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Negotiating Identities: Experiences of rural migrant learners in an urban school in Johannesburg

Name: NOMATHAMSANQA WONGO

Student number: 0505996V

Degree: M.Ed.

Field of study: EDUCATION

Supervisor: Dr ALFRED MASINIRE

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DECLARATION

I NomathamsanqaWongo (Student number 0505996v)

am a student registered for M . ED in the year 2012

* I am aware that plagiarism (the use of someone else's work without their permission and/or without acknowledging the original source) is wrong

* I confirm that the work submitted for assessment for the above course is my own unaided work except where I have explicitly indicated otherwise

* I have followed the required convention in referencing the thoughts and ideas of others.

* I understand that the University of the Witwatersrand may take disciplinary action against me if there is a belief that this is not my own work or that I have failed to acknowledge the source of the ideas or words in my writing.

Signature N.A. WONGO

Date: 15 February 2016

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ABSTRACT

Due to the contextual difference between rural schools and urban school, many rural learners have migrated to urban schools. The rural population movement in the urban contexts has resulted in an increased number of rural learners in urban schools and also contributed in the diversity of cultures, ethnicities and races in urban schools making it difficult for teachers to respond to every learner's needs. This study hypothesises that rural learners are likely to face challenges in terms of inclusion and negotiating their identities in the new urban schools. This study describes the challenges faced by rural migrant learners in new urban school, and how these migrant learners construct their identities in the new urban context. The study focusses on one primary school in Johannesburg that has a large influx of rural learners over the years. Using the key concepts of social identity, social inclusion and social exclusion, this describes the lived experiences of migrated learners and how they negotiate their identities in a new urban context. Findings show that migrated learners face inclusive challenges both academically and socially and challenges in adapting to the new urban school environment. The factors that caused academic challenges were: language barrier, difficult subjects, and teachers' intervention. Social challenges were, adapting to a new environment, interacting with other learners and learning a new culture of the school.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND CONTEXT

Urbanisation and rural underdevelopment provide both pull and push factors for many people in rural areas to migrate to South African urban areas such as Johannesburg. Most of these rural migrants move to city schools serving predominantly low-income learners, immigrant learners, and learners of colour. This rural population movement into urban contexts has resulted in an increased number of rural learners in urban schools which has also contributed to the diversity of cultures, ethnicities and races in urban schools in Johannesburg. However, accommodating diverse learners and creating an environment where these learners could feel a sense of belonging could be strenuous if teachers do not understand how migrant rural learners' negotiate their identities in a new urban context. Bhugra & Becker (1998) posit that migrant learners experience "multiple stresses" that impact on their wellbeing, including loss of cultural norms, religious customs, social support systems, adjustment to a new culture and shifts in identity. In the case of rural migrant learners, adhering to new rules and practicing the norms that are not familiar to them might make them feel excluded and not part of the new school context. In the above context, rural learners in urban contexts have to negotiate their identities. This process of identity negotiation might present academic, social, and psychological challenges to these learners. Thus it remains important to investigate how these learners navigate their way in new urban schools in order for educators to find ways to include these rural migrant learners.

Most rural migrant learners fail at school, not because they lack cognitive skills but because they feel alienated and isolated from others and from the urban educational process. They do not feel a sense of belonging and inclusion in the new school environment. Adding to the notion of belonging is Miller (2010) who claims that identity formation is tied to the sense of belonging, a feeling of whether we are insiders or not (p 72).

In South Africa inclusion in the mainstream classroom as outlined in the White Paper 6 (2001) is about recognising and respecting the differences among all learners and getting learners to "fit into "a particular kind of system or integrating them into an existing system (p 17). Basically the White Paper 6 considers inclusion on racial and religious lines, especially in relation to the recognition of the past exclusionary policies under the apartheid policies. The White Paper 6 promotes inclusion as treating all learners equally. This study hopes to extend the concept of inclusion to cater for rural learners who have migrated into urban schools. Often, teachers perceive inclusion as treating every learner equally without acknowledging their differences. The danger of treating every learner the same is that it excludes the different needs of learners. This kind of inclusion in most cases results in "other" learner's (in this case migrant learners) feeling excluded because according to the White Paper 6, these learners should be integrated in the mainstream.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Wenger (1999) and Handke (2012) claim that identities develop by interacting with others in a particular social context. Handke extends that a person's identity is developed, in part, by the society in which a person lives in. In other words social relations influence identity formations therefore the environment can influence the identity of a person and how the person should conduct him or herself. The perception of different rural-urban identities poses a predicament for rural immigrant learners when they migrate to an urban environment. Certain identities according to Handke (2012) are marginalized in urban settings, especially rural identities. As a result some learners, especially migrant learners struggle to perform well academically. Teachers tend to label such learners as underperfoming and coping academically yet not aknowledge the fact that these learners do not feel the sense of belonging and feel isolated in the new environment especially when they are not accomodated in the new school context. The study explores the negotiation of identities by rural migrant learners in a new urban school. As these learners come into urban schools their identities are often viewed as not complementary to their academic success. This study argues that they do not necessarily abandon their rural identities; neither do they embrace wholly the new urban identities; rather these learners negotiate and acquire hybrid and in-between identities (Bhabha, 1994). The study hopes to describe how rural learners adapt in a new urban school.

It is important for rural migrant learners to mobilize and negotiate identities that are congruent with urban schools so that they feel part and parcel of the

urban school community. This will boost their self-esteem so that they may adjust socially and achieve academically. The study is based on one primary school in Johannesburg that has a large number of migrated rural learners.

PURPOSE STATEMENT

The purpose of this study is to describe the challenges faced by rural migrant learners in a new urban school and how these migrant learners construct their identities in the new urban context. Speaking about foreign immigrants, Zimmermann (2012) argues that when these immigrants enter a new national context they are carrying a mixture of ethnic and different social identities from their home country and face assimilation challenges in the new ethnic and national identities (p6). When a foreigner enters a new social context, he/she has to conform to the social competences of that environment (which may be different from their home background). It becomes hard for a learner to become competent in that environment if he/she does not feel the sense of belonging. According to the REAP (2009) there is a sense of something lacking in these learners from rural context that is why they face difficulties when they enter urban schools. What I have noticed in my experience as an educator is that the academic language used in urban schools is what most learners from rural context struggle with the most. They struggle to understand the language and also struggle to follow instructions. Lack of resources also deprives them from acquiring other skills learned at school. In order for us to fully understand the challenges that they are facing and be able to assist these learners, we need to document all the challenges they are

facing. We need to examine other effects within the urban learning space that may hinder their learning progress, like the change in identity. With the growing out-migrations from rural to urban schools the problems that the rural learners face when they move to urban schools require serious investigations to ensure that they also succeed in their new urban learning context.

