establish whether traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children display Gardner's seven intelligences.

The characteristics displayed by children who are gifted in one or more of Gardner's seven types of intelligences, are given in Chapter 3, section 2.2.5.

- f) Identifying the factors that negatively influence giftedness of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children.

The factors that negatively influence the development and nurturance of giftedness in children are discussed in Chapter 3, section 4.2. It will be determined whether or not the subjects of this study are also influenced by these factors.

3 HYPOTHESIS

Chapter 2 focussed on the historical and sociocultural background of the Vhavenda people. The findings regarding the sociocultural background of the traditional Vhavenda, reveal that they recognised and encouraged giftedness for the benefit of the entire ethnic group. Those people who showed outstanding performance in a certain area were given names that defined their expertise (sections 3.4 & 3.8). They emphasised learning by imitating and the apprentices were accorded an opportunity to work on their own. The emphasis was placed on a strong drive towards excellence, developing self-reliance and self-confidence. The values, norms, beliefs and customs upheld by the traditional Vhavenda people were also discussed.

Chapter 3 reported the findings from the literature concerning the definition, identification, development and manifestation of giftedness in culturally diverse and disadvantaged groups. Gardner's multiple intelligence theory was also discussed. The factors and characteristics revealed by gifted children and their families were also investigated.

Wallace (Shaughnessy 1994:97) proposes that certain cultural variables play a role in giftedness, and therefore require investigation. Because the culture of Japan is different from the culture of Denmark and the culture of Africa differs from that of China, it is important to examine the cultural

factors of a specific ethnic group which play a role in the "big picture" of giftedness.

On the basis of these literature findings, the hypothesis is given as follows:

Factors revealed by the families of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children

(a) may be used to define the Vhavenda sociocultural context

(b) influence the development and manifestation of giftedness, and

(c) may be used to identify gifted Vhavenda school children.

In order to understand and correctly interpret giftedness amongst Vhavenda school children, the sociocultural contexts of the traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda people will be examined respectively. That is, this research will try to determine those factors in the lifeworld of rural and urban children that suggest that giftedness is recognised, acknowledged and nurtured in their cultures. Only those aspects of culture and context relevant to giftedness will be examined as Dobbert (1982:56) indicates that it is not easy to examine culture in all its detail for every surrounding context.

4 METHODS OF RESEARCH

4.1 **General**

The method of research to be used is qualitative and takes the form of case studies. Qualitative inquiry "is a generic term for a variety of approaches to educational research and evaluation variously labelled as ethnography, naturalistic inquiry, case studies, fieldwork and participant observation" (Ary, Jacobs & Razavielli 1990:444). The exact use and

definition of these terms vary from user to user and from time to time (Bogdan & Biklen 1992:3). Qualitative inquiry has been found relevant in this study because of its outstanding advantages. These advantages are as follows:

1. "Insider's" perspective. Qualitative inquiry examines human and social behaviour from the perspective of the participants in a certain social setting, for example, a culture, school, community, group, or institution. Qualitative inquirers stress the importance of the interaction between the inquirers and participants' values and beliefs in coming to a meaningful understanding of human experience (Ary et al 1990:445-446).

2. Concern for context. Qualitative inquiry is based on the premise that human behaviour is context-bound, that is, it is couched in a particular historical, social, temporal and cultural context. Consequently, people's behaviour is significantly shaped by the setting in which it occurs (Ary et al 1990:447; Bogdan & Biklen 1992:30).

3. Natural setting. Qualitative inquiry occurs in the natural environment of the subjects, and is undertaken without deliberate preconception or restraints. All factors and influences are incorporated into a holistic study of human experience (Ary et al 1990: 447).

4. Human instrument. The chief instrument of data collection is the investigator. Considerable time is spent by the researcher in schools, families and neighbourhoods, talking with people, observing their activities, and reading their documents and written records. Data thus takes the form of words rather than numbers and statistics recorded in field notes, although numerical data may also be used (Ary et al 1990:449; Bogdan & Biklen 1992:29).

5. Qualitative researchers tend to analyse data inductively. A qualitative researcher does not search out data or evidence

to prove or disprove hypotheses he holds before embarking on the study, but rather draws inferences from information that is gathered and grouped together. This process of data analysis is inductive - it proceeds from data to hypothesis to theory. The theory developed in this way is called grounded theory because it emerges from the bottom up rather than from the top down. It emerges from many disparate pieces of collected evidence that are interconnected (Ary et al 1990:450; Bogdan & Biklen 1992:31).

6. "Meaning" is of essential concern to the qualitative approach. A qualitative researcher is interested in the ways different people make sense of their lives. He is concerned with accurately capturing what are called participant perspectives, and focuses on questions like: What assumptions do people make about their lives? What are they experiencing? How do they interpret their experiences? How do they themselves structure the social world in which they live? (Bogdan & Biklen 1992:32).

As stated earlier, the qualitative enquiry in this research will take the form of case studies. This form of research examines individual cases in depth in order to arrive at an understanding of universal principles (Moon 1991:157). Yin (1989:23) describes this as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomena and context are clearly evident; and in which multiple sources of evidence are used".

Case studies often incorporate a variety of qualitative data collection methods. Extensive data must be obtained in order to arrive at an in-depth understanding of the entity being studied (Borg & Gall 1989: 402). Case studies also often attempt to describe the subject's entire range of behaviours and the relationship of these behaviours to the person's history and environment (Ary et al 1990:451).

Mitchell (1984:239) adds that each case study is a description of a specific configuration of events involving a particular set of factors in a certain context at some particular point in time.

The most important advantage of a case study is that it attempts to understand the whole child in the totality of his or her environment. On the other hand, the disadvantage of a case study is that the preconceptions of an investigator can determine which behaviours are observed and which are ignored as well as the way in which the observations are interpreted (Ary et al 1990:452). This is therefore a pitfall to be guarded against in this research.

Another advantage of a case study is that the information recorded in the account may be reanalysed by others either to deepen the analysis or to present an alternative interpretation (Mitchell 1984:241). Mitchell (1984:239) further asserts that a good case study enables the researcher to identify connections between events and phenomena which are theoretically valid and which had not been possible to establish before.

Within the framework of the case studies, the use of life histories cannot be overemphasised. Life histories not only give details of the life of an individual but also illuminate a set of common cultural patterns encountered by both the informant and his or her peers. The two main advantages of life histories are that they add depth to the view of the researcher, who is often on the scene for just a few weeks or a few months, and that they provide the researcher with a broader view than can be obtained by individual observation (Dobbert 1982:146).

4.2 Literature study

Literature that has been consulted in this study can best be grouped into three categories. The first category is educational and ethnographic research. This literature has been consulted in great depth, and the researcher familiarised himself with the ways, principles and guidelines of conducting a valid and reliable research study.

The second literature category is the ethnography of the Vhavenda ethnic group of South Africa. Although the literature reports only limited research on the history and culture of the Vhavenda people as an ethnic group, as much literature as could be found on their sociocultural factors including history, norms and values, beliefs and customs have been studied and discussed in Chapter 2.

The third literature category concerns gifted child education. On this subject, there is a severe lack of studies conducted on gifted child education of black people in South Africa. With regard to Vhavenda school children, it would appear that no research has ever been done. Because of the lack of literature that deals with the education of gifted black children of South Africa, a great deal of reference was made in Chapter 3 to the literature concerning black American gifted children. This American literature served as the starting point for the researcher in his attempt to arrive at a view of gifted child education in South Africa from a black South African perspective.

4.3 Fieldwork

4.3.1 Interviews

4.3.1.1 Conducting interviews

An interview essentially comprises the personal, oral administration of a questionnaire to each member of a sample

(Best & Kahn 1989:201).

One advantage of an interview is that it can, if well conducted, produce in-depth data not possible with a questionnaire. It is also flexible, allowing the interviewer to adapt the situation to each interviewee. The interviewer may also obtain more accurate and honest responses since he or she is able to explain and clarify both the purpose of research and individual questions, thus adding human interaction as a valuable dimension. The interviewer can observe the subject and the total situation in which he or she is responding. It permits the interviewer to follow up leads and thus obtain more data and greater clarity. When the response given is not complete or clear, the interviewer can press for additional information. In meeting face to face, through respondents' incidental comments, facial and bodily expressions and tone of voice, an interviewer acquires information that would not be conveyed in written replies (Van Dalen 1979:158; Ary et al 1990:418; Gall et al 1996:289-290; Gay 1992:231).

The disadvantages of interviews are that, firstly, a subject's responses may be affected by his or her reaction to the interviewer, resulting in either a positive or negative bias (especially when asking about sensitive issues). Secondly, they are expensive and require energy and manpower, while the number of subjects that can be handled is generally considerably fewer than the number of subjects who can be sent a questionnaire. Thirdly, interviewer bias may affect responses: a good interviewer requires a variety of communication and interpersonal relations skills (Gay 1992:231; Van Dalen 1979:158).

According to Best and Kahn (1989:201), in order to establish sufficient rapport it may be necessary to consider sex, race and other characteristics of the interviewer in relation to the interviewee. In the case of this research, the interviewer is a Muvenda with the same cultural norms and

values as the interviewees. The language that is to be used in interviewing is the mother tongue of the interviewer and interviewees, which is Tshivenda. The interview is well suited for literates, illiterates and those with language difficulties.

A semi-structured interview has the advantage of being reasonably objective while still permitting flexibility in coming to an understanding of the respondent's opinions and the reasons behind them. It provides a desirable combination of objectivity and depth and often permits the gathering of valuable data that could not be successfully obtained by any other approach (Gall, Borg & Gall 1996:310).

In this research semi-structured questions will be asked. The interview questions are in English and Tshivenda. The questions in Tshivenda will be checked and brought up to standard by an acknowledged expert in this field (Appendix L).

The interview will be conducted over three sessions with the parents of each subject child. These interviews are included in Appendices A, B and C. Each subject child will also be interviewed over the course of three sessions. Child interview 1, 2 and 3 are found in Appendices D, E and F respectively.

Parent interview 1 (Appendix A) is comprised of questions that deal with the family history. This interview session aims to gather biographical details of each family.

Parent interview 2 (Appendix B) deals with the subject child's details. These are questions aimed at the establishment of the history of the child and the revelation of his/her personality and characteristics of giftedness.

Parent interview 3 (Appendix C) concentrates on the sociocultural setting at home. Questions are aimed at the

identification of family factors that impact on child development. Some questions concentrate on the traditional and modern values maintained in the home, parental involvement in the education of the child, influence of religion and beliefs as well as the impact of socioeconomic conditions at home.

Child interview 1 (Appendix D) focuses on play interests and cultural values. Questions in this session aim to establish the child's play interests and abilities, his or her traditional versus modern orientation in various aspects of play.

Child interview 2 (Appendix E) concentrates on relationships. The questions try to establish the child's relationship formation and position with self, peers, teachers and parents, all of which help in identifying the characteristics of giftedness reflected by the child.

Questions in child interview 3 (Appendix F) aim to establish the political, religious, social and scholastic factors which impact on the child's development and abilities.

The interviewer will seek respondents' consent to record the interviews on tape. The advantages of using a tape recorder in recording interview data for research are that recording reduces the tendency of interviewers to make an unconscious selection of data favouring their biases. Unlike data which is limited to notes taken during the interview, the tape-recorded data can be played back more than once and can be studied much more thoroughly. Tape recordings also make it possible for a person other than the interviewer to evaluate and classify the responses. The interview process is also accelerated because a tape recorder obviates the need for extensive note taking (Borg & Gall 1989:455; Tuckman 1994:247).

The main disadvantage of using a tape recorder is that the interviewees may be reluctant to express their feelings freely if they know that their responses are recorded (Borg & Gall 1989:455). To counter this disadvantage in this research, the interviewer will explain the purpose of the recording in order to reassure the interviewees.

The interviewer will attempt to conduct the interviews according to an internal frame of reference. According to Porter (in Kokot & Wiechers 1991:85-87), an internal frame of reference refers to how interviewees see themselves, how they feel about the situation. An external frame of reference refers to the way in which the interviewer sees the respondent and how the interviewer feels about the respondent's situation. If interviewers conduct the interview from their own frame of reference, they will interpret the data as they imagine it to be and also direct the interview to suit their needs, feelings, attitudes, etc. To conduct an interview according to an internal frame of reference means that the interviewer endeavours to become part of the respondent's lifeworld, and tries to see the problem in terms of the interviewee's frame of reference.

4.3.1.2 Subjects of research

The total number of subjects will be ten grade 8 or 9 (standard 6 or 7) learners. These learners will be selected from the top academic group. Five of these learners will be drawn from schools in urban areas (where modern Vhavenda people are typically found) and the other five will be taken from schools in rural areas (where the traditionally-orientated Vhavenda people are usually found).

Permission will be sought from the Department of Education of the Northern Province to enter schools in order to select and observe children (Appendices J & K). Furthermore, permission will be obtained from parents to involve their children and

themselves in this study. Teachers concerned will also be requested to participate in this study.

4.3.2 Participant observation

In essence, participant observation means that the researcher gathers information by being directly involved in a particular situation or context (Tonkin 1984:215).

Some of the advantages of using participant observation are that, by virtue of being involved in the situation being observed, the participant observer often gains insights and develops interpersonal relationships that are virtually impossible to achieve through any other method. The researcher may function primarily as an observer but may participate enough to gain rapport with the group and develop a better understanding of the group's functions and relationships. Observation allows a participant observer to gain more data than with other methods as there are always things that people do not say publicly, (or do not even know how to say) but which they experience in their common living (Borg & Gall 1989:391; Tonkin 1984:220).

Some disadvantages of observation are that, firstly, it is time consuming and involves smaller samples. Secondly, analysing data and drawing conclusions is not an easy task. Thirdly, observation cannot be the only or even the main process through which data are gathered (Gay 1992: 238-239; Holy 1984:29). Indeed, participant observation "is an oxymoron, a form of paradox which generates meanings as well as permitting different - indeed contradictory - interpretations" (Tonkin 1984:216).

In this study, the researcher will act as a participant observer when he conducts child interviews at the children's respective schools and parent interviews at the parents' homes. The researcher will observe children in the classroom for between one and two hours. Children will also be observed

in their homes where the researcher will be conducting interviews with their parents. Two teachers will also be requested to observe one subject child in order to determine whether that child displays the characteristics of giftedness that appear on the rating scale. The rating scale selected for this purpose is discussed below.

4.3.3 Rating scale

Tuckman (1994:205) describes a rating scale as a device used by an observer to summarise judgement of an observed activity or behaviour. Observers record their observations over a set time span and in this way provide a quantitative estimate of what occurred during that time.

The perception of the observers are subject to many influences, one of which is the halo effect. This occurs when observers rate people they like positively on all scales, thus causing the scales to measure simply the general positiveness of the observer's perception. The rating scale is therefore subject to human error (Tuckman 1994:204-205; Best & Kahn 1989:179).

The rating scale or checklist serves as a guide to enable investigators to record many observations fairly quickly and to avoid overlooking relevant evidence. Checklists also tend to objectify the observations for a uniform classification of data, and some allow researchers to compare data or determine the general condition of the object observed (Van Dalen 1979:164).

Based on literature findings (Chapter 3, section 5.6), it has been established that Vhavenda children are culturally disadvantaged, culturally deprived, educationally deprived and geographically isolated. Researchers agree that disadvantaged and culturally different potentially gifted children are characterised by the descriptors synthesised in Chapter 3, section 8. This research aims to determine whether

potentially gifted Vhavenda school children also display these characteristics. The validity of the opinions of the researchers cited in Chapter 3 will also be tested.

Mitchell (1988:164-165) used indicators that various researchers believe are displayed by culturally different gifted/talented children to draw up a Gifted/Talented Student Behaviour Scale composed of 58 items (Appendix G). If the subject child scores above 70% of the total scores, he or she is then considered to display the characteristics tested.

The characteristics on Mitchell's Gifted/Talented Student Behaviour Scale will be tested by observing those Vhavenda school children who constantly show outstanding academic performance in order to discover if they display these characteristics. The researcher chose to use Mitchell's Gifted/Talented Student Behaviour Scale because its validity and reliability have already been established: it has been used for quite some time and has been effective (Mitchell 1988:164-165). In addition, as already indicated, the characteristics given by Mitchell are very commonly found in lists of characteristics, compiled by various researchers, displayed by culturally disadvantaged gifted children (Chapter 3, section 7).

The checklist for each child will be completed by two teachers who teach and observe the subject child every day in and outside of the classroom. They will be instructed to work together and agree on the score they give a child on every aspect. In order to complete the behavioural checklist for each subject, the teacher will be orientated regarding the use, purpose and importance of the checklist. Emphasis will also be placed on the importance of consistency in completing this checklist.

5 SUMMARY

The research design is presented and discussed in this chapter. The research problem has been delineated and the aim and method of research examined. An hypothesis has been formulated and a qualitative method of research including a literature study, interviewing, participant observation and rating scale, has been decided upon. The findings of this qualitative research are discussed in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5 : RESEARCH FINDINGS

1 INTRODUCTION : SELECTION OF SUBJECTS FOR THE INVESTIGATION

In the initial stages, nineteen adolescents were screened as being suitable subjects for this study. The following steps were followed in the selection of subjects for investigation:

1. Subjects were selected from the urban and rural schools approached and found willing to participate in this research. The grade 8 and 9 teachers were requested to choose two children in each standard who consistently showed high academic achievement.

Of the nineteen adolescents, ten were selected by the researcher for intensive interviewing which included their parents. The selection was made on the basis of the following criteria:

- the subject child should hold promise of high ability on the basis of:
 - * consistently high academic achievement, and/or
 - * teachers' nomination and recommendation
- the subject child together with his or her parents should be of the Vhavenda culture and origin, and should have spent most of their life living amongst the Vhavenda people
- the subject child should be in either grade 8 or 9 (standard 6 or 7) in the 1996 academic year
- the subject child should be between 13 and 16 years old
- the subject child may be either male or female
- the parents should have given permission for their child to participate in the study and be willing to participate in the interviews

Five of the subjects are from an urban area (modern children) and five are from a rural area (traditionally-orientated children).

2. The parents of the nominated children were requested to participate in the research.
3. Intensive interviews took place.
4. The teachers of the children under investigation were requested to observe them for a period of thirty consecutive school days and then complete Mitchell's Gifted/Talented Student Behaviour Scale discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.3.3. Two teachers had to observe each subject child for the period stipulated, after which they had to agree on the score to be awarded to the subject child in every item of the checklist.

The method of selecting subjects for this study is not entirely desirable since subjects are believed to be gifted on the basis of scholastic achievement and on the checklist used by untrained teachers. However, due to the fact that no other recognised methods yet exist for black South Africans, the researcher felt that this was the most suitable alternative.

The researcher conducted three interview sessions of approximately forty minutes each with every subject child and three interview sessions of approximately thirty minutes each with the parents of each subject. A full report will be given on four of the subjects, two from a rural area and two from an urban environment. Following the description of the four detailed case studies is an interpretation of the factors revealed by these gifted children and an analysis of how these factors may influence the development and manifestation of their giftedness.

2 CASE STUDIES

2.1 **Khumbe : Urban area**

Khumbe is the eldest of five siblings. He was born on 15

December 1980. His siblings are: 14 year-old boy, 10 year-old girl, six year-old boy and a one year-old girl. He was born in Thohoyandou, a newly established town founded early in 1979.

Khumbe is a grade 9 pupil at Mbilwi Secondary School, which emphasises and follows the science subjects curriculum. The school takes learners from grade 8 to grade 12. It is situated approximately five kilometres from Khumbe's home in an old but small developing town known as Sibasa.

The teaching staff at the school believe that Khumbe is gifted because:

- his talents are not confined to academic work, but extend to other activities such as sport
- his academic work is consistently of very high standard
- his levels of motivation and determination are outstandingly high.

Khumbe's parents believe that he is gifted because:

- he has been energetic, very active and restless since infancy. He was able to walk and speak earlier than the normal expected age.
- he is very inquisitive and is always busy, either with reading or playing tennis
- he is persistent and always wants to give his best
- he is ambitious and explorative although he is short-tempered and gets involved in many fights.

Khumbe's academic record when he passed grade 8 is as follows:

Tshivenda	B
Afrikaans	B
English	B+
Maths	A

History & Geography	A
Biology & Physical Science	A
Agricultural Science	A
Average Symbol	A

Khumbe stays in a well-built and furnished 21 roomed house which includes five bedrooms, two garages, one family room, one lounge, one study, four toilets, three bathrooms, one pantry, one laundry, one kitchen and one dining-room. The house has electricity, running water and a telephone. There are eight members in the family, Khumbe and his four siblings, his parents and a paternal grandfather. His father is 50 years of age and his mother is 38 years old. Both parents were born and grew up in the rural area. They are presently employed.

Khumbe's father is the general manager of the SABC in one of the nine provinces of South Africa. He manages the SABC radio stations and television operations in the province. He holds a BA(Hons) degree in African languages and a teaching diploma in library science. He was promoted several times before reaching this position. He started as a teacher and later moved to the broadcasting world as a radio announcer. He was then appointed as the manager of a new radio station that had just started.

During the time of the Republic of Venda government, he became the director general of the Department of Post and Telecommunication. At this time he was a part-time lecturer in African languages at the University of Venda. Before attaining his present position, he was acting postmaster general. He mentions that he derives satisfaction from performing his duties. He is also determined to face all challenges that he is confronted with at his place of work. His hobbies are watching soccer, television and movies, as well as playing cards for pleasure.

During his school days, Khumbe's father usually passed with symbols A, B or C and he served as a class prefect and chief prefect of the whole school. The five siblings of Khumbe's father are all professionals.

Khumbe's mother has passed grade 10 and has done a computer diploma. She works at a local radio station as a clerk. She is busy doing grade 12 on a part-time basis. She enjoys music more than any sport. Khumbe's paternal grandfather was a business person who operated a general dealer shop and was a minister of religion in one of the African churches. He liked art and could carve objects from trees.

When growing up, Khumbe was exposed to Western toys like motor cars, bicycles, puzzles, balls and sound instruments. He could even fashion cars from scraps of tin and wires. His parents provided him with toys that suited his development and level of activity. He played soccer with other children in the street. He participated in *mudzumbamo* (hide and seek) and *khadi* (rope skipping).

During the week Khumbe goes to bed at approximately 20h00 and during the weekends at about 21h30. Before going to bed during the weekdays he does his school work. Khumbe usually gives himself more time to watch television during the weekends. On television he watches classical and gospel music programmes. He also watches news and sports activities like tennis and soccer. His daily routine includes studying, watching television, sports practice and looking after the flower garden at home.

Khumbe also enjoys traditional Tshivenda music which he usually listens to on the local radio station. He feels that cultural music and activities uphold the Vhavenda ethnic group and add to their pride as a nation, although he has never had an opportunity of being actively involved in cultural dances and music. He has taught himself to play a musical keyboard.

The traditional games that he participates in are *mufuvha* and *muravharavha*. He also plays tennis and volleyball, participates in dancing and aerobics. Till recently there has been a club to which he belonged that concentrated on dance, aerobics and karate. He dropped this activity after being engaged in it for a long period. He also gave up boxing which he tried for only a short time. He is a participant in the environmental awareness project which involves making people aware of the environment, and encouraging them to keep their towns clean. Khumbe has already received two medals of excellence on this project.

As a tennis player, Khumbe has won tournament prizes. The first trophy was presented to him as a runner-up in the 1995 finals of the under fourteen Far North tennis tournament and the second was given to him when he and his partner won in the doubles division of this tournament. Khumbe has also received several floating trophies for his academic achievements. He enjoys solving mathematical problems and Maths is one of his favourite subjects at school.

Khumbe's parents make it a priority to provide their child with the necessary educational opportunities, including sporting equipment and facilities. Although there is no computer at home, Khumbe knows the basics of its operation. He gained this knowledge from the computer at his friend's house. He also concentrates on playing television games.

Khumbe believes that the Vhavenda people should develop and help one another economically as he feels that they are undermined by other ethnic groups. When a Muvenda person progresses in any remarkable sphere of life, he feels proud and his determination is strengthened. This encourages him to study with persistence and to aim for high positions and status in life. Khumbe feels that if he could change himself, he would increase his self-esteem so that he would not feel

inferior to other people but would feel on par with those who are regarded as superior in life.

It is Khumbe's understanding that Vhavenda parents should respect the feelings and choices of their children. As parents, they may expect their children to do certain things or behave in a certain way while the children themselves do not find it acceptable to behave that way. With regard to choosing a marriage partner, it should be left to the young person to decide on his or her own.

When it comes to caring for parents, Khumbe understands that, when he starts working, his first priority will be to help his parents and siblings both financially and in other areas because his parents sacrificed themselves for his own good and success.

Khumbe views the maintenance of traditional initiation schools as a way of maintaining culture. However, these schools should be improved in cases where they become dangerous to a person's health. A child should choose and not be forced to attend them.

Khumbe attended a preschool in 1987 and started formal school in 1988. He believes that schools must be multicultural so that pupils can learn about various cultures and ideas. This will enable people to respect someone's culture without undermining it or abandoning it in favour of another one. With regard to his studies, Khumbe does not use a study timetable but schedules his studies according to the demands of that particular week.

In 1994, Khumbe attended an international conference in Johannesburg which concentrated on environmental awareness, where he made friends with a child from Germany and another one from France. They correspond mainly in English, although Khumbe has learnt a bit of the German and French languages.

In his third and fourth year of schooling, he had a tutor who helped to teach him English.

Khumbe's relationship with his classmates is very good. He helps them academically when necessary. He prefers the company of children of his age. He does not like to be in the company of older children as well as those who smoke and drink because he is afraid that they may influence him into doing wrong things.

Khumbe has a strong belief in Christianity, and regularly attends one of the Pentecostal churches. He believes in God and does not believe in witchcraft although he often hears of the acts of witchcraft. He does not believe that any concoction of medicine or the ancestral spirits could influence the intelligence of a person, but that God can help people to study by assisting them to clearly understand the subject matter very fast. He owes thanks to God who has given him the talent of being able to grasp things easily and to succeed.

Khumbe encourages himself with what he regards as his own key statement of success: "Try and fail but don't fail to try". These words were imparted to him by his father. Even though he fails to perform well in certain aspects, he doesn't give up or become discouraged. Even in class, he does not hide his ability and is always open to correction. He enjoys lessons which present him with new information, which helps him to maintain a good relationship with his teachers.

Khumbe has a good relationship with his parents although he feels that they are sometimes strict. He is closer to his mother than his father, who is usually away from home on job schedules. Whenever he encounters a problem, his mother helps him.

Khumbe's parents play an important role in the education and wellbeing of their children, although it was Khumbe rather

than his parents who decided on a career as a medical doctor. His father says: "I want to be my children's role model, that is why in 1989 I stopped drinking and smoking and I don't even want an ashtray to be found inside my house. I want my children to be morally good and be motivated to achieve more than I have achieved in life".

Khumbe's parents have made a financial investment for him and his siblings' future studies. To encourage outstanding performance from all their children, Khumbe's parents have promised that if they come first in their respective classes, they will receive a reward of R1000. Second position receives R500 while third position receives R250.

Khumbe always tells his parents about his achievements and receives congratulations and encouragement from his family members. His parents, especially his father, checks his academic performance in his school work. He communicates with Khumbe's teachers and discusses his progress with them. Khumbe's parents encourage him to ask questions, especially concerning material that he does not understand.

With regard to the culture maintained at home, Khumbe's parents take what they regard as positive from the Vhavenda culture and what they see as being helpful to them from the Western culture. They sometimes expect Khumbe to show respect for the way a Muvenda boy does things. He is expected to take responsibility for looking after his clothes and to see to it that his shoes are polished everyday after school in preparation for the following school day. Self-reliance is encouraged. Khumbe's parents do not always give him money when he asks for it. In instances where they do give him money, they guide him as to how it should be used.

Khumbe's parents believe in corporal punishment to maintain discipline both at home and at school. They do not like the idea of sending children of Khumbe's age to boarding schools which are far away from home, but prefer the children to have

a direct link with home. This allows the parents to raise the children in the way that they prefer and to encourage them to speak and be proud of their mother tongue. They believe that if their children were away from home and spoke very little of their mother tongue, they would be leading an artificial life which they do not like.

Khumbe's involvement with the environmental awareness project has made his parents buy him a number of videotapes on nature conservation. In realisation that Khumbe is explorative, his parents have exposed him to various major cities in South Africa, including Cape Town, Durban, Johannesburg and Pretoria. Their aim is to make him aware of other environments outside his own.

Politics is one of the fields in which Khumbe's interest is limited, although he is aware of all the political changes and implications in our country and elsewhere. He is not a member of any political party.

2.2 Thanya : Urban area

Thanya is a grade 9 learner at Mbilwi Secondary School. She was born on 20 February 1981 at Makonde village. While still an infant, her family moved to a house that had electricity, a telephone and running water.

Thanya was selected by her teachers to participate in this study because she constantly showed high academic achievement.

Her parents believe that she is gifted because of:

- her consistently high academic achievement
- her determination and desire to excel in everything she does
- her early development in speech, reading and writing.

Thanya's academic achievement when she passed grade 8 was as follows:

English	B+
Afrikaans	A
Maths	A+
History & Geography	A
General Science	B+
Biblical Studies	A+
Typing	B
Average Symbol	A

Thanya is the eldest child. Her father is 41 years of age and her mother is 35 years old. Her parents separated while she was still a preschooler. She stays with her father, stepmother and her stepmother's three children. Her step-siblings are an eleven year-old boy, five year-old girl and a three year-old boy.

Thanya's father works at an agricultural cooperation as the marketing director. He is also a businessman who runs a butchery. He is a Christian who holds the position of the chairperson in the committee that controls the local church he attends. In the absence of the minister, he performs the minister's duties, which include delivering sermons in the church. Thanya's father has passed grade 12 and a marketing diploma.

Thanya's mother is a qualified teacher who obtained a three year teaching diploma after completing grade 12. Thanya has rarely had contact with her mother since she separated from her father. Her stepmother has a sewing diploma which she obtained after completing grade 12 and does sewing at home.

Thanya stays in a 14 roomed house which includes five bedrooms, kitchen, study, lounge, family room, dining-room, two garages and two bathrooms with toilets. The house is well

furnished with Western style furniture. It has running water, electricity and a telephone.

When Thanya was growing up, she drew much of her parents' attention, and was a very curious baby. She started sitting, crawling, walking and speaking at an earlier age than expected. Her parents provided her with assorted toys, including balls, dolls, and writing articles, at various stages of her development.

Thanya usually goes to bed at 21h00, as stipulated by her parents. The hours before bedtime are mostly spent on studying. Thanya loves reading and spends most of her time reading poetry and novels. She also reads magazines and newspapers, and finds this activity educational and informative. She sometimes plays netball at school. Thanya enjoys listening to classical and gospel music, preferring music that sends a message to its listeners. She likes listening to news on current affairs and watching films on television.

Thanya does not hide her ability, but has a desire to prove herself. She feels proud of her performance although she would like to do even better. She always shows her school books to her parents who are also interested in monitoring her school work. She obtained a best performance certificate for academic work and often receives the floating trophy for the best learner in the standard which is presented every quarter.

When it comes to relationships, Thanya prefers to be with friends of her own age because she understands that someone older may lead her to do things that are not suitable for her age or that she could lead a younger person to do what is not suitable for that person's age. On the advice of her parents, Thanya does not make friends with more than two people at a time, and would rather drop one for another. She has a sound relationship with classmates although they sometimes

criticise her for her ability. Thanya enjoys discussions that involve all learners in the class. She likes it when learners work together and is always ready to help other learners. Thanya enjoys Maths and feels excited when she solves a mathematical problem on her own or with only limited assistance. She also likes typing, which she did as a subject in grade 8.

Thanya finds her teachers friendly and ready to provide assistance with school work. She is very close to her parents, but especially to her father. She reports: "They are understanding in many cases. Sometimes they are strict but I understand why they are so strict after giving me an explanation". Her parents are very open and explain their reasons for allowing or not allowing her to do certain things. She relates well to her siblings, and feels closer to her eleven year-old brother than the others.