The focus of this study is to examine from the learners' perspective, how rural learners who have migrated into urban school feel, either included or excluded because of who they are and from where they come and how they negotiated their social identities to belong in the new school environment. This study believes that understanding of identity construction of migrated learners will assist teachers develop practices that will support the multi-phasic adjustment process. The process that will acknowledge the different identity of learners and assist learners with negotiating their identities and participating well in the new environment is needed**.**

RATIONALE

The significance of this research is to document from the perspective of the learners, the challenges and experiences that rural migrant learners encounter when they enter urban primary schools and how they negotiate their identities to adapt to a new environment. There has been little research conducted to document the educational challenges that students who migrate from rural to urban schools face particularly from the learners' point of view.

A few studies have focused on the challenges students from rural areas face when they enter higher education in urban settings (REAP), 2002). Some researchers have examined the educational problems encouraged by foreign immigrant students when they enter urban schools in South Africa (Adedayo, 2010). Adedayo (2010) found that immigrant students experience South African schools in an array of uniquely challenging ways. For example they struggle with the sense of belonging and the formation of identities. He also found out that language is a huge problem especially for those immigrants who come from countries where English is not the language of instruction in school. What this study seeks to accomplish is describing the challenges that learners from rural South African communities face in the urban primary schools. The study gives voice to learners from rural areas to try and understand their construction of identities in urban area and how the identities change from rurality to urbanisation. In doing this research, ways to assist learners from rural places migrating to urban primary schools could be found to elevate these learners so that they could succeed in their studies. This study will be important for urban educators who teach students who have migrated from rural schools.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The main question of the study is:

How do rural migrant learners negotiate their identities when they migrate to urban schools.

In order to answer the above research question the following research questions were paused:

1. How do rural migrant learners negotiate their identities in the new urban school?
2. What challenges do they face, socially and academically?
3. What new identities do these rural learners acquire in the new urban schools?

In addressing the above questions, this study hopes to describe the experiences of a selected group of rural learners who have migrated into an urban school in the city of Johannesburg. The description will, thus, provide a narrative that depicts their experiences of identity negotiation.

DELIMITATIONS

The study focused on one primary school in Johannesburg city in South Africa. Participants interviewed were learners from different rural areas and who had been in the school for a year and not more than three years. Since this study depends on participants' experience and memory thereby recollection of their experiences the study concentrated on those students who had more than one year in the school and those who had less than three years in the school. Those who were less than a year had less experience of the challenges while those who had over four years might have forgotten their challenging experiences

The study was conducted from the learner's perspective and not from the teacher's perspective thereby hoping to give learners a voice about their challenges that they had experienced when they migrated to an urban school. Often we hear teachers' views about the problems that the students experience without necessarily listening to how these students think about their own problems. This study encouraged learners to speak for themselves, rather than teachers speaking on their behalf.

CHAPTER 2: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

This section defines and discusses the concepts of identity and belonging, social inclusion and social exclusion from a sociological perspective. The above concepts are believed to be symbiotically connected. Klasen (1998) believes that personal and social identities are critically important in educational settings. He (Klasen, 1998) explains that personal and social identities affect not only how learners perceive themselves but also affects how they are perceived by others and how they engage with others in the school context. Deriving from the claim alluded by Klasen (1998) that personal and social identities are significant in the learning process, what is therefore important is how teachers and the school community understand the social and cultural identities of the new comers and how they include migrated students in the school. This study focuses more on social identity and how migrant learners identify themselves and how they negotiate their social identity in the new environment. In South Africa, the education policy, White Paper 6 (2001) document outlines the notion of inclusion in relation to learners with special needs. The policy focuses more on learners with physical, mental and or learning disabilities (Sayed, Subrahmanian, Soudien, Carrim, Balgopalan, Nekhwevha & Samuel 2007, p11). Apart from the exclusion of physically disabled in the school, Klasen (1998) asserts that one can see social exclusion among non-disabled groups whereas socially generated barriers may reduce the ability of the excluded individual to

interact within the school. This study views another form of exclusion. The exclusion of rural migrant learners who are struggling with issues of belonging in a new school context. It is suspected by this study that migrant learners might be invisible to educators at school because their kind of exclusion has not been considered as worthy of note. What might not be taken into account are their social and cultural needs which they bring from the rural context. As a result these learners may become isolated and marginalized. Most of these challenges are encountered by new comers or immigrant learners so in this context it is rural learners who have migrated in urban schools. Dovidio (2004) entails that Intergroup inclusion and exclusion have critical implications for one's attitudes toward others. This means that learner engages more freely with other individuals if she/he feels the sense of belonging and acceptance. This is due to the fact that Upon social categorization, people often favour in group members ("we") over out group members ("they") in terms of evaluations, attributions, material resources, helping, and social support (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2000). What Gaertner & Dovidio potray is that people compare themselves to others to evaluate which group they belong to. In this context, migrant will compare themselves with other learners especially learners who grew up in the urban area in order for them to evaluate which group they belong to and whether they are included in the host environment or not.

Rewal (2010) points out that a marginalized learner is a learner whose social location is misunderstood and whose identities are contested or denied, whose life circumstances are not known or considered, whose voice is not

heard or silenced, and whose needs have been left unfulfilled (p 4). Schools often include new comers and immigrant learners as part of homogeneous group without identifying their individuals and unique identities. They also rarely assist migrant learners in negotiating their identities.

In support of the above statement Jansen (1998) cited in Sayed et al. (2007) argues that in South Africa 'black' learners have been granted formal access in 'white 'schools, however they encounter a hostile, anti-cultural environment in which assumption are fixed about what constitute a good schooling and appropriate language policy, afflicting damage to the self-esteem and confidence of learners (p.14). This suggests that new comers have to conform to the rules and expectations of their host environment in order to be included. In other words they have to try to be like the host majority in order to survive and feel the sense of belonging in the new school context. The above parallels rural learners in urban school contexts.

SOCIAL IDENTITY AND BELONGING

Social identity according to Brewer (2001) is a central aspect of how we define who we are in society. Brewer (2001) maintains that we consider ourselves to be individuals but it is our membership to a particular group that is most important in constructing our identity. Social identity theorist like Durkheim cited in Brewer (2001) and Deaux (2001) posits that social identity is about categorising ourselves personally and socially, in other words social identity is a process by which we identify ourselves in terms of categories that we share with other people. Similarly Durkheim cited in

Brewer(2001) also explains that social identity is a mental process which involves three steps that people use to evaluate themselves: categorization, identification and social comparison. The first step which is categorization implies that individuals define themselves as belonging in a certain social group, for example culture, religion, ethnic, student, geographical location (urban or rural). The second step is identification meaning that we then adopt the identity of that particular group. We start acting and behaving like that particular group that we are categorised in and the roles of that group starts to feel like a norm, for example being a student, one adopts the norms of being a student and starts behaving like a student. In other words people identify themselves based on the group into which they fall into and consider themselves belonging in that group because of shared beliefs, values and/or practices. The group membership therefore provides a definition of which one is in terms of defining characteristics of that category (Borman, 2001). In addition, Kathleen; Ethier & Deaux (1994) also claim that an important aspect of self-definition is the identification of oneself with other people who share common attributes. People therefore define themselves in terms of others, and shape their social behavior to those around them (Gee, 2000). The third step is social comparison which states that we always compare ourselves with other groups to maintain our self- esteem and to get a sense of who we are in the world, we even compete to maintain the self-esteem.

The three stages of social identity elucidated by Durheim (2000) can assist in comprehending the identities of rural migrant learners and their experiences

that they might be experiencing in the new urban environment. Rural migrant learners enter the new urban environment with background cultures and norms intact that they identify themselves with. People are categorised and also categorise themselves based on their geographical locations and historical cultural backgrounds. They then identify themselves based on the shared cultures and norms which influence their behaviour and identities. For example a learner coming from the rural places of Kwa Zulu Natal will identify him/herself as Zulu person following a Zulu culture. When the migrant learners enter an urban place they are most likely to compare themselves with other learners of the host city (urban place), that is when they will either feel included or excluded/ isolated in the host city. They (rural migrant learners) will then have to find ways of negotiating their identities in order to adapt to the new environment.

Social identity could also be viewed as a social process as it takes place within a social environment and a specific historical context. According to Wenger (1999) identity and social practice are connected because in order to have a practice there need to be a formation of a community whose members can engage with one another and acknowledge each other as participants (p 149). For example teachers and learners form a community to engage with one another in a learning practice. Identity development will be based on how each individual labels him/herself and others in the practice and also by affiliation or engaging in a particular group. Wenger (1999) explains that engagement in practice gives us certain experiences of participation, and

what our communities pay attention to reify us as participants, therefore according to Wenger (1999) identity is produced as a lived experience of participation in specific communities. In other words becoming a "learner" takes both a label of being a "learner" and giving this label meaning through engagement in the learning practice. Gee (2000) defines social identity as being recognised as a certain kind of a person in a given context. Gee, (2000) also mentions that people have multiple identities connected not to their internal states but to their performances in society (p 99). However Gee (2000) does not deny the fact that each person has their own" core identity" which is fixed and not easily changed by changes in society. Core identity is who you are personally, (for example person's sex). Core identity also defines a person and that is not changed by time nor is it changed by different contexts.

Gee (2000) in his theory mentions different ways of viewing identity development. The four perspectives of viewing identity which are interrelated will help us to understand how identity can be developed and maintained through dynamic and relevant social interactions. Gee (2000) asserts that identity can be viewed as *Nature Identity, institutional identity, Discourse identity and Affinity identity*. I shall explain each perspective using rural learners as an example. As I have mentioned earlier, social environment impacts greatly in our identity construction, there are certain expectations from one self and from those around us, expectations like success and wanting to be seen as competent in a certain practice. Nature identity for example is a natural state that a learner is in, the race of a learner "Black,

Indian or white", this is a part of identity, another way of looking at who one is. The learner was not get this label based on what she/he had accomplished but it is part of the natural state of the child. Another example is the one outlined by Gee (2000), He uses a child that is has been diagnosed as having ADHD, this disorder then becomes the "fixed internal state of a child" it becomes part of a child's natural identity (p 101). The second perspective is institutional identity, being a "learner" is part of an identity, however it is not nature that ascribes this identity and it is not what a person has accomplished to gain this identity. Institutional realities create positions from which certain people are expected and sometimes forced to act (Gee, 2000, p 108). A learner is subjected at adhering to school rules and engages in a certain culture of learning. Rural migrant learners who are coming from a school that teaches English as a subject but not as a language of learning could fill the position of being "at risk learners" in the urban English school because of their lack of understanding of the school's language of learning and not doing well academically. The position constitutes institutional identities for these learners. The third perspective is Discourse identity, this perspective is based on how people recognise and perceive an individual. According to Gee (2000), people interact with an individual due to the way they perceive that person. Take for example a rural migrant learner that is not doing well academically, the teacher will recognise and refer to that learner as "at risk" learner. The teacher might spend more time helping the learner in the classroom. Another example, a certain learner could be recognised as being good in maths based on the good work that a learner does or how that learner conducts her/himself around other learners. Gee

argues that people and institutions rely on discursive practices to construct and sustain identities. This means that part of social identity is the way people identify and perceive an individual. The fourth perspective is the affinity identity; this is a set of practices that a person gets involved in, sharing the same interests as the members of that group. Wenger (1999) stipulates that in practice "we know who we are by what is familiar, understandable, usable, negotiable, we know who we are not by what is foreign, opaque and unproductive" (p 153). In other words we identify ourselves with social groups with which we feel kinship and exclude ourselves from groups we do not feel part of. This means that a rural migrant learner might choose to associate him/herself with other rural migrant learners who share the same backgrounds as him or her.

What can be noted from the above explanation of social identity is that social identity is multiple, fluid and under continual construction and reconstruction (Wenger, 1999). A change in one's location in society influences a shift in identity; in the same way as a change in school environment from rural to urban will impact on the identity of rural immigrant learners. Of the four kinds of identities identified by Gee (2000) institutional, discursive and affinity identity will be critical in understanding how rural learners construct and negotiate their identities in urban school contexts.

The notions of social identity and belonging remain a core issue in contemporary discussion of migration (Anthias, 2008). The notion of

belonging according to Anthias (2008) is found mostly in the notions of inclusion, exclusion, access and participation. The questions of belonging often emerge when people feel there are places, spaces and identities that they feel they cannot or do not belong to, in the sense that they cannot gain access, participate or be included within (Anthias, 2008, p8). Most of the literature on migration concurs that immigrant learners experience adjustment issues and adaptation issues when they enrol at schools in the host city and the language being the main problem (Vanderyar & Vanderyar, 2012), Miller (2000), Osborn & Osborn (2005). Osborn & Osborn (2005) like Miller (2000) maintain that language is a basic human right and a main resource in education. If a migrant learner does not comprehend the language of the host school it will be difficult for that learner to feel any sense of belonging and therefore will feel excluded. Vandeyar & Vandeyar (2012) proceed to mention that the degree of belonging to the school centres on how or who immigrants associate and identify with in a bid to shape their identities, which presents the road to acculturating to their new environment (p157). According to Anthias (2008) the two concepts of social identity and belonging live together even though they involve different emphasis. He sums up the differences by declaring that on the one hand social identity involves individual and collective narratives of self and other, presentation and identification. On the other hand belonging is more about the experiences of being part of the social fabric and the ways in which social bonds and ties are manifested in practices, experiences and emotions of inclusion (Anthias, 2008, p157). The latter relates to this study because if rural migrant learners' identities are not well understood and accommodated by the teachers and learners in the host city, the rural migrant

learners might feel excluded and not belonging in the host city which may results negatively in their academic work and social being. According to Hughes (2007) issues of identity and belonging to the institution play a crucial role in retention because retaining students without assisting them is not going to help learners with learning and understanding what they are learning. The sense of belonging according to Hugh (2007) might explain why rural migrant learners fail to do well in their first year of attending a new urban school. It becomes tough for learners to do well in their academic work when they do not feel a sense of belonging in the new environment. Fengen (2010) argue that students who went to urban universities from rural areas have lower levels of attainment and drop out because of their social backgrounds. Students in Fengen's study mentioned the difficulties in language, social difference and struggling to adopt the new culture of the host environment.