Thanya takes the opportunity to ask questions whenever she does not understand something. She asks her parents to clarify what they say to her. In this regard, she says: "I should understand that there is a time when parents will want me to do things which I do not want to do while giving me a valid reason, like when they restrict me from walking at night, I should accept it because parents aim at a better future". Her parents encourage her to ask questions wherever she does not understand and they are ready to give explanations.

At school, Thanya feels at liberty to raise her hand in class and ask the teacher questions in order to understand better. She also approaches the teachers individually if she needs their help. She feels confident about herself and about what she does.

Thanya's parents play a strong supportive and encouraging role. They provide her with educational opportunities and supply her personal needs. To avoid spoiling her, Thanya's

parents try to first evaluate her needs and wants before meeting them. Thanya's father usually reminds her to stick to her study schedule, and occasionally regulates the time she spends watching television.

To encourage their child, Thanya's parents sometimes promise that if Thanya tops the whole class in the examination, she may choose a gift; however, if she gets any other position, the choice of her gift would be made by her parents. This encourages Thanya to study hard to please her parents and so that she may choose her gift. Sometimes Thanya's father helps her with her school work. Thanya's parents take her and the other siblings on holiday outings. Thanya enjoys this and usually asks her parents to take them somewhere.

With regard to traditional Vhavenda cultural practices, Thanya believes that some practices should be maintained while others need to be done away with. The decision to become involved in certain cultural practices should be left to the person concerned. Thanya strongly agrees with the cultural practices of sharing possessions, the rich helping the poor, parents receiving care and help from their adult children and so on. Concerning the custom of helping her parents once she is working, she says: "I should help my parents without regarding it as a problem because my parents will have sacrificed much for me so that I may achieve my goal of becoming a medical doctor".

Thanya views the practice of parents choosing marriage partners for their children as unacceptable and not to be maintained. She believes that this kind of marriage ends in disaster because the partners do not know and love each other.

Concerning traditional initiation schools, Thanya feels that parents should not compel their children to attend these schools without their consent. Rather, children should be permitted to make their own decisions. Nevertheless, Thanya

agrees that traditional initiation schools maintain part of the Vhavenda culture.

Thanya feels proud when she learns of a Muvenda person who has achieved much in life or who holds a respectable top post in his/her job or in politics, and considers such people to be her role models. She becomes motivated to do the best so that one day she may find herself, a Muvenda girl, holding a prominent post or known for her outstanding achievements.

Thanya, together with her parents and siblings, are members of one of the apostolic churches which they attend on Saturdays. Thanya believes in God and feels that God can help people to remember the subject matter which they have studied.

Thanya believes in witchcraft but she could neither give proof of what she believes nor accept that *mushonga*, traditional medicine, can influence the performance of a person. She believes that ability comes from determination. She regards those who do not perform well as lacking the sufficient determination to achieve.

Thanya does not show any interest in politics although she follows the changes that are taking place in the country.

2.3 Rabe : Rural area

Rabe was born on 28 May 1982 in a rural village in the Lwamondo area. Her father is a school teacher and is 41 years of age. Her mother, a professional nurse, died in 1994. Rabe lives with her father and stepmother. Rabe is the first born of three daughters. She has a sister, born from the same mother, who is eight years old and a three year-old stepsister. This family of six includes Rabe's cousin, and stays in a 10 roomed house which has electricity and running water but no telephone.

Rabe's parents completed school successfully, despite interruptions due to lack of funds from time to time. Both parents usually passed with A or B and sometimes C symbols. Rabe's parents were very interested in reading magazines and newspapers. Rabe's father kept his school books and shows these to Rabe so that she can see how he performed. They are usually used as a source of motivation.

Rabe's father was a professional soccer player in his youth. He was awarded several merit certificates and awards for his performance. During his training as a teacher, he was awarded trophies for being the best student in languages, music and soccer.

Presently he serves as the vice-principal and treasurer of his school. He enjoys carrying out his responsibilities and is proud of his achievements at work. Very few of either parent's relatives are professionals.

Rabe is in grade 8. She travels about 38 kilometres to and from Mbilwi Secondary School. Her parents chose this school for her because it selects children of high academic achievement and its teaching staff is dedicated to helping learners to the best of their ability.

Rabe was nominated to participate in this study by her teachers who believe that she is gifted because:

- her academic performance is consistently very high
- her curiosity and ability to solve problems are outstanding

Rabe's parents believe that she is gifted because:

- she is interested in problems that are beyond her age
- she could read and count before attending school
- she could speak and walk before the average age

Rabe's academic achievement when she passed grade 7 in 1995 was as follows:

Tshivenda	A
English	A
Afrikaans	A ⁺
Maths	A ⁺
History & Geography	A
Biology & Physical Science	A ⁺
Technical Drawing	A ⁺
Religious Education	A
Average Symbol	A ⁺

Rabe's development in various stages of growth was earlier than expected. She was a very active baby, and would break a lot of utensils in the house, which usually annoyed her parents. It came as a surprise to her parents when they realised that Rabe could listen attentively and repeat the words they spoke as she started to do this before they expected it.

Rabe neither attended a preschool or creche as there was none in the area. Rabe's parents taught her to speak a few English words and even phrases as well as to count and to read. They would ask her to read, count and speak in English while recording her on tape. She started formal schooling in 1989.

Rabe's routine work at home includes cleaning the house and washing the dishes. She usually goes to bed at about 21h30. She spends some time watching dramas and films on television and allocates approximately three hours every day to her studies. She also reads as a hobby. During weekends she gets more time for studies and also for watching television. She watches some of the youth programmes, including televised school lessons and music programmes. She also watches the news on television and listens to it on the radio. Her parents usually guide her with regard to the television programmes she may watch.

Rabe enjoys music and has a good singing voice. She usually takes the leading role or solo parts in the choir. She prefers listening to gospel music because she feels that this music draws her closer to God. She avoids disco music because she feels that this type of music may influence her to go to night clubs where young people drink beer, smoke cigarettes, take drugs and engage in sexual activities.

Rabe does not particularly like traditional music. Although she stays in a rural area, she has never really been exposed to it except during her first year of school when they had to sing and dance in a traditional way as a class.

Until recently, Rabe was a member of a youth club in which they sang, imitated other singers and danced. Their aim was to keep themselves busy and avoid roaming the streets of their village. They had been using a community school classroom to perform these activities, until the community stopped them, saying that youth club meetings would defile their minds, make them misbehave and encourage sexual immorality.

The Western toys that Rabe played with were dolls and balls. She also modelled animals with clay. The games she plays now are *khadi* (rope skipping) and *mudzumbamo* (hide and seek).

Rabe reports being bored throughout her primary school phase, always scoring A symbols but never feeling challenged by the work. This prompted her father to send her to a town school where it is assumed that the standard of teaching is higher. Presently, Rabe feels that she is finding the subject matter and the other classmates challenging. Rabe dislikes sitting without doing anything. She enjoys Science and Maths more than other subjects.

With regard to studies, Rabe has a study timetable which she follows regularly. During a test week, she draws up another

timetable that fits well with the preparation for the subjects to be written.

Rabe enjoys reading novels, newspapers and magazines, and finishes reading seven novels within three months. Rabe does not hide her ability, but says that "I am aware that my ability comes from God and I feel happy about it and understand that God wants to do something with me. I study but I also write tests having not studied, yet I pass. I accept that my ability is not common". Over the interview period, Rabe had already received the floating trophy given every quarter to an academically outstanding learner in their class three times.

Rabe regularly attends church. She believes in God and does not believe in witchcraft. She is against visiting traditional healers and would prefer consulting medical doctors instead. In her view, ancestral spirits cannot help people in their academic achievements, although God can. If people ask his help before they study, they will be able to understand and to recall what they study.

Rabe's relationship with her teachers is good, and she does her school work faithfully and with dedication. She enjoys teachers who talk clearly when offering their lessons and those who encourage the learners to ask questions where they do not understand. She does not appreciate teachers who give a fluent and passive lecture. If teachers mix things up in their lesson, she feels urged to indicate her confusion immediately. In some cases she goes to the teacher and requests him/her to clarify not to herself alone, but to the whole class what has been taught previously.

Rabe prefers to be with children of her age because she fears that older children may mislead her by involving her in activities not suitable for children of her age. Although Rabe does not always experience criticism from her peer group, she has sometimes been told that teachers favour her

and therefore award her more marks than she deserves. Some pupils from higher classes come to her for help in certain subjects and she is amazed when she finds that she can easily solve the problems they bring to her.

Rabe views mixing with other children of various cultural groups at school as very important, as one would learn about the cultures of other people. This helps people to refrain from criticising other cultures due to lack of knowledge about them, and will promote respect of other cultures in children.

Rabe feels that traditional initiation schools should be maintained, and that the Vhavenda culture should not be done away with in favour of the Western culture. Anyone who likes to attend such schools should do so at his/her own will. Rabe, however, does not wish to attend these schools at all.

Rabe is of the opinion that children should obey their parents but that they should also be allowed to give their views and to explain why they sometimes behave in the way they do. Children should be given a hearing before judgement is passed on them. If there is something that children do not understand, they should ask for an explanation from their parents in a way that shows respect. Disagreements at home should never make children to decide to leave home; rather, children should seek solutions with their parents.

Children should be allowed to make their own choices with regard to marriage partners. Parents should understand that it is their children's right to choose whomever they want for marriage and should accept their children's choices.

Rabe intends to become a medical doctor. She dreams of living with her husband and children in a beautiful house. She looks forward to becoming a role model in her community. She would like to start a learning project to combat illiteracy by

teaching reading and writing as well as teaching study skills to learners.

When a Muvenda person becomes successful in any sphere of life, he/she becomes a role model for Rabe. She is encouraged and feels that, as a Muvenda child, she can make it to the top as people of other cultural groups are doing. As a result, she becomes motivated to work hard towards achieving the best of her potential.

Rabe looks forward to building a house for her parents who struggled to finance her studies. Although she would not like to finance all of her siblings in their studies, at least one of them would receive her full support financially and in other areas. The sibling who receives help should, in turn, help others.

Rabe is not a member of any political party, although she is aware of what is going on in the political arena of her country and other countries. Should she get involved in politics, she would strive for equality for all.

Rabe's relationship with her father is very good, and she feels free to discuss problems with him. The relationship with her stepmother is not always good, and Rabe feels that there are issues which she cannot discuss with her. Nevertheless, both her parents encourage her to ask questions regarding things which she does not understand. Her parents check her school work at all times. In several cases it is Rabe who invites her parents to look at some of her outstanding work. In order to encourage her, the parents usually promise to celebrate her birthday by hosting a party.

Rabe's father in particular controls her television watching, so that she has ample time for her studies. Her father also helps her with her school work. He does not provide answers to the problems but rather give guidelines regarding how she may arrive at the right answer.

Rabe's parents encourage her to undertake educational tours so that her knowledge of various environments can be broadened. They emphasise discipline which goes hand in hand with guidance, friendship but also strictness when necessary. If Rabe goes wrong, her parents do not hesitate to rebuke her and even to apply corporal punishment if her offence warrants it.

In the beginning of 1996, Rabe was elected the class prefect. When she realised that much of her time was spent on class duties, she spoke to her father who requested the principal to allow her to step down from this position.

Rabe's father feels proud when teachers and other people comment on or talk about the outstanding ability of his child. He feels that she is uplifting him and the family as a whole.

When Rabe is asked to point out things which encourage her to perform to the best of her ability, she says: "I am encouraged to perform at my best when I think of how excellently I performed even when I started attending school. I have realised that there is something special in me because even at the time when I did not know of studying, I was performing excellently. When other classmates challenge me, I feel very much triggered to do my best. My father also inspires me when he tells me of how much education helps and changes a person".

2.4 Shoni : Rural area

Shoni is a grade 9 boy. He was born on 4 September 1981 at Muledane village and attends the Sam Mavhina Secondary School in this village.

Shoni's teachers selected him for participation in this study based on the following:

- his academic achievement is constantly high
- he shows creativity in speech and writing
- he displays innovative ideas for playing and/or toy making.

His parents see their child as:

- an outstanding person in many areas, including ability in sport, taking responsibility and cooperating well with other people.

Shoni's academic achievement when he passed grade 8 was as follows:

Tshivenda	B ⁺
English	A
Afrikaans	A
Maths	B
History & Geography	A
General Science	A
Agricultural Science	A ⁺
Average Symbol	A

Shoni is the second child of three. He lives with his mother, father, two sisters and his elder sister's child in a temporary three roomed house near Thohoyandou. The house has no electricity or telephone. There is a water tap in the yard.

Shoni's father did not complete his secondary school education and works in Pretoria, which is 454 kilometres from Thohoyandou. He comes home once every several months. Shoni's mother passed grade 12, and earns a living as a vegetable and fruit hawker in Thohoyandou town.

The most remarkable behaviour shown by Shoni while still an infant was curiosity. Although Shoni was not a very active

baby, he never had any problems in crawling and walking, which he did well within a short space of time. He also started speaking earlier than others of his age.

During his early childhood years in Muledane village, Shoni shaped clay making models of cars, people and animals. He also used wires to make models of various cars. Together with other children, they put together all the models of toys they had made and everyone would play with the one he liked most.

Shoni watches the news and sports activities such as boxing and soccer, music programmes and comedies on television. He does not show much interest in traditional music but likes it for the fact that it prevents the disappearance of Vhavenda tradition. He also listens to music programmes on the radio. Shoni reads newspapers which he gets from his friends.

Shoni participates in traditional games such as *mufuvha* and *muravharavha*, although his favourite game is soccer. Shoni's afterschool chores include scrubbing the floor of his family's house. Shoni feels he must help his parents because they help him in many things.

Shoni believes that children should obey their parents. If there is something they do not understand, they should ask their parents for further explanation in a respectful way. However, they have to obey their parents whether they understand or disagree with what they have said or not. He accepts that parents should choose marriage partners for their children, even though it is seldom practised these days. "In my case, if my parents choose a marriage partner for me, I will have to force myself to take her and will be ready to accept everything that happens in our marriage".

Shoni feels that children should not be compelled to attend the Vhavenda traditional initiation schools but that such schools should not be done away with. Vhavenda customs, such as greeting the elderly, should be maintained. Cooperation

amongst the Vhavenda people should be kept intact. Vhavenda people who are rich should help the poor.

Shoni has his own study programme. During the week he usually starts studying at about 18h00 until about 21h00 whereas over the weekend he studies until about 22h00.

Shoni's relationship with other classmates is good. There are about eight learners in the class who compete with Shoni in every test they write. When writing class tests, these learners draw up their own schedule made up of various subjects' marks to find out who comes first in each subject and overall. Shoni always comes first in all subjects, and does not hide his ability. The members of this group help one another in their studies.

There are some classmates who criticise Shoni. They say that he is being helped by *mushonga* (traditional medicine) in his studies. Shoni does not mind when they say this as he knows that he achieves well because he studies and not because of the traditional medicine.

The majority of people encourage and congratulate Shoni on his good performance at school. He finds the subject matter he learns at school very simple, and thinks that other children may do better than him if they study. Shoni's family is very proud of his performance.

Shoni likes to be with children of his own age: he feels that they can share common ideas as they are at the same level of understanding.

The relationship between Shoni and his teachers is very good because he is cooperative, responsible and obeys whatever the teachers tell him. Whenever there is something he does not understand, he asks the teacher to explain clearly.

Shoni shows his parents every test he writes at school. His parents then sometimes promise him something good as a reward. This encourages Shoni to study hard. He believes that his relationship with his parents is always good because he obeys them. His mother sometimes helps him with his school work. His parents fulfil his needs according to what they can afford, and Shoni also understands the limitations of their socioeconomic situation. Shoni accepts that his parents rebuke him when he does something wrong, stating that they do this because they do not wish him to be spoiled.

Shoni's parents accept their son's questioning, although this is contrary to the traditional behaviour of a child. The parents hold the view that if a child understands a situation, there is no need to force him to take responsibility as would be the case when he does not understand.