Miller (2000) claims that if our different identities are ignored and when we do not feel the sense of belonging in a particular area it therefore becomes challenging for us to do our best and express ourselves. The same applies to rural migrant learners when they enter an urban school; to them the environment is new and they are therefore required to negotiate their identity and try to belong like the rest of the learners in the urban school. Unfortunately it becomes a significant challenge if the rural migrant learners are not assisted by educators to belong and help them develop that sense of belonging that will boost their self- esteem to enable them to do well in their academic work.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION

The concept social exclusion is said to have originated in France in the early 1970s to describe various categories of people who were excluded from employment based social security systems , for example the physically and mentally disabled, aged, and abused children. (Pradhan, 2006; Sayed et al, 2007). The contemporary concept of exclusion has gained a lot of contenting definitions. It has been defined by some authors as the opposite to social integration, as a multi- dimensional concept or as a process of the mechanisms by which people are excluded (Haan, 1998 cited in Pradhan, 2006). Some of the definitions of exclusion according to Klasen (1998), Sayed et al(2007), Pradhan (2006), have sought to emphasize that social exclusion is concerned with the inability to participate fully and effectively in the economic, social and cultural life and in some characteristics alienation and distance from mainstream society. In other words exclusion can be understood as concerned with the relationship between the individual and society, in this case the school context and the dynamics of that relationship (Klasen 1998). Similarly, Barry (1997) reiterates that the familiar form of social exclusion affects those who are unable to participate in the institution patronized by others. For example the marginalized group might not enjoy the benefits of participating fully in an environment because of exclusion by the majority. In this study many urban schools in South Africa consist of learners who have migrated, either from rural areas of the country, township schools, or other neighbouring countries, turning the schools into multicultural and multilingual places. Some learners especially migrated learners are forced to change how they identify themselves as unique

individuals, and start to identify themselves according to the majority of the group in order to try to fit in with the rest.

Barry (1997) distinguishes between social isolation and social exclusion. Social isolation means the non-participation of the individual or group in a social mainstream institution. This means that a rural migrant learner might isolate him/herself from learners that he/she does not relate to and choose to associate with learners that have similar traits or have similar backgrounds, for example rural migrant learner might choose to associate with other migrant learners because they will understand each other better hence they are sharing the same experience and choose to isolate themselves from urban learners due to the perception of difference they hold for urban learners. However this notion of isolation could change once the learner is accommodated by other learners, like urban learners.

Social exclusion occurs for reasons that are beyond control of those subjected to it. Social isolation is when individuals isolate themselves from the rest because they don't regard themselves as similar to the rest. As a result they tend to associate themselves with individual who share the same challenges or experiences they do. Being excluded is beyond the control of the excluded person in that it could be afflicted by others; the majority to the minority.

Klasen (1998) emphasizes the point that the learner is excluded when the needs of that learner are not met by the school, when the learner is not

integrated in a particular group, when the learner is identified as the same like the rest and not as a unique individual. Therefore this illustrates that social exclusion is a process not just a label. A learner is said to be suffering from social exclusion if the learner is unable to participate in, and not recognised by others in the school (Miller, 2000).

SOCIAL INCLUSION

Dei, Wilson & Zine (2002) argue that inclusion as a concept can be understood in two ways, the inclusion of disabled or handicapped students which gives the traditional meaning of inclusion, to make sure that all learners with disabilities are exposed to learning strategies that reach them as individual learners (Vanderyar, 2010). Traditionally special classes were created for these learners with special needs and there were special teachers to teach them separately from "normal" or 'able bodies' students (Vandeyar, 2010). Another way of understanding the concept is the inclusion for socially and culturally different students when they come into the mainstream classrooms. Dei et al, 2001, writes in the North American context of Afro-American black students in a Western white racialized schooling system. This study will focus on the latter concept of inclusion because learners coming from rural backgrounds experience a lot of challenges when they enter urban schools in terms of language and adapting to a new environment and new learning culture. Integrative approach to inclusive schooling does not only mean placing learner who are disadvantaged in a mainstreamed classroom because mainstreaming according to Vanderyar (2010) means that students

with special needs, need to be placed in the general education setting solely to traditional academic expectation with minimal assistance. Teachers are therefore required to vary their teaching styles to meet the diverse learning needs of diverse population (Vanderyar, 2010, p 1). This process requires a teacher to plan a procedure that will cater for every learner's needs. It will also require interventions and educational resources that will assist learners with special needs and help them achieve higher level of personal success like the physically able learners. Inclusion promotes practices that will be "critically cultural, socially responsive and relevant, and must seek to engender empowerment and transformation in the lives of all learners" (Dei, et al 2002, p 4). The above concept of inclusion applies to this study because most migrated learners experience learning and communication challenges therefore they will benefit from teacher intervention such as different approaches to teaching and setting a welcoming classroom environment

CONCLUSION

Social identity is symbiotic to social belonging, social inclusion and social exclusion. Most research about identity show that people identify themselves based on the social groups they belong to because there are similarities that are shared so when they are immerse in that group they feel the belonging in that group. When an individual is included in a particular group, they also feel the sense of belonging. Padilla and Perez (2003) hold that social identities are guided by two core human motives: "the need to be unique and the need to belong" (p43). The concepts of social identity according to Padilla and

Perez (2003) reiterate that the individuals' social cognitions are socially construed depending on their group or collective frames of reference (p 43). Using the concepts of identity, inclusion/ belonging and exclusion, this study aims to shed light on the difficulties faced by a selected group of rural learners who had migrated into an urban school in Johannesburg.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

INTRODUCTION

Much research has shown that the educational and psychosocial challenges faced by rural migrant learners in urban schools are English language acquisition, cultural and psychosocial adjustment, and for some, the effects of limited formal education are undoubtedly complex and interconnected. This chapter reviews literature on the intersection of rural-urban identities of young school boys and girls in the city. In the absence of empirical research on local migration (rural-urban) I will present evidence from international migration as there is not much literature on rural migrant learners who have migrated to urban areas.

DEFINING RURAL

There is a perception that there are major differences between rural and urban contexts. There are different approaches and views in defining the rural, however it shows that there is no clear definition of the rural. Woods (2005) outlined four different approaches that are used to define the rural. Descriptive definitions, socio-cultural definitions, the rural as locality and the rural as social representation.