Although Shoni is not a member of any church, he believes in God. He also believes that a person can use supernatural powers to bring illness to another person. Even though he himself does not consult traditional healers, he believes that a sick person can be healed through treatment by a traditional healer. However, Shoni does not believe that ancestral spirits or medicine can help a person's academic performance; rather, it is studying that determines success. Consequently, Shoni studies hard to achieve his good results.

Shoni is not presently active in politics but hopes to be so after finishing his studies. He wants to participate in politics so that he may influence the government to build more schools for children and more factories to accommodate the unemployed. Shoni is encouraged by this goal to perform well so that in future he may contribute to finding solutions to the country's problems.

Vhavenda people who succeed and occupy high positions in various areas of life encourage and inspire Shoni to do

better so that he may also reach the top. He feels that these people uplift the Vhavenda ethnic group so that it is no longer undermined by other cultural groups.

Shoni wants to become a lawyer. After completing his schooling, he intends to help his family members financially with their studies and look after his parents. He would also like to help members of the community for example, by offering knowledge and expertise to people in need.

3 FACTORS REVEALED BY THE SUBJECTS AND THEIR FAMILIES

The literature findings include the characteristics commonly found in families of gifted children (Chapter 3, section 4.1.1), factors revealed by gifted children and their families (Chapter 3, section 4.1.2), and recent factors revealed by Zulu school children (Chapter 3, section 4.1.3). Some of these factors and characteristics have been found to correspond with the traditional and recent factors revealed by the subjects of this study. Attention will now be given to a detailed discussion of these factors.

3.1 Characteristics or behaviours found in families of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children who show promise of high ability

Chapter 3, section 4.1.1, lists a number of factors which are said to characterise an environment that is conducive for the development and manifestation of giftedness in children. The following characteristics, listed in Chapter 3, were displayed by the families of the subjects of this study.

- Parents accept their children as individuals, are loyal sources of support and openly express acceptance.
- Parental guidance is reasonable, realistic, and appropriate to each child.

- The family tends to be liberal and flexible, but not permissive.
- Parents lead active lives outside of the family and do not rely on their families as the sole or necessary major source of gratification and esteem.
- Parents encourage and monitor progress.
- The socioeconomic status of the subjects' families is moderate.
- Successful learners perceive their families as a major source of encouragement and influence.
- The message they receive from their families as motivation to succeed is: "You must work hard, get an education, and achieve what your parents and grandparents did not".

Each of these characteristics is discussed below:

- a) Parents accept their children as individuals, are loyal sources of support, openly express acceptance

The parents of both the traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda subjects showed support and acceptance of their children. Support was indicated in the provision of educational opportunities, sporting equipment, personal attention, as well as through exposing their children to environments other than their own. These parents openly congratulate their children for their efforts.

The acceptance and support that these subjects receive from their parents create a conducive environment for the nurturance and manifestation of giftedness.

- b) Parental guidance is reasonable, realistic, and appropriate to each child

Eighty percent of both the traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda subjects appear to give realistic and appropriate guidance to their children. For example, Khumbe's parents encourage him to take responsibility for looking after his clothes and to see to it that his shoes are polished everyday after school in preparation for the following school day. In instances where they give him money, they guide him as to how it should be used. Rabe's parents guide her in the television programmes she may watch, while Thanya's parents give reasons for their actions and decisions, indicating instructive interaction which emphasises fairness and reason. Shoni's parents guide him in life in general and in his studies.

The reasonable guidance that parents give to their children creates a safe and secure environment in which giftedness may be nurtured.

- c) The family tends to be liberal and flexible, but not permissive

All the parents interviewed seem to be liberal and flexible, but not permissive. These parents allow their children to ask for explanations to clarify confusion and misunderstanding. Limits exist in all the families interviewed, although these do not seem rigid. Khumbe and Rabe's parents, although liberal and flexible, nevertheless believe in the value of corporal punishment if it is necessary for correction.

Thanya regards her parents as very open with her even though she sometimes feels they are strict. Explanations help her to understand why they limit her in her involvement with certain activities. Shoni understands that his parents rebuke him because they do not want him to be spoiled. Rabe's parents

emphasise discipline which goes with guidance, and believe in balance between kindness and firmness.

The atmosphere created in the families of the subjects allows them to take responsibility for their own actions. They are also encouraged to shun things that may limit the development of their giftedness, such as taking drugs and neglecting academic work.

d) Parents lead active lives outside of the family and do not rely on their families as the sole or necessary major source of gratification and esteem

Ninety-five percent of the parents of the subjects are employed. Appendix M lists the parents' occupations. It appears that they lead active lives in their working places. They obtain gratification and self-esteem from carrying out their duties in their working environments. Khumbe's father indicated his determination in tackling challenges at work and the enjoyment he derives from this. He also emphasised the satisfaction he gets from performing his duties (section 2.1). This is also the case with Rabe's father, who takes pride in and feels fulfilled by the work he does (section 2.3).

e) Parents encourage and monitor progress

The parents of both the traditionally-orientated and the modern Vhavenda subjects monitor the progress of their children. They also congratulate them and offer gifts as incentives or rewards. This is clearly evident in the cases of Khumbe, Rabe, Thanya and Shoni.

This effort by parents positively influences the development of giftedness in these subjects.

f) The socioeconomic status of the subjects' families is moderate

The socioeconomic status of the families of the subjects is moderate in comparison with the average socioeconomic

standing of the Vhavenda people (Chapter 2, section 6.6). This can be deduced from their occupations (Appendix M) and standard of living. Khumbe, Thanya and Rabe live in large houses with running water and electricity and, except in the case of Rabe, there is also a telephone. Their parents can afford to supply their needs.

The parents of gifted children elsewhere occupy professional and managerial status and have an advanced educational status compared to the general population. Appendix M gives the occupations of the parents of the subjects of this study. The majority of them occupy professional and managerial positions which demand an individual of high educational status.

g) Successful learners perceive their families as a major source of encouragement and influence

All of the subjects acknowledged the efforts their parents are making in order to help them succeed in their studies and attain their goals. They indicate that after finishing their studies, a priority will be to look after their family and finance the studies of their siblings. In this regard Thanya says, "I should help my parents without taking it as a problem because my parents will have sacrificed much for me so that I may achieve my goal of becoming a medical doctor". Rabe intends building a house for her parents who will have struggled to finance and encourage her in her studies.

h) The message subjects received from their families as motivation to succeed is "You must work hard, get an education, and achieve what your parents and grandparents did not"

The parents of both the traditionally-orientated and the modern Vhavenda subjects regard their socioeconomic circumstances as a factor that should motivate their children. When parents found that they could not provide for the needs of their children for economic reasons, they emphasised that their children should be encouraged by this bad situation and work hard in order to overcome such

difficulties. Shoni's parents provide for him as far as they can afford and he understands the socioeconomic situation of his family. This stimulates him to set high goals for his future.

The parents of the subjects emphasise hard work and encourage the choice of role models in accordance with the literature discussed in Chapter 3, sections 4.1.2.4 and 4.1.2.6 respectively.

The atmosphere in which the message of hard work is communicated to children contributes to the nurturance of giftedness.

3.2 Traditional Vhavenda factors revealed by the subjects

The factors upheld by the traditional Vhavenda were given in Chapter 2, section 6.8. The interviews reveal that many of these factors are upheld by both more traditionally-orientated (rural) and modern (urban) Vhavenda subjects. Only the following factors, which are of significance to this study, will be discussed:

- Family pride in achievement
- Doing one's best and striving for excellence
- Competition
- Reward for a job well done
- Persistence and hard work
- Choosing role models
- Cooperation - helping one another
- Children to look after ageing family members
- Self-esteem and determination to succeed

a) Family pride in achievement

The traditional Vhavenda people take strong pride in the family's achievements. They value the success of a family or ethnic group as a whole, and consider it important to

maintain the good reputation of their families (Chapter 2, section 3.1).

Based on the observations of the researcher in this study, all the families of these subjects seem to be proud of the achievements of one of their members. Khumbe's family is proud of the tennis trophies he has won, and have displayed these where visitors may see them every time they enter the house through the main entrance. In this way, the abilities of Khumbe are valued and fostered.

With regard to Rabe, her father feels proud when other people admire his child's exceptional ability. It would appear that family pride encourages these children to maintain their levels of achievement.

b) Doing one's best and striving for excellence

The families of the subjects hold the notions of doing one's best and striving for excellence in high esteem. This corresponds with the traditional Vhavenda view that a strong desire to excel is important in order for people to do their best (Chapter 2, section 3.2). This may explain why parents offer rewards and incentives for excellent work.

Because both the subjects and their parents want them to excel in life, they have chosen high-profile, respected careers, such as a medical doctor and a financial manager. It appears that these choices were made by the learners themselves with guidance from their parents, rather than by the parents alone.

In order to achieve the goals children set for themselves, insistence and perseverance are required. Shoni, from a rural area, is motivated to excel and do his best so that, as he puts it, "I can be able to help members of the community with my thoughts and ability". The push to excel from Shoni's point of view is the opportunity to render service to the

community.

Thanya says she is motivated to excel because "whites are said to be better than blacks, so I want to prove that we can be better or we are the same". Thanya also strives to excel and to do her best in order to prove that she can do better than boys. She realises that girls are undermined when compared to boys.

c) Competition

The desire to obtain the highest academic results introduces the aspect of competition among learners at school. The traditional Vhavenda also value healthy competition (Chapter 2, section 3.2). All of the subjects acknowledge the role of competition with their classmates, and report that it influences them to give their best through hard work. Rabe states that she never received any challenge from the classmates and subject matter throughout her primary school phase, and that her enjoyment of school increased when her parents sent her to a school that presented her with a challenge from the other classmates and the subject matter.

Thanya's school report cards show that her performance at Mbilwi Secondary School is better than when she was at Tshikevha Christian School. At Tshikevha Christian School, Thanya recalls that her only competition was one friend, while at Mbilwi Secondary School, she competes with several boys. She enjoys topping them in class. It seems therefore that competition has greatly improved her achievements. It may be inferred that competition, which calls for hard work by gifted children so that they may attain the highest levels of academic achievement, influences the realisation of their giftedness.

d) Reward for a job well done

It is traditional amongst the Vhavenda people to reward

ability that is used for the benefit of the nation or the family. In times of war, the bravest warriors were rewarded before the whole nation for their achievements (Chapter 2, section 3.8).

All the parents of the subjects promise a reward for the best academic achievement. If Khumbe gets an A symbol in the examination, he is promised R1000; for a B symbol he receives R500 while a C symbol is rewarded with R250. This encourages Khumbe to give the best of his ability. Thanya is allowed to choose what she wants only when she tops the class. A lower symbol is rewarded with a gift of her parents' choice as a token of appreciation. Rabe and Shoni are also promised rewards by their parents if they perform better than their average performance.

The reward serves as a motivation for the children, who then persevere, work hard and commit themselves to their work.

e) Persistence and hard work

Ninety percent of the parents of the subjects check their children's academic progress. As indicated earlier, the parents of the subjects encourage them to stick to their study schedule. Rabe's father, for example, may advise her to stop watching television so that she may go and study. Thanya's parents insist on the time they have stipulated for her to study. They also warn her against laziness.

Some parents have set bedtimes for their children, although the time serves as a flexible guideline. This is the case with three of the subjects, including Thanya and Khumbe.

None of the subjects associate high performance with the influence of *mushonga*, witchcraft or ancestral spirits, and rather indicate that success comes through determination and hard work. Even those who believe that God can help in one's

studies emphasise that God can help one remember only after one has studied.

f) Choosing role models

Many of the subjects' parents have professional qualifications (Appendix M). They appear to be role models for their children and instil in them the value of choosing a role model in order to motivate them to achieve as much or more than their role models have.

Khumbe's father would like his children to consider him as a good role model, and encourages them to achieve far beyond what he has achieved academically. He also stopped smoking and drinking so that his children may follow in his footsteps. Khumbe takes his father as a role model and motivates himself by the words of his father, for example: "try and fail but do not fail to try".

Rabe's father also presents himself as a role model for his child. He shows her some of his old school books and tells her of the awards he gets at work. This motivates Rabe to set her own goals. In rendering service to the community, she in turn, wants to be a role model for others.

Members of the community that have performed outstandingly in any field of endeavour also serve as role models. All the subjects indicate that they feel motivated when they find that a Muvenda person has achieved so highly. They also feel that it is possible and good for them to achieve like he/she has done.

g) Cooperation - helping one another

Chapter 3, Section 4.1.2.11 discusses the influence that cooperation has on the development of giftedness in children.

All the rural and urban subjects support the factor of cooperation with other learners as well as teachers. Shoni recalled the time when he made models of various toys and put them together with the models of other boys so that any one of them could play with the toy he liked most. All of the subjects participate in various sporting activities and games where cooperation is the fundamental factor. Some of the subjects like Rabe and Khumbe enjoy teaching or explaining what they know to others.

Thanya indicates that she enjoys classes where learners discuss issues and where she offers help to other learners. The desire of the subjects to help members of the community is revealed when they are asked what they want to be in the future. Rabe points out that she would like to start a community learning project to combat illiteracy, while Khumbe is already involved with an environmental project in which they make the community aware of nature, its preservation and keeping the environment clean.

h) Children to look after ageing family members

The factor that children should look after their family members when they start working is accepted by all informants. Because of the strong factor of sharing to which these children subscribe, they feel that when they start working they should contribute to the care of their immediate family members and other relatives. Also, the subjects see their role as a way of relieving their parents of the financial burden of all of their children. It is also seen as a way of uplifting the family from the depths of poverty.

As indicated in Chapter 2, section 3.1, the firstborn male child in the Vhavenda family grows up being trained into leadership and is made aware that he should look after his parents and siblings. If his father passes away, he adopts a more responsible role because he will also have to take over

the wealth of his father and supply the needs of the whole family.

Sixty percent of the subjects are firstborns who come from families with an average of 3.8 children (Appendix L). Khumbe accepts that his first priority when he starts working will be to help his parents and siblings in all areas of need because he feels that they have sacrificed much for his sake. Rabe also dreams of building a decent house for her parents who have struggled to finance and encourage her in her studies. She would also give full support to one of her siblings. This idea is echoed by all the subjects, even those who are not firstborns.

Giftedness is positively influenced in that children are motivated to succeed in order to help their families, attain their goals and fulfil their ambitions.

i) Self-esteem and determination to succeed

The Vhavenda believe that people who know that they are gifted in a particular area should have self-confidence or high self-esteem in that particular field, whether this be in the field of dancing, playing an instrument or doing pottery (Chapter 2, section 3.2, 3.3 and 3.4). This factor has been found to be upheld by both the traditionally-orientated and the modern Vhavenda subjects in this study.

Parents and teachers in this study give support, recognition of children's abilities and feedback to the gifted children, which contributes towards the establishment of a positive self-concept. As a result, the children develop a strong desire to excel which allows for the development and manifestation of giftedness.

All the subjects show determination to succeed when they spell out their future goals. This is found among both rural and urban subjects.

3.3 Recent factors reflected by subjects

Chapter 3, sections 4.1.2 and 4.1.3 of the literature study, deal with factors revealed by gifted children and their families, and Zulu children respectively. Some of these, listed below, are newly acquired factors reflected by the subjects in this study.

- Achieving the highest levels of scholastic success.
- The desire to broaden knowledge and a love of reading.
- The desire to fulfil one's potential through exploration of the world.
- Encouraging general intellectual questioning.
- The desire to increase personal prestige in the community.
- The value attached to external tokens of success.
- The value placed on prayer for assistance in studies.
- The desire for personal and financial advancement.

Attention will now be paid to each of these recent factors.

a) Achieving the highest levels of scholastic achievement

Ninety percent of the parents of both the rural and urban subjects expect their gifted children to attain high levels of academic achievement. This is evident in that they provide for their children's educational needs, check the children's academic achievement, encourage their children to be at the top of the class, and help and guide them in their scholastic work. As indicated in Chapter 3, section 4.1.2.1, the educational materials which children obtain from their parents are important for their intellectual development. Thus, giftedness in these children is positively influenced.