Descriptive approach according to Woods (2005) descriptive definitions can be characterised by the use of statistical indicators, for example density (number of households or buildings). The assumption behind this approach

is that a clear geographical distinction can be made between urban and rural areas. The problem with this approach is that it is difficult to define clear boundaries. Areas can be reorganised and changed over the years, buidings, houses can be revovated which may result in the change of the outcome of the descriptive definion. The second approach is socio-cultural definions which assumes that population density has an effect on behaviour and attitudes of people (Halfacree, 1993). This approach assumes that lifestyle seems to be related to where people live. This results in different rural-urban dichotomies, wher for example urban life is characterised by dynamics and rural life by stability, or rational vs traditional (Halfacree, 1993, p 25). The rural-urban dichotomies according to Woods (2005) focus on groups of people, shifting the focus from rural areas to people living in these areas. Woods *et al* continues to say that the rural –urban continuum is critiqued because it is still oversimplifying reality: for example in rural areas, urban societies can exist, and the other way around. The third approach is defining rural as locality, this approach investigates "the process that might create distinctive rural localities" (Woods, 2005, p 10). Structures such as agricultural agricultural production, low population density and consumption patterns according to Halfacree (1993) are appointed to be rural and define specific localities. However Woods (2005) argue that these structures or indicators could also be used to identify certain issues in urban areas, they are not specifically rural. The forth approach is defining rural as social representation, Halfacree *et al* describes this approach by explaining that "rural are words and concepts understood and used by people in everyday talk" (p 29). Woods adds by declaring that it is important to ask people what

images, symbols and signs people think of when thinking about rural life, in order to create a more flexible definition of rural. He feels that rural in people's perception is personal and/or cultural and/ or historical bound, many images will occure. These social representations are influenced by politics and media as well. The rural myth is another discourse, this view can be decribed as one opposed to everything that is thought of to be negative about the urban. For example the rural is described as nostalgic, problem free, natural, healthier and friendlier than the urban (Bell, 1992).

RURAL IDENTITY versus URBAN IDENTITY

Petrzella (2004) cited in Handke (2012) explains the notion of "social identity" as a relatively new concept in sociology which is called "place identity". This concept of place identity according to Handke (2012) can explain why rural and urban inhabitants may feel that they have vastly different identities, because of physical geographical landscapes and how people interact with those landscapes. For example the representation of the rural contexts appears to be different from the representation of urban community. One of the four approaches outlined by Halfacree (1993) is defining rural as social representation, he explains that rural "are words and concepts understood and used by people in everyday talk" (p 29). Woods (2005) follows by adding that it is important to ask people what images, symbols and signs people think when thinking about rural life in order to create a more flexible definition of rural. Woods (2005) also pointed out that because rural in people's perception is personal and/or cultural and/or historical bound,

many images will occure. He agues that social representations are influenced by politics and media as well. The concept of place identity suggests that people who come from different sorts of geographical settings tend to view the world and interpret its meanings differently. In this context rural and urban inhabitants often hold stereotypical views of each other. In order to understand the stereotypes that are held by rural people on urban people and vice versa, it is important to first outline the difference between the rural and the urban environments. Cloke (2006) asserts that the distinctions of rurality is vested in its oppositional positioning to the urban place, where the rural area represent the site of conceptual struggle and the urban place represent the multifarious conditions of vastly differing scales and styles of struggle (p 18). In other words, the concept of rurality makes meaning only when viewed in relation to the urban. The poor image of the rural becomes visible when compared to the progress of the urban. Adding to the notion of rurality is Moletsane (2012) who also confirmed that most research work on rurality views rural areas a places which are isolated, backward, marginalized, depopulated and poor (p 3). However Moletsane (2012) believes research on rurality and rural education should be repositioned as the previous research paradigms do not define rurality in current times. Rurality according to Cloke (2006) represents both the imaginative space and material space. By imaginative space he is referring to all kinds of cultural meanings held by people in rural places ranging from idyllic to oppressive. As a material space, Cloke (2006) refers to the rural space a place rich of nature and where most farming is done (p18).

Some of the stereotypes are that urban people tend to identify rural people as individuals who are more reserved. Most studies represent the beliefs and values of rural people as totally different and distinct from those held by urban people because of their geographical differences and the strong cultural backgrounds (Petrzella, 2004). In this context rural learners enter the new urban setting carrying their ethnic and place identities. They need to negotiate their identities in relation to the new place. Identities are mutually constructed in social interactions. “People define their own identities in terms of others, and shape their social behaviour to those around them” (Gee, 2000). Gee (2000) makes a point that a person cannot get recognised in anyway except, for social and historical reasons. Rural people that live in the same area are part of the same culture that they identify themselves with, but it does not necessarily mean that they have the same identity. What it means is that their cultural background and what their culture has taught them is part of their identity. This does not imply that identity is fixed; one can still negotiate identity in a new environment.

RURAL AND URBAN IDENTITIES IN THE WEST

Bell (1992) conducted a study of the rural-urban continuum in England and he found that the people of Childerley, a rural village in London held strong convictions that they were very different from the urban people of London in two main ways – their strong communalities to other villagers, and their village’s closeness to nature (p. 66). The village residents Bell interviewed

“were virtually unanimous in ascribing a distinctive lifestyle and pattern of social relations to country life” (p. 69).

Bell (1992) also found that residents seemed to idealize rural life, yet feel it is in decline, due to the corporate farming and also the fact that wealthy Londoners were starting to move into the community. Most of the residents also reported distinctions between themselves and “city people,” of whom they had a variety of slightly derogatory nicknames, including “bloody townies” and “yuppies” (p. 72). Bell (1992) reported that a number of residents believed that “country people are in contact with a greater reality and have more objective view of life” than urban dwellers, because country people are in touch with ““natures primal laws,” and grow up comparing man-made developments with the natural environment (p. 78). This was used as an example of a greater “country identity” and sense of rural belonging that most residents expressed (p. 75-77). According to Handke (2012) people and their landscapes mutually define each other; people give the land an identity while the land simultaneously gives its inhabitants an identity. Petrzelka (2004) points out that as a landscape faces changes, the identities of the people associated with that landscape will change, too, and as the identities of the people change, they change their landscapes to reflect those changes. Once identification with a social group has taken place, the implications go further than mere self-definition (Hogg & Terry, 2001). The representation of a particular group as a relevant social identity in people's minds implies that it does not only prescribes their attributes as members of the particular group, but also prescribes what they should think and feel and

how they should behave. This is particularly the case in situations that emphasize or make a particular social identity salient. Thus social identification has far-reaching and important attitudinal, behavioral and normative consequences (Bornman, 2001).

Schultz (2004) cited in Handke (2012) conducted a study about how rural students adjust to leaving their rural areas and experience the first year of college in the urban setting. Schultz (2004) interviewed a group of rural students during their senior year of high school and again one year after their high school graduation, to assess how their perceptions of the "outside world" and their own "self-definitions" and personal aspirations had changed (Handke, 2012). Schultz claims that exposure to the larger sociocultural world is the main component determining rural adolescents' aspirations in life, including education attainment, occupational goals and family matters. Schultz also found that adolescents raised on farms with little exposure to the outside world were slightly more likely to stay in their rural areas and work rural jobs than to leave the area and work in high-level professional jobs. High-level professional jobs are usually not available in rural areas; therefore rural youth are not exposed to a wide variety of career paths to explore for themselves and they also may choose rural jobs for the convenience of staying in the rural area amongst family and friends. "Rural communities limit both cultural exposure and job opportunities for young adults, as a result, people with higher aspirations migrate to more urban settings (Handke, 2012). In terms of education, Emerging Voices (2005) has shown that South African rural schools are still at a disadvantage when

compared to urban schools. It is believed that the level of education in some of the rural areas is still low. To gain better education is part of the reason why rural people migrate to urban areas.