Some of the parents in the study sent their children to creche and preschool and actively sought out the best schools for them. For example, forty percent of the urban subjects

attended a preschool and creche and could read and write before they started school.

Ninety percent of both the rural and urban subjects seem to receive family support in their studies while seventy percent, predominantly the urban children, also have a suitable learning environment at home. They have their own rooms or study areas with tables and chairs to use for their studies. As discussed in Chapter 3, section 4.1.2.1, the evidence that learning rates can be altered by appropriate educational and environmental conditions suggests that very favourable learning conditions provided in the early years can markedly influence learning rate. This implies that the home conditions of most of the subjects may allow them to achieve at the highest level of their scholastic ability.

The parents get involved in monitoring how learning is taking place at school. Anything that disturbs the child's potential to achieve elicits concern from the parents. After Rabe's father realised that his child's election as the class prefect was interfering with her studies, he approached the principal asking him to relieve her of this responsibility so that she may concentrate intensively on her academic studies. (This was done with Rabe's approval.) To the pleasure of her father, Rabe remained at the top of the class.

Eighty percent of the subjects' parents have planned for their children's tertiary studies, although they allow their children to make their own career choices. Eighty percent of the subjects in this study could indicate a chosen career, and had discussed this choice with their parents. Khumbe's father indicates that since it is his son's choice to become a medical doctor, he has invested in an educational policy for him and his siblings. The knowledge that Khumbe has about this investment is a motivational factor that appears to contribute to his performance at school.

All the subjects maintain a good relationship with teachers and classmates, which indicates that they have learnt to adapt to the values and demands of school. As a result, they are achieving well to the extent of gaining trophies and awards.

b) The desire to broaden knowledge and a love of reading

In this study, all the subjects reveal a love of reading. Rabe, for example, reports that she finishes reading seven novels (not prescribed work) within three months. Like Thanya, much of her time is spent reading magazines and newspapers with a view to gaining knowledge.

A television is found in the homes of the families of ninety percent of the subjects. Consequently, most of the children have the opportunity to watch some television programmes. They concentrate on teaching programmes that deal with the matter of their school subjects, and are also exposed to programmes that show various lifestyles and cultures of different people found around the world. They also become acquainted with and absorbed into the technological developments taking place in the world which are screened on television.

Khumbe's family owns a video machine. His father has bought him many video cassettes about nature because of the environmental awareness project in which Khumbe participates. His father regularly brings home new books to enrich his knowledge.

c) The desire to fulfil one's potential through exploration of the world

Children showing potential also demonstrate a keenness to explore their worlds. The children in this study who showed precocious development of speech and movement also displayed explorative and inquisitive behaviour. Although the

development of the subjects were not formally documented by their parents, seventy percent of the subjects' parents could remember very well that their children's speech and motor development was earlier than the average. Rabe's parents indicated that they realised that Rabe could listen attentively and repeat words from their conversations long before they expected her to. Traditionally, these children, who are hyperactive, restless and inquisitive, are usually called to order as mentioned in Chapter 2, section 3.1.

The subjects from homes with plenty of rooms had the opportunity to explore widely. These children are chiefly from the urban area. Children from the rural area, such as Rabe, lived in a thatched mud hut until she entered grade 5. Such mud huts, with limited modern furniture, did not present the opportunity for exploring a technologically advanced environment, and children are limited to the natural environment. This was also the case with Shoni.

The information regarding the early development of the subjects suggests that they are gifted. Among the rural, traditional Vhavenda people, a child is expected to behave according to expectations, however, these children exceeded these expectation.

In order to promote their children's potential ability, some parents provide opportunities for their children to explore and discover their abilities. They are exposed to various sporting activities and environments and the family supports their activities and provide them with the necessary equipment. Khumbe participates in a variety of sports but excels in tennis, for which he has received several awards. His father buys him the necessary equipment for this sport, thus promoting the development of skill in this area.

All the subjects have come into contact with one or more Western toys when growing up. Every subject's home contains Western technology. The rural children played with more

traditional toys than did their urban counterparts who had significant exposure to Western toys, writing materials and books.

According to the discussion in Chapter 3, section 4.1.2.3, exposure to Western technology (with which both the rural and urban subjects came into contact) stimulates the development of intelligence. It is possible that the more sophisticated the technology in the home, the more likely it is that potential will realise as giftedness.

d) Encouraging general intellectual questioning

In contrast to the traditional practice of virtually never questioning authority, the parents of all the subjects understand and allow questioning. The degree of questioning encouraged by each family differs. It should be emphasised that the urban children are allowed more room for questioning than the rural children.

Rabe is an exception amongst the rural children since she appears to have more freedom to question both her parents or teachers at school. Her father encourages her to ask questions whenever she fails to understand and where she needs more explanation. Amongst the urban children, questioning is strongly encouraged by parents and practised by children. Thanya and Khumbe's parents are always ready to explain what the child doesn't understand.

e) The desire to increase personal prestige in the community

The traditional Vhavenda did not encourage the ideas of developing oneself as an individual. If this was done at all, it had to have certain benefits for the family or ethnic group as a whole (Chapter 2, section 3.6). All subjects of this study seem to have a desire to increase personal prestige. Thanya indicates that she wants to prove herself to everyone and is proud of her achievements. It is her dream,

as a Muvenda girl, to hold a prominent post and to be known in the community for her outstanding and notable achievements.

Rabe would like to become a role model in her community as a medical doctor who stays in a beautiful house with her husband and children, and aims to run a learning project that concentrates on teaching the illiterate to read and write as well as teaching study skills to learners.

Khumbe regards the Vhavenda as people undermined by other ethnic groups. As such, he is determined to study with persistence in order to attain a high position and status in life. He also feels that if he could change himself, he would increase his self-esteem so that he would not see himself as being inferior to other people. Shoni wants to reach the top positions in life and be known in his community as a person who helps people with his thoughts and knowledge.

The setting of such goals positively influences subjects to explore every possible means at their disposal that could activate their abilities and actualise their potential. This promotes the development of giftedness.

f) The value attached to external tokens of success

The traditional Vhavenda used to reward one another with things which they could use or titles associated with certain benefits (Chapter 2, section 3.8).

Similarly, seventy percent of the subjects strive for and are proud of tokens of success such as trophies, certificates, and medals. Khumbe is proud of the two medals of excellence given to him as a participant in the environmental awareness project. He is also motivated by the prize of two trophies given to him for his achievements in tennis. He has always aimed for the floating trophy given every quarter to the academically leading learner in their class.

Both Thanya and Rabe are proud of the floating trophies that they received for the best learner in their grades. The pressure on the subjects to attain these tokens of academic success influences the development of their potential.

g) The value placed on prayer for assistance in studies

Originally, the Vhavenda believed that every success was brought to them by the ancestral spirits (Chapter 2, section 3.9). In contrast, none of the subjects, either rural or urban, associates success with the influence of ancestral spirits or *mushonga* (traditional medicine), although ninety percent associate high performance with the help of God which comes after determination and hard work. Thus the faith in higher beings as an aid to success continues to encourage the development of potential.

h) The desire for financial or personal advancement

All subjects seem to look forward to personal and financial advancement. They envisage careers that bring financial security and which will permit them a high standard of living. Khumbe, Thanya and Rabe all want to become medical doctors. Rabe indicates that being a medical doctor will enable her to live with her husband and children in a beautiful house.

This desire influences the degree to which subjects work to actualise their academic potential.

3.4 Characteristics or behaviours displayed by the subjects of this study

All subjects were rated highly on Mitchell's Gifted/Talented Student Behaviour Scale. The average score is 85.3 percent (Appendix M). This indicates that the characteristics displayed by the subjects of this study are

similar to those of gifted children of disadvantaged minority groups mentioned in other literature sources. Furthermore, this similarity applies to both the rural and urban subjects of this study.

3.5 Intelligences displayed by subjects as described in Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory (MIT)

Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory (MIT) proposes that there are seven types of intelligences, all equally important, which may be displayed by gifted children (Chapter 3, section 2.2.5). These seven types of intelligences are reflected by the majority of the subjects of this study as follows:

a) Linguistic intelligence

Ninety percent (9 out of 10) of the subjects of this study show convincing power in their use of language, and prove to have successfully mastered the basic language skills. They show interest in reading. Khumbe, Thanya, Rabe and Shoni all are interested in and obtain satisfaction from reading poetry, novels, magazines and newspapers. They feel fulfilled in working with groups, especially when they can assist them through providing explanations of the class work.

b) Logical and mathematical intelligence

Fifty percent (5 out of 10) of the subjects show an interest in mathematical problems. Khumbe, Thanya and Rabe are good in Maths and regard it as their favourite subject. They obtain satisfaction from working on mathematical patterns and problems. Rabe likes to search for solutions to problems, as a result, she is interested in doing scientific experiments in the laboratory.

c) Visual-spatial intelligence

Seventy percent (7 out of 10) of the subjects show characteristics of strong spatial intelligence. Khumbe spends much time playing television games at which he demonstrates skill and is excellent in conceptualising and constructing wire toys. Thanya is an accomplished typist, which she did previously as a school subject. Rabe is excellent at drawing, a subject in which she excelled in grade 7. Shoni is good at games including *muravharavha* and *mufuvha*.

d) Bodily-kinesthetic intelligence

Ninety percent (9 out of 10) of the subjects show potentially high levels of this intelligence. Khumbe's excellent visual-motor skills enable him to fashion cars from scraps of tins and wires. He also excels in dancing, aerobics, karate, soccer and tennis. Thanya plays netball for her school. Rabe participates in dancing and excels in modelling clay animals. When he was younger, Shoni used to shape clay making models of cars, people and animals.

d) Musical intelligence

Sixty percent (6 out of 10) of the subjects seem to have an ear for music. Khumbe prefers to listen to classical, gospel and traditional music. He displays potential in that he taught himself to play a musical keyboard. Rabe has a good singing voice and she takes the leading roles or solo parts in the choir.

e) Interpersonal intelligence

All subjects of this study show a strong element of this intelligence. Khumbe's relationship with his classmates is very good and he appears to adopt leadership roles successfully. He found it easy to make friends with children from Germany and France in the environment awareness

conference he attended in Johannesburg. Thanya pioneers discussions that involve all learners in the class. Rabe is determined to help and work with other learner groups teaching them what she knows. This is also the case with Shoni who has a good relationship with his classmates and has eight learners in his class with whom he discusses school work and studies. This group also competes with him in the tests they write.

g) Intrapersonal intelligence

Seventy percent (7 out of 10) of the subjects show characteristics of this intelligence. They tend to have high self-discipline, self-understanding and self-esteem. Khumbe encourages himself with the statement, "try and fail but don't fail to try". His self-confidence is indicated through his continued attempts to master several games. Thanya, Rabe and Shoni are conscious and proud of their abilities. They are confident that they will become leading figures in their communities in future.

3.6 Positive and negative factors influencing the development and manifestation of giftedness

The background of the subjects identified share the following characteristics (Chapter 3, section 4):

- The socioeconomic position of the subjects' families is moderate.
- The parents of the subjects are literate.
- They are concerned with the success of their children.
- They encourage questioning.
- They exercise controlled and necessary discipline.
- Books, toys, puzzles and writing materials are supplied for the children to play with.

It is possible that other potentially gifted Vhavenda children could not be identified in this study because their

sociocultural context lacks these positive factors and/or because factors that negatively influence the development of giftedness are present.

Some subjects of this study were also exposed to the following negative factors.

- They did not attend creche or preschool because, such institutions were not found in their rural environments.
- The urban environment of the subjects is not developed to an extent where it differs significantly from the rural area.

However, it is not clear whether these subjects were negatively affected by these factors or to what extent these contexts inhibited the development of their giftedness.

4 SUMMARY

The characteristics or behaviours displayed by the families of all the subjects have been identified and discussed in this chapter. Furthermore, the traditional Vhavenda factors that are maintained by both traditionally-orientated (rural) and modern (urban) Vhavenda subjects were explored. These factors have a positive influence on the development and nurturance of possible giftedness in these children. Those factors which negatively influence giftedness, and the recent factors upheld by the subjects of this study were identified.

The seven intelligences of Gardner's Multiple Intelligence Theory (MIT) were discussed with reference to the subjects and it was found that all of the subjects possess many of these intelligences to different extents. Lastly, it was found that the descriptors of giftedness displayed by the subjects are similar to those displayed by the gifted children of disadvantaged minority groups elsewhere. These factors, characteristics or behaviours together form the

cultural context that seems to be central to the identification of gifted children. An exposition of this context is thus vital to any investigation of giftedness in Vhavenda school children.

CHAPTER 6 : INTEGRATION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. LITERATURE FINDINGS

It was found in literature that the traditional Vhavenda culture recognised, developed and nurtured high ability (Chapter 2, section 6.8). Giftedness was recognised in various fields most notably sport (Chapter 2, section 3.2), art (section 3.3), music (section 3.4) and combat (section 3.8). Opportunities for developing such abilities through training, serving apprenticeships or emulating others were created. In terms of Gardner's MIT (Chapter 3, section 2.3) the Vhavenda encouraged development of musical, visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic and interpersonal intelligence.

The child-rearing pattern followed by traditional Vhavenda parents supported and developed high ability in children especially when it could benefit the family and the whole nation rather than a particular individual (Chapter 2, section 3.4).

It was found that various definitions of giftedness exist which do not consider the sociocultural background of culturally disadvantaged children (Chapter 3, section 3.1). There are, however, also definitions which may be considered for application to the culturally disadvantaged as the bias against sociocultural factors is limited (Chapter 3, section 3.2).

According to literature findings, Vhavenda school children may be classified as culturally disadvantaged, culturally deprived, socioeconomically deprived, educationally deprived and geographically isolated (Chapter 2, section 6.8 & Chapter 3, section 5). This implied that a rating scale designed for identifying gifted children among the culturally disadvantaged could also be used to screen for gifted Vhavenda school children.

Some negative factors which apply to low socioeconomic status gifted learners serve to positively motivate their performance. These factors encourage them to work towards a good education so that they may redress the poor conditions in which their families live (Chapter 3, section 4.1.1).

Factors considered significant in the traditional Vhavenda culture for raising children were identified (Chapter 2, section 6.8).

2 EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

The subjects of this study showed outstanding abilities in the various fields of human endeavour. These include ability in the academic field and sport (Chapter 5, section 3).

The child-rearing pattern followed by the parents of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda subjects supports the development of high ability in children. For example, they provide their children with the necessary educational opportunities, including sporting equipment and facilities (Chapter 5, section 3.1); assorted toys that stimulate intelligence (Chapter 5, section 3.2); and exposure to either lessons or a preschool before attending formal school (Chapter 5, section 3.3). They encourage their children to study and sometimes offer gifts for outstanding performances (Chapter 5, section 3.3). In the light of this empirical finding, the hypothesis, namely factors revealed by the families of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children define the Vhavenda sociocultural context and influence the development and manifestation of giftedness, is proved correct.

Both the traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda subjects of this study proved to maintain the traditional Vhavenda factors which influence the positive development and nurturance of giftedness (Chapter 5, section 3.2) as

indicated in literature study (Chapter 3, section 4.1.2). The hypothesis, namely factors revealed by the families of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children define the Vhavenda sociocultural context and influence the development and manifestation of giftedness, is proved correct in this regard.

Both the traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda subjects of this study have acquired recent factors which, according to the literature (Chapter 5, section 3.3), are maintained by gifted children and their families. The hypothesis, factors revealed by the families of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children define the Vhavenda sociocultural context and influence the development and manifestation of giftedness, and certain factors, including resulting characteristic behaviours, may be used to identify gifted Vhavenda school children, is proved correct. These recent factors reflected by gifted children and their families may be used in the screening phase of the identification of gifted Vhavenda children.

Both the traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda subjects and their families revealed common characteristics or behaviours which characterise an environment that is conducive for development and nurturance of giftedness in children (Chapter 5, section 3.1). These characteristics or behaviours are similar to those commonly found in gifted children and their families elsewhere (Chapter 3, section 4.1.1). In this regard, the hypothesis is proved correct. The subjects of this study displayed the characteristics or behaviours which are commonly reflected by gifted children as indicated in literature, and bodes well for the manifestation of giftedness in the subjects of this study.