The "urban school" according to Hunter (2012) signify more than its location in a city or densely populated area. It usually refers to city schools serving predominantly low-income students, immigrant students, English learners, and students of colour. Preparing new teachers to be effective in these schools involves an integrated program of study and field experience designed to develop the skills, knowledge and attitudes needed to become an effective teacher of these student groups within the context of urban communities and city school systems (Hunter, 2012, p 2). Urban schools should therefore attend more affectively to the identities and self-representations of students from the rural areas. Another issue that is raised by Miller (2000) is that rural migrants often come from non –English background, therefore it is the responsibility of the school to ensure that migrant learners are made to understand the dynamic interrelations of institutional context.

Hollins (1990) cited in Ladson-Billings (2008) has looked carefully at success models for African-American urban school children. Hollins' (1990) analysis suggests that successful approaches to raising academic achievement for Black inner-city students follow one of three theoretical perspectives. The first perspective is that of remediation or acceleration without regard to students' social or cultural backgrounds. Approaches such as the Chicago Mastery Learning Program follow the same perspective. The second perspective is that of socializing urban Black children into mainstream

behaviours, values, and attitudes while simultaneously teaching them basic skills. Many Head Start programs operated from this socialization perspective. The third perspective is one that attempts to facilitate learning by building on students' own social and cultural backgrounds (Ladson-Billings, 2008). Billings (2008) also illustrates how teachers can use students' language and culture as a bridge to school achievement. The third perspective would benefit the rural migrant learners that the study is investigating because; it acknowledges their socio-cultural capital. This means that they need to make sense of their new culture. When migrant learners background is accommodated in the new school environment, they will be motivated to achieve in the new school, however if their cultural beliefs and their languages are not acknowledged, they will not be motivated to do well at a new school. It is thought that motivation often depends on whether an endeavour is linked to one's sense of social identity and feeling belonging (Cohen & Garcia, 2010, p365). Migrant learners' languages and cultures should be accommodated in the new school environment in order for them to feel the sense of belonging. Similarly according to Ladson- Billing (2008) the work that is done in many of the (Black independent) schools see students' cultural background as critical to academic success **(**Ladson-Billings, 2008).

CONCLUSION

The research mentioned above illustrates the possible intensity of rural-urban identity difference. When an individual relocates to a new

environment, he/she would have to adapt to the new environment. This is the same with the rural migrant learners entering a new urban school, they need to negotiate their identities in order to adapt to the new environment. Kathleen & Deaux (2004) added to the issue of negotiating identity by claiming that during the transitions, individuals may find it necessary to adapt in some way to the changes in environmental opportunities and demands (p 243). The issue of rural- urban migration in the context of schooling seem to have been relatively under researched in South Africa. But given the current movement of people from rural to urban environments, learner migration provides an educational challenge for the learners and teachers.

CHAPTER 4: METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the qualitative case study approach in conducting research, the instruments of data collection, the research procedure, ethical issues, sampling and method of data analysis. The main methods of gathering data were open-ended interviews.

QUALITATIVE STUDY METHODS

Qualitative research approaches have the advantage and strength of describing in detail the problem and help to understand issues that are not easily observable (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). This is because qualitative research focuses on a small part of the problem and seeks to understand it in more depth. The aim of this study is to describe how rural learners who migrated into an urban school negotiated/shifted their identities in a new urban setting. The study focuses on the lived experiences of rural migrated learners.

A case study is one type of a qualitative research approach which will be used in this research. According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2007) a case study is a specific instance that is designed to clarify a more general principle. The single instance is a bounded system that is examined in depth over time (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p 24). Cohen et al (2007)

claim that the case study provide a "unique example of real people in real situations, enabling readers to understand ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with abstract theories" (p. 253). This study is a case study because it focuses on one phenomenon in depth, that is to investigate how rural migrant learners negotiate their identities and challenges they face in adapting to the new environment in one school in the city of Johannesburg. This study describes in depth how migrant learners perceive themselves, how they perceive urban learners and how they negotiated their identities in the new urban school.

INTERVIEW METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

Using the open ended interview technique in this research allowed me to gain a deeper insight into experiences of the respondents and how they negotiate their identities in the urban schools. (Cohen, Minion & Morrison, 2007, p. 32). To collect data, l used open ended interview questions that allowed all participants to explain their lived experiences in depth. The participants' responses were audio recorded and later transcribed. The reason for using open–ended questions was because open –ended questions have a number of advantages being flexible; they allow the interviewer to probe so that the interviewer may go into more depth if she chooses, or clear up any misunderstandings (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The open ended questions according to Cohen et al (2007) can catch the authenticity, richness depth of response, honesty and candour which are the hallmarks of qualitative data (p 32). There were structured questions that were asked

to learners, to probe more from the learners, the interviewer asked learners to explain their responses and explain their actions.

Focus group interviews were used. Cohen et al (2007) argue that the use of group interviews will be useful with children for collecting data in this study, for it encouraged interaction between learners rather than simply a response to an adult's question and it also assisted in putting learners at ease.

POPULATION OF THE STUDY

This study was based on one primary school in Johannesburg that has a large number of migrated learners. The data of this study was collected in 2015. The school was a model C school that has enrolled a large number of rural migrant learners in 2013 and 2014 (see appendix f). The study used learners who have been with the school for a year but not more than three years. The reason is that learners who have not yet completed a year in the school are still in the process of experiencing being in a new school context, and learners that have been with the school for more than three years would not remember precisely the challenges they experienced in adapting to the new environment. The learners who were used in this study were learners who were in the intermediate and senior phase (grade 5 to 7) because their age (11 to 14 years old) was appropriate to tell their stories coherently than learners who were in the foundation phase. I obtained the list of learners who have migrated to this urban primary school from the school office/ principal from the attendance registers.

SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

Purposive sampling was used in this study. The reason for purpose sampling is that the participants were only rural learners who have migrated into the urban school. The study purposefully wanted to elicit data from the rural migrant learners' perspective. The sample of the study consisted of five (5) learners that were coming from different rural context and were enrolled in the same urban school. The migrant learners were between the ages of 11 and 13 years old, from grade five to grade seven. Using five learners was convenient for the study for two reasons; first reason was that I had time to explore their experiences in depth. The second reason was that five participants were manageable. I conducted interviews in a group.

DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURE

In analysing data I used the inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns and relationships among the categories to make meaning of the data (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p 367). Learners' responses were audio recorded, and then later transcribed data into categories using the coding format to develop patterns (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). In analysing the data I transcribed what was important to quote individually and in similar responses I quoted them as a group. Lastly I identified patterns and themes in the data. To help reveal the focus

of the study and to categorize data I made use of coding. Codes were generated from the data and continuously modified to accommodate new data and new insights about the data. This was a flexible and an interactive process that yielded extensive codes and themes (Sandelowski, 2000, p 338).