All the subjects of this study were rated highly on the Mitchell's Gifted/Talented Student Behaviour Scale. Their average score was 85.3 percent. This indicates a cohesion between characteristics displayed by gifted children of

of disadvantaged minority groups in the USA and the subjects of this study. Within the Vhavenda cultural context, gifted behaviour is evident. This proves the hypothesis to be correct.

The characteristics or behaviours that are commonly found in families of culturally disadvantaged gifted children (Chapter 3, section 4) are similar to those displayed by families of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda children who show promise of high ability. Within the sociocultural context of the Vhavenda, descriptors of giftedness are displayed, thus the hypothesis is proved correct.

The hypothesis that factors revealed by the families of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children define the Vhavenda sociocultural context and influence the development and manifestation of giftedness, and certain factors, including resulting characteristic behaviours, may be used to identify gifted Vhavenda school children, is proved correct on the basis of the empirical findings in this study.

Most of the parents of the subjects of this study were found to be literate. The majority of them belong to the working class (Chapter 5, section 3.1, Appendix M). Although this finding is not related to the aims of this study, it may be significant to studies investigating the role of the environment on the development of potential giftedness in African cultures.

3 CONCLUSION

Both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda people recognise, develop and nurture high ability in a child. The cohesion found between the characteristics or behaviours displayed by culturally disadvantaged gifted children elsewhere and those displayed by both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children proves that

gifted or intellectual behaviour is common across cultural borders. This is because the factors influencing children's development determine the way giftedness later shows itself in the behaviour of the child.

Both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children are culturally disadvantaged, culturally deprived, socioeconomically deprived, educationally deprived and geographically isolated (Chapter 3, section 5.6). This finding needs to be taken into consideration whenever the identification of Vhavenda gifted children is undertaken.

The sociocultural context of both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda people is mostly characterised by recent rather than traditional factors which influence the development and nurturance of giftedness in Vhavenda children. Most of the factors found within the cultural context of the subjects positively influence giftedness (Chapter 5, sections 3.1 - 3.5).

The characteristics or behaviours revealed by both traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda school children and their families are similar to those commonly found in gifted children and their families elsewhere in the world (Chapter 5, sections 3.1 & 3.3). Consequently, it can be concluded that gifted behaviour is developed and manifested within the Vhavenda cultural context.

There is no vast difference between the sociocultural contexts of the traditionally-orientated and modern Vhavenda gifted children. This may be due to the fact that the former Venda self-governing state territory is regarded as entirely rural (Chapter 2, section 6.6).

The maintenance of a home environment characterised by love, acceptance, protection, encouragement and desirable discipline stabilises the emotional aspect of the child and

creates a space for giftedness to be developed and nurtured (Chapter 5, section 3.1).

The factors that are regarded as having a negative influence on potentially gifted Vhavenda children may provide the positive motivation to perform in an exceptional way (Chapter 5, section 3.1).

Vhavenda children who grow up in families of working class parents who are literate may stand a better chance of realising their potential for giftedness (Appendix M).

4 IMPLICATIONS OF FINDINGS

This research has laid a foundation for further research on the development of identification approaches, procedures, instruments and tests based on the sociocultural background of the Vhavenda people. (These approaches will hopefully be relevant to identification of Vhavenda gifted children.)

Mitchell's Gifted/Talented Student Behaviour Scale, which indicates the characteristics or behaviours displayed by culturally disadvantaged gifted children, can be used as a screening instrument in the process of identifying gifted Vhavenda children (Chapter 5, section 3.4).

A list of characteristics of Gardner's seven intelligences displayed by children may be used to screen for gifted Vhavenda children (Chapter 3, section 2.2.1.6).

It seems that no single view nor definition of giftedness is comprehensive enough to thoroughly understand the complexities of giftedness or its identification. This is true of giftedness as manifested in children from advantaged backgrounds and becomes even more significant when considering the identification and nurturance of giftedness in children from culturally different, disadvantaged communities. Combining or integrating the views of theorists

is useful in order to gain as complete a picture as possible of various aspects that should receive attention when addressing these issues. In this study, the views of Gardner and Tannenbaum were found to be useful and their explanations of, respectively, intelligence and giftedness are considered relevant to the Vhavenda.

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated earlier, due to similarities between the gifted children amongst the Vhavenda and those in other culturally disadvantaged groups, the rating scales designed for the latter may be used on the Vhavenda. However, further research must be conducted in order to determine whether the findings of this research can be generalised or not.

Applying the rating scales to a larger sample would enable a factor analysis to be done. This would make it possible to determine the validity and reliability of the instrument for use with the Vhavenda.

Similar studies should be conducted with other African ethnic groups to broaden the knowledge base of giftedness in the African context.

A follow-up study on the findings of this research, using alternate identification methods, may be done in order to confirm whether the school children identified as subjects in this study are gifted or not.

Children screened as possibly gifted should have the chance to attend programmes in order to further aid the development of their high abilities and to overcome the many disadvantages they face. In spite of the potential that may be present in Vhavenda school children, the educational standard is generally low. Thus, although ability is present in the nature of the child, the nurturance of giftedness is inadequate in the schools.

Until the standard of education offered in the schools is raised, it is recommended that special classes or even a special school is established to cater for the potential abilities of gifted Vhavenda children.

The Department of Education, Arts, Culture and Sports in the Northern Province should consider setting up a structure that concentrates on working with and implementing gifted child education in various cultural groups. Teachers should be well informed about giftedness so that they are able to understand the behaviours of gifted children whenever they are found in their classes. In-service training is thus recommended as well as pre-service training courses that give sufficient attention to the development, characteristics and nurturance of giftedness in learners.

The parents of Vhavenda children need to be made aware of both the factors that positively and negatively influence the development and manifestation of giftedness in children and the importance of eliminating these negative factors should be emphasised. Educating for parenthood should thus include the necessity of early stimulation in the home and continued involvement in the child's educational progress.

6 DEFECTS IN THE STUDY

The subjects of this study may not be gifted since the identification measures used may be inadequate.

The subjects were chosen for academic talent and the other areas of giftedness were not adequately accommodated.

The subjects of this study may not have been entirely truthful in providing the information, especially concerning issues that they might have regarded as too sensitive and personal to talk about.

The teachers who recommended the children and completed the checklists of the subjects were untrained, having only received an orientation on what they were supposed to do from the researcher.

7 FINAL WORD

Much research in gifted education has been conducted within the developed Western world, and indeed, there remains much to learn from the problems surrounding giftedness in those communities. Yet researchers in rural Africa still face the mammoth task of breaking through the barriers to giftedness. This is further necessitated by the economic, social and political conditions in Africa which urgently call for the tapping of gifted potential in those who are able to act in service of their community and country.

Within the South African context, Kokot (1992:vii) supports this in stating: "This country has an incredibly and confusingly rich and diverse cultural heritage which is largely ignored through generalization in education and in identification and encouragement of giftedness. As a result, hope in the shining leaders of the future is somewhat impeded and our children's gifts lie buried".

This study is merely a drop in the ocean in the attempt to address the challenge facing giftedness in Africa. Should this challenge be accepted by present and future generations of researchers, the promises held by Africa's undeveloped youth may be realised, and the richness in human potential brought forth to shine.

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APPENDIX A

PARENT INTERVIEW 1 : FAMILY HISTORY
MBUDZISO DZA VHABEBI : DIVHAZWAKALE YA MUTA

NAME OF THE CHILD: _____
 DZINA LA NWANA: _____

DATE ON WHICH THIS QUESTIONNAIRE WAS COMPLETED:
 DUVHA LE MUTEVHE UYU WA MBUDZISO WA DADZWA:

In this questionnaire, all persons specified (eg mother, maternal grandfather, sister, Kha mutevhe uyu wa mbudziso, vhatu vhothe vho buliwaho (tsumbo: mme, makhulu etc) are referred to in terms of their relationship to the SUBJECT CHILD. wa tshisadzini, khaladzi, na vhanwevho) ho livhanywa vhushaka havho na NWANA MUGUDIWA.

1. Date of birth of father _____
Mabebo a khotsi
 2. Date of birth of mother _____
Mabebo a mme
 3. Place of birth of father _____
Fhethu ha mabebo a khotsi
 4. Place of birth of mother _____
Fhethu ha mabebo a mme
 5. Place of birth of paternal grandfather _____
Fhethu ha mabebo ha makhulu tshinna vha ha khotsini
 6. Place of birth of paternal grandmother _____
Fhethu ha mabebo ha makhulu tshisadzi vha ha khotsini
 7. Place of birth of maternal grandfather _____
Fhethu ha mabebo ha makhulu tshinna vha ha mmeni
 8. Place of birth of maternal grandmother _____
Fhethu ha mabebo ha makhulu tshisadzi vha ha mmeni
 9. Father's highest level of education (Please specify)
Pfunzo dza khotsi dza nthesa (dzi buleni)
- * Highest standard passed _____
Murole wa nthesa wo phasiwaho

* Diploma _____
Dipuloma

* Degree _____
Digirii

* Master's degree _____
Digirii ya masitasi

* Doctor's degree _____
Digirii ya vhudokotela

10. Mother's highest level of education. (Please specify)
Pfunzo dza mme dza nthesa (Dzi buleni)

* Highest standard passed _____
Murole wa nthesa wo phasiwaho

* Diploma _____
Dipuloma

* Degree _____
Digirii

* Master's degree _____
Digirii ya masitasi

* Doctor's degree _____
Digirii ya vhudokotela

11. Record any skill or ability shown by the following relatives, or any specific service
Neani vhukoni vhunwe na vhunwe vhu sumbedzwaho nga mashaka a tevhelaho,

*they rendered and are still rendering to the community or what they have been
 kana munwe tshumelo inwe na inwe ye vha itela lushakana ine vha kha di ita na*

well-known for in the community (where this is known).

zwe vha vha vha tshi divhelwa zwone kha lushaka (hune izwi zwa divhea)

* Paternal grandfather: _____
Makhulu tshinna wa khotsini

* Paternal grandmother: _____
Makhulu tshisadzi wa khotsini

* Maternal grandfather: _____
Makhulu tshinna wa mmeni

* Maternal grandmother: _____
Makhulu tshisadzi wa mmeni

12. (a) What is father's occupation?
Mushumo wa khotsi ndi ufhio?
- (b) Please give a brief description of what this job entails.
Talutshedzani nga u pfufhifhadza zwine mushumo uyu wa katela zwone.
- (c) Has father obtained some positions of honour or recognition in academic,
Khotsi vho no vhu ya vha wana maimo a khuliso kana u dzhielwa ntha kha
 business, social or sporting life? (e.g. academic prize, business award,
zwa manwalo, mabindu, matshilisano kana vhutshilo ha zwa mitambo?
 community leader, etc)
(tsumbo: pfufho ya zwa pfunzo, vhubindudzi kana murangaphanda wa
tshitshavha, na zwinwevho).
- (d) What are father's special interests, hobbies or accomplishments?
Ndi zwifhio zwine khotsi vha takalela, zwine vha dzulela u zwi ita kana zwine
vha konesa?
- (e) How is father involved in serving his local community?
Khotsi vha di dzhenisa hani kha u shumela tshitshavha tsha havho?
13. (a) What is mother's occupation?
Mushumo wa mme ndi ufhio
- (b) Please give a brief description of what this job entails.
Talutshedzani nga u pfufhifhadza zwine mushumo uyu wa katela zwone.
- (c) Has mother obtained any positions of honour or recognition in academic,
Mme vho no vhu ya vha wana maimo a khuliso kana u dzhielwa ntha kha zwa
 business, social or sporting life? (eg academic prize, business award,
manwalo, mabindu, matshilisano kana vhutshilo ha zwa mitambo?
 community leader, etc)
(tsumbo : tshipuga tsha zwa pfunzo, mabindu kana murangaphanda wa
tshitshavha, na zwinwe).
- (d) What are mother's special interests, hobbies or accomplishments?
Ndi zwifhio zwine mme vha zwi takalela, zwine vha anzela u zwi ita kana zwine
vha konesa?
- (e) How is mother involved in serving her community?
Mme vha di dzhenisa hani kha u shumela tshitshavha tsha havho?

14. What occupation has been most common on father's side of the family?
Ndi ufhio mushumo we vhathu vhanzhi vha sia la muta wa ha khotsi vha u tevhela?

15. What occupation has been most common on mother's side of the family?
Ndi ufhio mushumo we vhathu vhanzhi vha sia la muta wa ha mme vha u tevhela?

APPENDIX B

PARENT INTERVIEW 2 : CHILD'S DETAILS

MBUDZISO DZA MUBEBI 3 : ZWIDODOMBEDZWA ZWA NWANA

- 1 Full name of child. _____
Madzina a nwana nga vhudalo
- 2 Date of birth. _____ day _____ month _____ year _____
Datumu ya mabebo divha nwedzi nwaha
- 3 Birth order position (e.g. only child, eldest child of three, second child of four, etc).
Mutevhe wa mabebelwe (tsumbo: nwana e ethe, tanzhe la vhararu, wa vhuvhili kha vhana, na zwinwevho).

- 4 Name and dates of birth of siblings (brothers and/or sisters).
Dzina na datumu ya mabebo a vhanwe vhana (vharathu kana dzikhaladzi).

Name <i>Dzina</i>	Sex <i>Mbeu</i>	Date of birth <i>Datumu ya mabebo</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

- 5 Does the child have any serious health problems or handicaps now?
Nwana uyu u na thaidzo khulwane dza mutakalo kana vhunwe vuhole zwino?

- 6 Does the child suffer from any allergies? Yes _____
Nwana u a tambula nga zwinwevho zwine zwa hanana nae? Ee

No _____
Hai

- 7 Is the child: Predominantly right-handed _____
Nwana: U shumisesa tshanda tshaula

Predominantly left-handed _____
U shumisesa tshanda tshamonde

Ambidextrous (writes fluently with either hand) _____
U shumisa zwanda zwothe u lingana (u nwala zwavhudi nga zwanda zwothe)

- 8 At what age compared to others did the child start to speak in short sentences, sit and walk?

- 9 At what age did the child start schooling?
Nwana uyu o thoma tshikolo e na minwaha mingana?
- 10 Does the child ask questions?
Nwana uyu u a vhudzisa mbudziso?
- 11 How inquisitive was the child during his/her growth?
Luvhudziso lwa uyu nwana lwo vha lu hani musi a tshi aluwa?
- 12 Do you allow, encourage or discourage him/her to ask questions?
Vha a mu tendela, tutuwedza kana u sa mu tutuwedza kha u vhudzisa mbudziso?
- 13 Did the child have a mentor/tutor or any other adult outside school who influenced
Hu na munwe muthusi kha zwa pfunzo a si wa tshikoloni we a tutuwedza
the child's ability? How?
vhukoni ha uyu nwana? Hani?
- 14 How does the child gain knowledge about everyday life and events?
Nwana u wana hani ndivho nga ha vhutshilo ha divha linwe na linwe na zwi bvelelaho?
- 15 What are this child's likes and dislikes?
Ndi zwifhio zwine uyu nwana a zwi funa na zwine a si zwi fune?
- 16 What are the child's personal strength and weaknesses?
Uya nga mbumbo ya uyu nwana, vhukoni na u balelwa hawe ndi hufhio?
- 17 What do you like and dislike in this child?
Ndi zwifhio zwine vha zwi funa na u zwine vha sa zwi fune kha uyu nwana?
- 18 What is the child's attitude to life in general?
Nwana u vhona kana u dzhia hani vhutshilo nga u angaredza?