ETHICAL ISSUES

To safeguard the confidence and integrity of my participants, I took ethical considerations by asking permission from their parents/guardians using a consent form (see Appendix B). Permission to conduct interviews was granted by the GDE (see Appendix D) and the Principal of the school (see Appendix C). Learners were not be coerced to take part in the study, they were given letters that served as an invitation (see Appendix E). The invitation clearly stated that they were allowed to withdraw when they were no longer interested to participate. Pseudo names will be used to keep learners information discreet. Learners information and responses willl not be disclosed to anyone. The data will be kept safe in locked cupboard and later it will be distroyed. Ethical requirements of the Wits School of Education will be observed (see Appendix A).

CHAPTER 5: DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

INTRODUCTION

This study aimed to examine the negotiation of identities by rural migrant learners in the new urban school. Data was collected using the open-ended interviews with 5 purposefully selected learners who had migrated to one urban school in Johannesburg from rural areas. In this chapter participants will be referred to as; Learner 1 (L1), Learner 2 (L2), Learner 3 (L3), Learner 4 (L4) and learner 5 (5) in order to maintain their anonymity. The discussion of learners' responses included verbatim quotations and references to the literature to get a clearer understanding of their experiences in the new urban school. The learners' responses were analysed and organised into themes. The themes were organised in relation to the questions that were asked to learners in order to answer research questions in the introduction section above. The comparison of different responses elicited by the interviews intended to describe how rural migrant learners negotiate their identities in the new urban school, the challenges they face in terms of inclusion and exclusion, socially and academically, and the new identities these rural learners acquire in the new urban schools. The eight themes that emerged were as follows: The first theme was **Resources and learners' identity;** this theme outlined the difference between the urban and rural school backgrounds that the migrant learners were enrolled in. The theme also described how the difference in environment affected the social identity of learners. The second theme was **Social identity of rural learners in**

urban school and pedagogy. The theme illustrated the social identities of migrant learners in the new urban environment and also illustrated the forms of pedagogies offered by the rural and urban schools. The third theme being **Learners 'social belonging**, dealt with the forms of social inclusion/exclusion that were experienced by the migrant learners. The fourth theme: **Dress code and Cultural identity,** this theme showed that dress code could also be part of identity and how a person could be socially excluded based on the image she/he portrays. The fifth them outlined **Respect and Identity** which showed that respect could be instilled and practiced differently in different geographical locations. The sixth theme: **Language and learners social identity** stating that language is part of identity, part of learners identity is based not only on their culture but on the language that we speak. Language could either include or exclude an individual in a particular group. The seventh theme that followed was **Invisible identities in the classroom;** learners described how they were excluded in the classroom and how their lack of engagement was hindering with their learning and how that affected their social identities. The last theme was **Embodying urban identities:** language and friendship, this theme illustrates how rural migrants negotiated their identities to adapt to the new environment.

Learners' Profiles

Participants	Rural area & Home Lang	First year & grade in urban school	Grade in 2014	Age	Gender
Learner 1	Nquthu in Kwa Zulu Natal. (ZULU)	2013, grade 6	Grade 6	13 yrs.	Girl
Learner 2	Kandla in Kwa Zulu Natal (ZULU)	2013, Grade 5	Grade 5	12 yrs.	Girl
Learner 3	Qwaqwa in Orange Free State (SOTHO)	2012, Grade 5	Grade 6	13 yrs.	Boy
Learner 4	Statharem in Eastern Cape (XHOSA)	2013, Grade 7	Grade 7	14 yrs.	Girl
Learner 5	Limpopo (SEPEDI)	2012, Grade 6	Grade 7	14yrs.	Boy

Fig 1:

The above table (fig 1) shows the learners' profiles (e.g. rural origin, language, grade, age, gender, race and ethnicity). All five learners came from different rural provinces in South Africa. The notion of coming from different provinces or having diverse ethnical backgrounds was interesting because it brought forth the understanding of how the different backgrounds impacted on their experiences and identities in the new setting. There was an assumption made by Dam, Heins & Elbersen (2002), that spatial representation, spatial

preferences and spatial behaviour were linked and that individuals act on the basis of their interpretation and representation (p 463). If the interpretation of the environment or reality was subjective as mentioned by Dam, Heins & Elberton (2002), then one could have assumed that the social identity of migrated learners was subjective and not similar to all of them.

The table above also connotes the year that the learners enrolled at the urban school and the grade they were registered for when they arrived at the urban school. When comparing the grades that the migrant learners were doing in 2014 with the grades that they were doing before they came to the urban school, the table shows that the learners were retained. The assumption of most teachers was that when learners repeat the grade they would get a better chance of understanding the work that they were learning in the previous year. This implies to rural migrant learners as well because of the change in contexts which was different from what they were used to and also the difference in the learning styles and languages. This study argues that language, difference in context between urban and rural or even teaching/learning styles could be part of the learners' underperformances however the issues of identity and belonging also serve as a troubling issue that may hinder with the learners' academic performance at a new school.

1. RESOURCES AND LEARNERS' IDENTITIES

It was vital to find out if there were major differences between the rural schools that the rural migrant learners attended and the urban school environment that they are currently attending. Having a sense of the learners'

background assisted in comprehending the identity transitions faced by migrant learners. Learners were asked to describe the differences between their current school environment and their previous rural school environment. The learners were being asked to show differences in the structures of the building, resources, the language of learning and the cultural difference between the two schools. Even though all five learners came from different rural provinces and different schools, common findings of their current urban school appearing to be better equipped by way of resources, differences in culture and language compared to the schools they were coming from.

In their previous rural schools they mentioned having limited resources, such as computers, libraries and sports facilities. The migrant learners mentioned that they were not exposed to learning using technological resources such as computers. They also added that they did not have libraries at their previous school and in their rural area that they were coming from. This gave a clear indication that the leaners were not exposed to the culture of reading and finding information using different books apart from the notes they got from their teachers in class. They also mentioned that they did not know how to use computers as in the current urban school they do maths activities using a computer.

L2: 12 year old girl, in grade 5, from Kwa Zulu Natal said: *"I had never used a computer before in my life; I didn't even know how to switch the computer on".* "This kind of comment was common amongst all the learners that were interviewed. Using technology for learning was one of the skills they all did not

acquire at their previous school. The issue with selecting books from the library was also a challenge to those who used the library. **L4:** 14 year old girl,in grade 7, from Eastern Cape said: "*I remember when I was still a new learner, did not even know how to choose books in the library*." Some learners mentioned that they did not use the library more often.

Learners also commented about the space and the building of their previous rural schools**. L 5:** 14 year old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo stated that the previous rural school he attended was not in good condition when compared to the schools in the urban areas. He mentioned that apart from having limited educational resources, the rural school had some classes which were not built properly and which were damaged.

L3: 13 year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State; also added that his previous school's building was very small compared to the current school. According to **L3** the rural school had about 10 classes and the office accommodating all learners from grade 1 up to grade 7. Adding to the statement made by **L3** 13 year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State was **L5:** 14 year old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo who said:

"*We had mixed grades in one classes in my previous school, grade 4 and 5 were placed in one class and taught by one teacher."*

The conditions of the rural schools described by learners were similar to what Gardener (2008) illustrated about rural schools. "National Assessment Report

published by the Department of Education in 2007, many rural schools still lack clean running water, electricity, libraries, laboratories and computers. More than one-quarter of the schools in Eastern Cape, KwaZulu-Natal and Limpopo have more than 45 learners per classroom. These were not easy conditions in which to provide a sound education for young people" (Gardener, 2008, p4).