APPENDIX C

PARENT INTERVIEW 3 : SOCIOCULTURAL SETTING AT HOME MBUDZISO DZA MUBEBI 3 : NDZULELE YA HAYANI

Cultural values

1. Vhavenda people are in a process of acculturation.
Vhavenda ndi vhathu vhare kha mvelele ya u shanduka.
 - (a) What are the traditional Vhavenda activities that you think should be abandoned? Why do you think so?
Ndi afhio maitete a Vhavenda ane vha humbula uri a fanela u litshiwa?
 - (b) What are the traditional Vhavenda activities that you think should be maintained? Why do you think so?
Ndi ngani vha tshi humbula ngauralo?
2. Which Vhavenda cultural values do you teach this child?
Ndi afhio maitete na mvelele zwa Vhavenda zwine vha funza uyu nwana?
3. What is the importance of teaching him/her these cultural values?
Ndeme ya u funza nwana uyu maitete na mvelele zwa Vhavenda ndi vhufhio?
4. Is there any difference in how you were brought up and how you are bringing up your child? If yes, why?
Hu na phambano kha ndila ye vhone vha aluswa ngayo na ine vhone vha khou alusa nwana uyu wavho ngayo? Arali zwo ralo, ndi ngani?
5. In general, what would you say are the values of your family?
Nga u angaredza vha nga ri maitete a matshilele a muta wavho ndi afhio?

Parental involvement in the education of the child

6. How often do you check the progress of your child regarding school work?
Ndi lungana lune vha sedza mvelaphanda ya nwana uyu kha mushumo wa tshikolo?
7. What do you do to make your child the best in his/her studies?
Vha ita mini zwine zwa nga thusa nwana uyu uri a konese kha ngudo dzawe?
8. As a parent, what are your expectations of this child presently and in the future?
Sa mubebi ndi zwifhio zwine vha zwi lavhelela kha uyu nwana zwino na kha tshifhinga tshi daho?

9. What is your dream about this child educationally and in other areas?

Muloro wavho ndi ufhio nga uyu nwana kha zwa pfunzo na kha manwe masia?

Religion and beliefs

10. Vhavenda people originally worshipped their ancestral spirits. Today some worship

Vhavenda vhubvoni havho vho vha vha tshi rerela Vho-makhulukuku. Namusi

God of the Bible while others say they worship both their ancestral spirits and God
vhanwe vha rerela Mudzimu wa Bivhilini, ngeno vhanwe vha tshi rerela zwothe

of the Bible. What is your position in this regard?

Vho-makhulukuku na Mudzimu wa Bivhilini? Ndi vhu fhio vhuimo havho malugana na ili likumedza?

11. Do you think the abilities of your child can be influenced by ancestral spirits or

Ni humbula uri vhukoni ha nwana uyu vhu nga kona u tutuwedzwa nga Vho-

God?

makhulukuku kana Mudzimu?

12. Do you think traditional practitioners can help people with their problems?

Vha humbula uri dzinanga dza sialala dzi nga kona u thusa vhatu kha thaidzo dzavho?

13. Can witchcraft influence the abilities of a child with regard to his/her school work?

Vhuloi vhu a kona u tutuwedza vhukoni ha nwana kha mushumo wa tshikolo?

Socioeconomic conditions

14. Are you satisfied with the conditions in which you are bringing up this child?

Vha a fushea nga nyimele ya zwithu ine vha khou alusa uyu nwana fhasi hayo?

15. Do you feel you are generally able to supply the needs of this child

Nga u angaredza vha pfa uri vha khou kona u nea uyu nwana thodea dzawe nga

satisfactorily?

ndila i fushaho?

16. How do you feel about your place of residence? What changes would you bring to

Vha di pfa hani nga fhethu hune vha dzula hone? Ndi dzifhio tshanduko dze vha

the area if you were able to do so?

vha vha tshi nga dzi disa arali vha tshi kona?

17. Which services do you render to your community?

Ndi dzifhio tshumelo dzine vha dzi nea kha tshitshavha tsha havho?

APPENDIX D

CHILD INTERVIEW 1: PLAY INTERESTS AND CULTURAL VALUES
MBUDZISO DZA NWANA 1: MITAMBO INE A I TAKALELA NA MAITELE A
MVELELE

- 1 As a general rule, at what time do you usually go to bed:
Sa mulayo, ni anzela u edela nga tshifhinga de?

 on week nights? _____ on weekends? _____
vhukati ha vhege? mafheloni a vhege?
- 2 Why do you go to bed at this particular time?
Ndi ngani ni edela nga tshifhinga itshi?
3. Do you watch TV?
Ni a sedza TV?
- 4 Are there any special benefits you feel you derive from watching TV?
Hu na zwinwe zwivhuya zwine na pfa uri ni a zwi wana kha u sedza TV?
- 5 Do you feel that watching TV has any negative effects on you?
Ni pfa uri u sedza TV hu na zwinwe zwivhi zwine zwa ni tutuwedza khazwo?
- 6 Which programmes do you enjoy viewing on TV?
Ndi dzifhio mbekanyamushumo dzine na di phina nga u vhona kha TV?
- 7 Do you listen to the radio?
Ni a thetshesesa radio?
- 8 Are there any special benefits you feel you derive from listening to the radio?
Hu na dzinwe mbuelo dzine na pfa uri ni a dzi wana kha u thetshesesa radio?
- 9 Which programmes do you enjoy listening to?
Ndi dzifhio mbekanyamushumo dzine na diphina nga u dzi thetshesesa?
- 10 Which music do you think is important to listen to? Is it:
Ndi ufhio muzika une na humbula uri ndi wa vhuthogwa u u thetshesesa? Ndi wa
 - * modern music like pop, disco, gospel, jazz, etc?
tshizwinozwino sa pop, disco, wa mafhungo madifha, jazz, na minwevho?
 - * traditional music like *tshikona*, *tshigombela*, *mbila mutondo*, *malende*, etc.
musika wa sialala sa tshikona, tshigombela, mbila mutondo, malende, na minwevho.

* Are they equally important?

Ndi ya ndeme i linginaho?

12 Do you have access to a computer:

Ni a kona u swikelela computer:

(a) at school?

tshikoloni?

(b) at home?

hayani?

13 If yes, what do you use the computer for?

Arali i ee, ni shumisa computer u ita mini?

14 Do you belong to any youth organization or Church organization? e.g. Youth

Ni murado wa linwe dzangano la vhaswa kana la kerekeni? tsumbo: sa khwairi

choirs, Student Christian Movement, Political parties youth organization, etc?

ya vhaswa, dzangano la matshudeni la vhukhriste, madzangano a vhaswa a politiki, na manwevho.

15 Are you a member of any competitive or non-competitive sports teams or clubs,

Ni murado wa thimu kana kilabu dza mitambo dzi tambaho mitatisano kana dzi sa

eg soccer, athletics? Please describe.

i tamba, tsumbo: bola, mugidimo? Talutshedzani.

* at school

tshikoloni

* out of school

nnda ha tshikolo

16 Which traditional games (eg *mufuvha*, *muravharavha*, *ndode*,

Ndi ifhio mitambo ya sialala (mufuvha, muravharavha, ndode, mudzumbamo, na

mudzumbamo, etc) do you play at home after school and over the weekends?

minwe) ine na tamba hayani tshikolo tsho bva na nga mafheloni a vhege?

17 Do you have a high degree of ability in any particular sport? Please describe

Ni na vhunwe vhukoni ha nthesa kha munwe mutambo? Talutshedzani ni

any awards you may have won or the name given to you because of your
sumbedze na zwiphuga zwinwe zwine na nga vha no zwi wana kana dzina le na

outstanding ability.

newa nga vhukoni hanu vhu vhonehlo.

18 Do you take lessons at school or privately in dance, music, drama, gymnastics,
Ni a guda tshikoloni kana nnda u dantsa, u imba matangwa, nyonyoloso, nyambo

foreign language or other cultural activity like *tshikona, tshigombela, malende,*
dzinwe kana mitambo ya sialala sa tshikona, tshigombela, malende, na

etc?

dzinwe-vho?

19 Traditionally the Vhavenda are proud of social cooperation and success and, as an
Nga mvelo Vhavenda vha dihudza nga u shumisana na mvelaphanda ya vhatshu

ethnic group, are proud of individual effort and success. What is your opinion in this
vhothe sa lushaka u fhira muthu a tshi di imisa e ethe a bvela phanda e ethe. Inwi

regard?

kuhumbulele kwanu ndi kufhio afha?

20 Traditional Vhavenda people believe that there should be equality between the
Vhavenda vhasialala vha tenda uri hu fanela u vha na nyedano vhukati ha

rich and the poor. No person should strive for personal enrichment but should share
vhapfumi na vhashai. A huna muthu ane a fanela u lwela u dipfumisa e ethe u

his/her belongings with others. How do you feel about this?

fanela u kovhekana zwine a vha nazwo na vhanwe. Inwi ni zwi pfa hani izwi?

21 It is traditional that Vhavenda children should not question their seniors when they
Ndi mvelo ya Vhavenda ya uri vhana a vha tei u vhudzisa vhahulwane mbudziso

are given orders, but have to carry them out even if they don't agree with
musi vho newa ndaela, vha fanela u ita zwe vha vhudzwa nahu vha sa

them. What is your feeling about this?

tendelani nazwo. Vhudipfi hanu ndi vhufhio kha izwi?

- 22 Traditionally Vhavenda choose a marriage partner for their son who should
U ya nga mvelele Vhavenda vha nangela nwana wavho wa muthannga musadzi.

accept her without question and also make decisions for their children in all
ane a fanela u tangedza musadzi uyo hu si na mbudziso. Vhabebi vha

important cases. What is your understanding in this regard?

*dovha hafhu vha humbulela vhana vhavho maga mahulwane ane vha fanela u
a dzhia. Vhupfiwa hanu ndi vhufhio malugana na ili likumedzwa?*

- 23 It is traditional among Vhavenda people that children should supply the needs of
Ndi u ya nga mvelele kha Vhavenda uri vhana vha fanela u fusha thodea dza

their parents, brothers, and sisters when they become working adults. What is your
vhabebi vhavho, vharathu na vhakomana na dzikhaladzi musi vha tshi vho shuma.

view on this?

Kuhumbulele kwanu kha izwi ndi kufhio?

- 24 Vhavenda children are expected to maintain and perpetuate the culture, for
Vhana vha Vhavenda vha lavhelelwa u fara na u bveledza phanda mvelele,

example, language, tradition, values, initiation schools and certain ceremonies of
luambo, maitete, matshilele, zwikolo zwa u fumbisa na minwe mikhuvha ya

the Vhavenda people without any compromise. What is your feeling about this?

Vhavenda hu si na u zwi shandukisa. Inwi izwi ni zwi pfisa hani?

- 25 What are your expectations of the future? What do you want to be when you leave
Kha vhumatshelo hanu no lavhelela mini? Ni toda u vha mini musi ni tshi

school?

litsha kana u fhedza tshikolo?

APPENDIX E

CHILD INTERVIEW 2: RELATIONSHIPS MBUDZISO DZA NWANA 2 : VHUKONANI

Peers

- 1 How are your current relationships with classmates?
Vhushaka hanu ha zwino na vhanwe vhagudiswa kilasini vhu hani?
- 2 Do you ever get teased or bullied because of being bright?
Ni a vhu ya na tungiwa kana u levhelwa nga uri ni a konesa?
- 3 How do you get on with the other kids in the class?
Ni shumisana hani na vhanwe vhana kilasini?
- 4 Some kids prefer to be on their own while others prefer to be in the company of other kids. Others like to join in with other kids occasionally. How do you feel?
Vhanwe vhana vha toda u dzula vhe vhothe ngeno vhanwe vha tshi toda u dzula vhe na vhanwe ngavho. Vhanwe vha toda u ita vha tshi vha na vhanwe vhana zwinwe zwifhinga. Inwi ni di pfa hani kha izwi?
- 5 Do you like to be with kids of your own age, or do you prefer to be with kids a bit older or a bit younger than you?
Ni a toda u twa na vhana vha thanga ya murole wanu, kana ni toda u twa na vhana vhulwane kana vhatuku kha inwi?

Self

- 6 Some very bright kids are a little shy of letting people see that they are bright, and try to 'play it down' in class. Others quite enjoy being recognised as bright. How do you feel?
Vhanwe vhana vha konesaho vha a shona u divhiwa uri vha a konesa, vha lingedza u didzumba kilasini. Vhanwe vha takalela u divhiwa uri vha a kona. Inwi ni di pfa hani?

7 (If 'play it down') What are some of the things you do to 'play down' your abilities?

(Arali 'u didzumba') Ndi zwifhio zwine na zwi ita zwa u didzumba vhukoni hanu?

8 (If 'play it down') Do you think the teacher knows you are 'playing down' your

(Arali 'u didzumba') Ni humbula uri mudededzi u a zwi divha uri ni khou

abilities?

dzumba vhukoni hanu?

9 (If 'play it down') Do any other kids in your class realise it?

(Arali 'u didzumba') Vhanwe vhana vha kilasini vha a zwi vhona?

Teachers

10 How are your current relationships with teachers at school?

Vhushaka hanu ha zwino na vhadededzi tshikoloni vhu hani?

11 Do any of your teachers stand out in your mind as having been particularly helpful

Hu na vhanwe vhadededzi vhane na humbula vho ni nea thuso yo khetheaho

or responsive to you?

kana vho ni thusesa?

12 (If 'yes' to 11.) Do you think (that teacher) is also very bright?

(Arali i 'ee' kha 11) Ni vhona u nga ri (mudededzi uyo) o vha a tshi konesa?

13 Have you ever felt that you were being held back, or have you ever felt a bit irritated

No no vhuya na pfa ni tshi khou kokodzelwa murahu, kana u dinalea zwituku nga

by a teacher's lack of knowledge in a subject?

musi mudededzi a tshi shaya a si na ndivho ya thero?

14 What qualities do you feel a teacher should have to be a particularly effective

Ndi zwiitisi zwifhio zwine mudededzi a fanela u vha nazwo uri a vhe mudededzi

teacher?

wa nungo?

15 Are there teachers whose teaching you enjoy?

Hu na vhadededzi vhane na diphina musi vha tshi funza?

Parents

16 What are the things which you like and dislike about your parents? Describe.

*Ndi zwifhio zwine na zwi takalela na zwine ni si zwi takalele nga vhabebi vhamu.
Talutshedzani.*

17 If you have achieved highly in a specific aspect at school, do you feel encouraged

Arali no konesa kha zwinwe tshikoloni, ni a pfa ni tshi tutuwedzea u vhudza

to tell your parents?

vhabebi vhamu?

18 How is your current relationship with your parents?

Vhushaka hanu ha zwino na vhabebi vhanu vhu hani?

APPENDIX F

CHILD INTERVIEW 3 : GENERAL

MBUDZISO DZA NWANA 3 : `GUTE

General

- 1 How is your current relationship with your brothers and sisters (if any)?
Vhushaka hanu na vhakomana, vharathu na dzikhaladzi zwa zwino vhu hani (arali vhe hone)?

- 2 Have you ever experienced any hostility from other children or teachers, or from other community members, that you feel arose from a resentment of your exceptional abilities?
No no tangana na u vhengiwa nga vhanwe vhana kana vhadededzi kana vhanwe mirado ya tshitshavha, zwine na pfa uri zwi itiswa nga tsinyuwo ya uri inwi ni a kona?

- 3 As a Muvenda child, have you experienced any criticism from other children, teachers or community members on cultural grounds, that you are too traditional or becoming too modern in your lifestyle?
Sa nwana wa Muvenda, no no tangana na u sasaladziwa nga vhanwe vhana, vhadededzi kana mirado ya tshitshavha zwi tshi bva kha zwa mvelele, uri inwi ni tshila nga ndila ya sialala kana ni vho vha wa musalauno nga maanda?

- 4 If you could change anything you wanted about your present class or school, or the work you do at school, what changes would you make?
Arali ho vha hu na zwine na nga kona u shandukisa zwine na toda nga ha kilasi yanu ya zwino kana tshikolo kana mushumo une na ita tshikoloni, ndi dzifhio dzitshanduko dze na vha ni tshi nga ita?

Religion

- 5 Do you believe in God, ancestral spirits or both?
Ni a tenda kha Mudzimu, vhomakhulukuku kana kha vhothe?

6 Do you believe that a person can bewitch another one using supernatural powers?

Ni a tenda uri muthu u a kona u lowa munwe o shumisa madambi?

7 Do you think traditional practitioners should be visited to cure sickness?

Ni vhona uri nanga dza hashu dzi fanela u dalelwa uri dzi fhodze malwadze?

8 Can God or ancestral spirits influence the academic achievement of a person? How?

Mudzimu kana vhomakhulukuku vha a kona u thusedza kha u kona mushumo wa tshikolo? Hani?

Politics

9. How are you involved in politics?

Ni di dzhenisa hani kha zwa politiki?

10 What do you say about the changes in the new South Africa?

Ni ri mini nga tshanduko dzi re hone kha Afrika Tshipembe liswa?

11 How do you think you could contribute to the politics of your country now and in

Ni humbula uri ni nga dzhenelela hani kha politiki ya shango ili la hanu zwino na

the future?

nga tshifhinga tshidaho?

School

12 How do you feel about school at the present time?

Ni di pfisa hani nga ha tshikolo nga tsshino tshifhinga?

13 What part of the school day do you like best? Why?

Ndi tshipida tshifhio tsha divha la tshikolo tshine na tshi funesa? Ndi ngani?

14 What part of the school day do you like least? Why?

Ndi tshipida tshifhio tsha divha la tshikolo tshine tshine ni si tshi takalele? Ndi ngani?

15 A lot of children say they find school a bit boring from time to time. Do you find
Vhana vhanzhi vha ri vha wana tshikolo tshi vha disela vhuludu tshifhinga

school boring a lot of the time, sometimes, rarely or never?

*tshinzhi inwi vho ni wana tshikolo tshi tshi ni disela vhuludu tshifhinga tshinzhi
 kana a zwi anzeli u itea?*

16 What particular aspects do you find boring?

Ndi zwifhio zwine na nga sumba zwine na wana zwi tshi ni fha vhuludu?

School work

17 What do you think is your strongest subject academically?

Ni humbula uri thero ine na i konesa ndi ifhio pfunzoni?

18 Do you think you could handle harder work in that subject if it was offered to

Ni vhona u nga no vha ni tshi kona u lwa na mushumo u kondaho wa iyo thero

you?

arali no u fhiwa?

19 Is there any school subject that you have difficulty with and feel you would like

Huna inwe thero ya tshikolo ine ya ni kondela ine na pfa uri ni nga toda thuso

more help with?

khayo?

11. ____ Enjoys working in groups.
12. ____ Has an interest in art.

(Items 13-22 adapted from May V. Segoe)

13. ____ Possesses a keen power of observation.
14. ____ Enjoys intellectual activities.
15. ____ Has an interest in cause and effect relationships.
16. ____ Exhibits a questioning attitude.
17. ____ Displays an intellectual curiosity.
18. ____ Enjoys doing things in new ways.
19. ____ Has good verbal ability.
20. ____ Likes to work on complex problems.
21. ____ Concentrates well.
22. ____ Is interested in creative endeavors.

(Items 23-30 adapted from Bruce Mitchell)

23. ____ Is fluent in idea development.
24. ____ Is able to elaborate on ideas.
25. ____ Experiments with ideas and hunches.
26. ____ Has a strong self-concept.
27. ____ Learns from mistakes and/or failing situations.
28. ____ Tolerates ambiguity.
29. ____ Is resourceful.
30. ____ Has a good imagination.

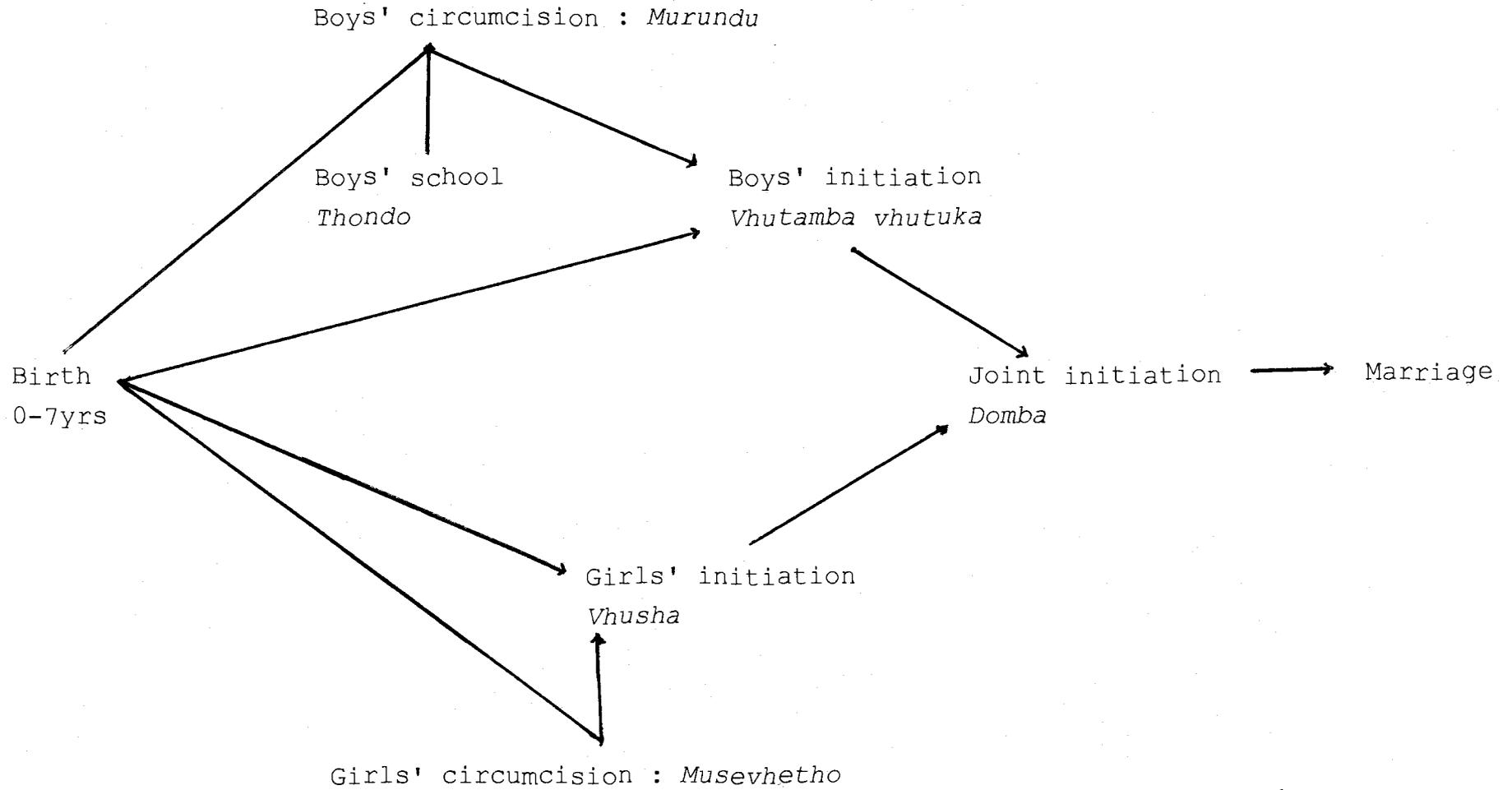
(Items 31-46 adapted from Los Angeles Unified School District - Characteristics of Able Disadvantaged Students.)

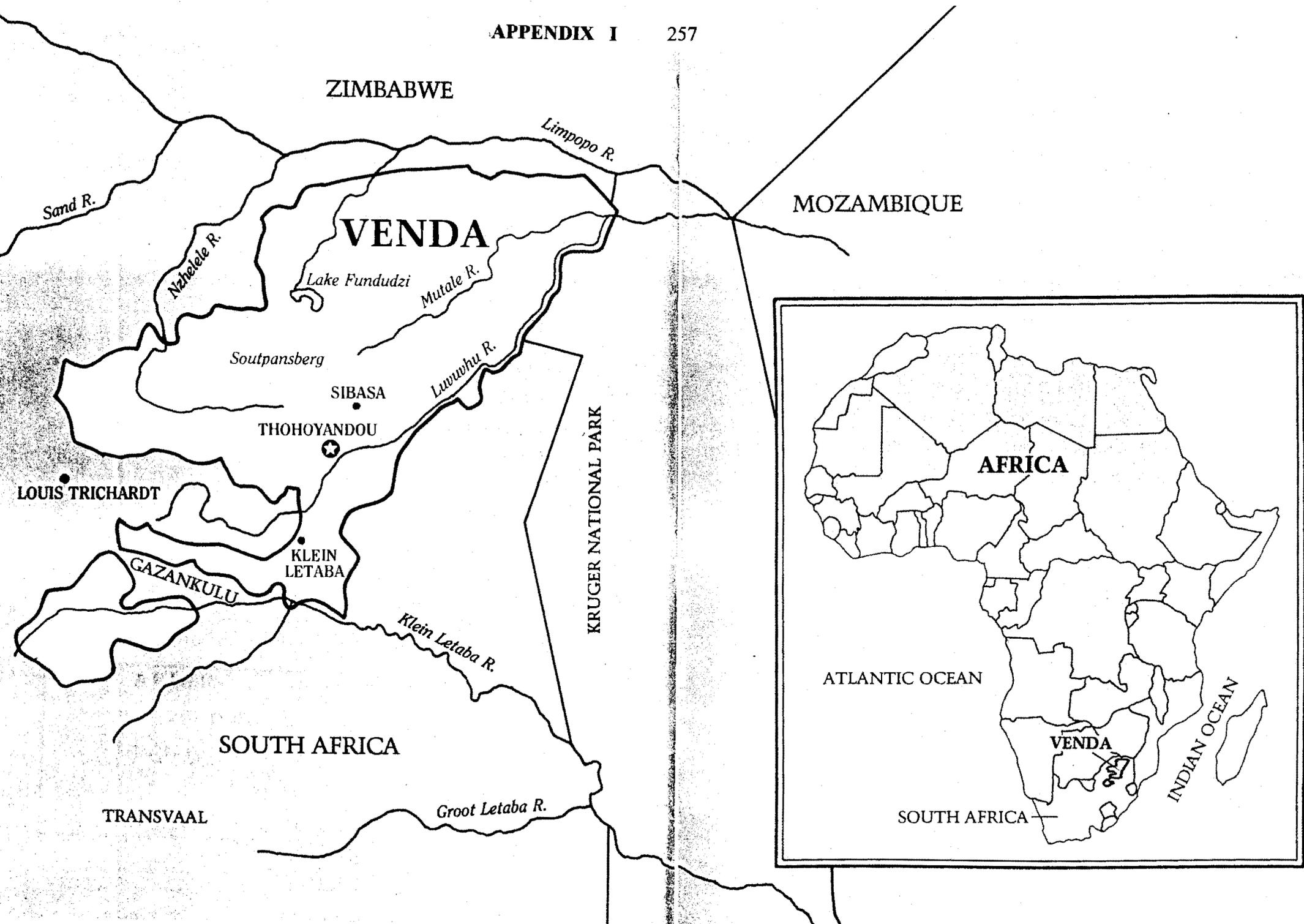
31. _____ Has an advanced vocabulary for age or grade level.
32. _____ Possesses lots of information.
33. _____ Asks provocative questions.
34. _____ Likes to attempt difficult tasks.
35. _____ Has good reasoning ability.
36. _____ Catches on quickly.
37. _____ Retains and uses new ideas and information.
38. _____ Has keen powers of observation.
39. _____ Works well independently.
40. _____ Becomes absorbed in tasks.
41. _____ Enjoys challenges.
42. _____ Adapts readily to new situations.
43. _____ Is a social leader.
44. _____ Has ability in fine arts and /or practical art.
45. _____ Displays mature judgement.
46. _____ Transfers learning from situation to situation.

(Items 47-58 are taken from Renzulli/Hartman Scale)

47. _____ Often bored with routine tasks.
48. _____ Interested in "adult" problems; ie: religion, politics, race, etc.
49. _____ Is self-motivated.
50. _____ Requires little direction from teachers.
51. _____ Uninhibited in expressing opinions.
52. _____ Is individualistic.
53. _____ Enjoys aesthetic characteristics of things.
54. _____ Does not fear being different.
55. _____ Carries responsibilities well.
56. _____ Enjoys being around other people.
57. _____ Enjoys athletic participation.
58. _____ Has many interests.

APPENDIX H





APPENDIX J

Tel : 0159 843 206 (h)
21500 (w)

P.O. Box 1255
THOHOYANDOU
0950
05 March 1996

The Region Director
Region 3
THOHOYANDOU
0950

Dear Sir

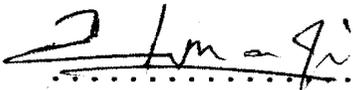
APPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS IN SOME
SECONDARY SCHOOLS UNDER YOUR JURISDICTION

I am a teacher at Sam Mavhina Secondary School who is enroled with UNISA for a Masters' Degree in Psychology of Education. My topic is "Sociocultural factors in the family that are significant for the development of giftedness in Vhavenda children".

I therefore apply for permission to conduct interviews with grade 8 and 9 learners who show high academic achievement in some of the schools that are under your jurisdiction. I promise not to disturb their teaching process.

I look forward to hear from you as soon as you possibly can.

Yours Faithfully



.....

Lumadi T E (Mr)

Northern Transvaal Province
EDUCATION, ARTS, CULTURE & SPORTS

TEL: (21031)Ext.

Private Bag X 2259
SIBASA
0970

FAX: (0155)

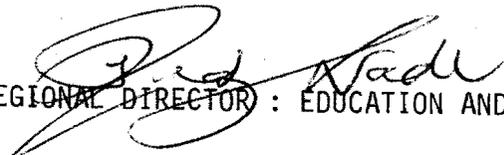
REFERENCE NO: ...7/4/2/1

ENQUIRIES: M.D. Mathelemusa

06 MAR 1996

Mr T.E. Lumadi
P.O. Box 1255
THOHOYANDOUAPPLICATION FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT INTERVIEWS AT SOME SECONDARY
SCHOOLS: MR T.E. LUMADI

1. Your application dated 05 March 1996 has reference.
2. Your application to conduct interviews at some of our secondary schools is hereby approved.
3. However, you are advised to first contact the Area Managers and then the principals of the schools at which you intend to conduct these interviews.


REGIONAL DIRECTOR : EDUCATION AND CULTURE (REGION 3)



Fakulteit Opvoedkunde

UNISA

Faculty of Education

MAY 1996

SUBJECT: EVALUATOR'S REPORT: MED QUESTIONNAIRES

CANDIDATE: TE LUMADI

In 1996 I have scrutinized the MEd questionnaire for the above-mentioned student, and wish to detail my observation in this report.

Grammatical changes were effected here and there. The deficiencies pertaining ^{to} grammatical errors are in my judgement due to the typist's ignorance rather than to deliberate educational fraud.

Procedures for conducting interviews have been in evidence. I am pleased to point out that since my last assessment, there does seem to have been a great improvement. As such, the questionnaire is of an acceptable standard for this level of study.

MW LUMADI
Subject Didactics (Tshivenda)

STD (VECO)
BA HONS (UNISA)
BEd (WITS)
MEd (RAU)
MA (STELLENBOSCH) in progress

NAME	GRADE	AGE	SEX	BIRTH ORDER	MITCHELL SCORES	ENVIRONMENT	FATHER'S OCCUP.	MOTHER'S OCCUP
1 Khumbe	9	15.7	Male	Eldest of five	94%	Urban	General manager	Clerk
2 Thanya	9	14.5	Female	Eldest of three	92%	Urban	Project manager	Teacher
3 Tshino	8	14.1	Female	Eldest of three	76%	Urban	School principal	Teacher
4 Phophi	9	14.8	Female	Eldest of three	76%	Urban	School principal	Sales lady
5 Rabe	8	13.3	Female	Eldest of three	96%	Rural	Teacher	Nurse
6 Shoni	9	14.11	Male	Second of three	86%	Rural	Driver	Hawker
7 Edith	8	15.2	Female	Eldest of five	88%	Rural	Labourer	Shebeen owner
8 Olga	8	13.11	Female	Third of five	90%	Rural	Insurance rep.	Sales lady
9 Rama	8	13.9	Female	Eldest of four	80%	Urban	Teacher	Teacher
10 Sana	8	13.5	Female	Third of four	75%	Rural	Building contractor	Housewife