Furthermore learners also revealed the differences in the teaching styles between the urban and rural schools. Two learners shared that they were taught all subjects by one teacher. One learner (**L4:** 14 year old girl, in grade 7 from Eastern Cape) mentioned that the teachers used to write notes on the board for them as they never used textbooks. Other learners mentioned that they used to share textbooks from which their teachers taught. They also did activities from the textbooks and wrote answers in their books. This means that when they first started in the urban school these migrant learners did not know how to use other resources that were available in the new school. They mentioned that they saw themselves less advantaged when compared to the learners of the host city.

2. PEDAGOGY AND SOCIAL IDENTITY OF RURAL LEARNERS IN AN URBAN SCHOOL

Learners were asked how they identified themselves when they were still new comers in the urban context. Some learners **L1** (13 year old girl, in grade 6, from Kwa Zulu Natal)**, L2** (12 year old girl, in grade 6, from Kwa Zulu Natal)**, L5** (14 year old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo) mentioned that they identified themselves as disadvantaged learners because they were coming from disadvantage schools in the rural school. These learners were identifying themselves based on their previous environment and the schools they were coming from. The migrant learners perceived themselves as a disadvantaged group due to the fact that they were coming from the rural schools which are in poor conditions when compared to the urban school they are attending now. They were not comparing themselves to other rural migrant learners but they were rather comparing themselves to urban learners. The above was similar to what Vandeyar &Vandeyar (2012) illustrated in their study; that immigrant learners compared themselves not with other immigrant learners, but with learners of the host country (p155).

L5: 14 year old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo "*City learners know a lot of things, like using computers and spoke English very well. In class they would ask questions and speak to the teachers in English, they were just not scared to speak in English, like I was".*

L3 (13 year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State) identified himself as inferior because he was not knowledgeable about using technology especially when he

had to do his school work. He mentioned that in the current school there was a lot of learning so some other things they were learning were new to him. **L4 (**14 year old girl, in grade 7, from Eastern Cape identified herself as "*back ward learner*" simply because she knew few things when it came to new ways of learning. For example she said:

"*In this school, sometimes we were given projects to do using the internet and books in the library. I was not used to learning like that, our teachers used to give us all the notes and teach us everything.*"

The pedagogy that the learners were accustomed to was of teacher centeredness. Their learning was entirely dependent on what the teacher provided and said. This kind of pedagogy does not allow learners to be identified as critical thinkers and independent learners. Furthermore Harrell-Levy and Kopelman (2010) sanction that adolescents identities can be purposefully constructed by educators provided they use pedagogical approaches that involve ICT (Information & Communications Technology) resources to seek more knowledge, collaborative learning and by empowering learners to think creatively and critically (p 76). **L4 (**14 year old girl, in grade 7, from Eastern Cape)**, L3 (**13 year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State) and **L5 (**14 year old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo) mentioned that they never did assignments and investigations at their previous school so they got confused when they were given such exercises to do at urban school. **L1 (**13 year old girl, in grade 6, from Kwa Zulu Natal) and **L2 (**12 year old girl, in grade 5, from Kwa Zulu Natal) said they were given portfolio work in home economics like

sewing, planting to do at home and given a submission date but not the kind of work they are given in the urban school. For these rural learners it was important for them to familiarize themselves to new ways of learning and negotiate their identities in order to belong to the new school.

The rural migrant learners experienced tremendous change when they migrated to the new urban environment. Rural migrant learners also showed their level of self-esteem and their lack of confidence that they had when they started in the new urban school. The learners mentioned that they struggled with relating to other learners who grew up in the city because they felt that they were not the same as them.

Some migrant learners mentioned that they isolated themselves from learners who grew up in the city simply because they spoke differently, appeared differently and they did not find anything in common that they had with learners who grew up in the city. **L3 (13** year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State) said he avoided learners who had grown up in the city because he did not want to be laughed at. **L5 (**14 year old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo) differed to all of them by stating that he would ask other learners when he did not understand the work and they would help him. In order to belong to the new school they had to develop a new identity.

Eliciting from the responses made by learners it showed that learners have multiple identities. l The rural migrant learners identified themselves more on

their previous learning experiences and their rural educational background and saw themselves as disadvantaged learners, inferior learners in the new urban school.

Learners were asked how they identified themselves when they first entered the new urban school.

L3: 13 year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State "*I was clever back in the rural school; I used to do well in my academic work. Teachers there explained the work in my language so that I could understand what I was learning. I felt that I belonged to the school so I did not have any challenges.* It transpired that the migrant learners' identity shifted when they entered the urban school. This participant identified himself as good learner in the rural school, now he identifies himself as inferior whilst others identified themselves as disadvantaged/underperforming/ at risk learners. The way in which these migrant learners identify themselves links to the notion of social identity given by McLeod (2008) that "social identity is a person's sense of which they are based on their group membership because groups give us a sense of belonging to the social world" (p 12). Back in their rural schools they identified themselves as learners like any other learner because they were amongst the group of people who shared the same or similar culture as them. In the new urban school they were faced with different groups of people that they perceived as better than themselves so they identified themselves as inferior compared to urban learners. The learners were not the only ones categorising themselves. There is an assumption that rural schools are poorer, with limited

or no educational resources than schools in the urban areas leads to the perception that rural learners are not receiving good education. Therefore rural learners were also categorised as learners who were disadvantaged because of their background environment.

3. LEARNERS' SOCIAL BELONGING

In this context the term belonging was used to describe whether rural learners were included/excluded in urban school. The term was also used in this study to describe transformation and repositioning of self in a new environment by rural learners. Thus data below illustrates which practices and behaviours of these learners were acceptable within the urban school. Each of these experiences had the potential to make the learner included or excluded.

Learners were asked to describe how they felt when they first entered the new urban school and how they perceived other learners especially those who grew up in the city. Learners mentioned feeling scared, lonely and nervous simultaneously because of being in the new setting. In their opinions urban learners were more educationally advanced and they felt and also identified themselves as a disadvantage group in the new urban context. However McLeod (2008) argues that we categorize people (including ourselves) so that we could understand the social environment that is new to us (p82). **L3 (**13 year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State) mentioned that teachers in his previous school motivated them by saying they should work hard and study so that they could be like learners who live in the city. This kind of motivation

gave learners like **L3** an impression that learners who grew up in urban areas were clever than those who grew up in the rural areas. Hence **L3** identified himself as inferior when compared to learners in the new urban school. **L2 (**12 year old girl, in grade 5, from Kwa Zulu Natal) felt more out of place due to the fact that her appearance was different to those of the host group.

4. DRESS CODE AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

L2: 12 year old girl, in grade 5, from Kwa Zulu Natal "*I was nervous and felt lonely because other learners looked different from me. My dress was longer than other girls so some girls used to laugh at me. Back at home girls are not allowed to wear short dresses and pants."* **L1**: 13 year old girl, in grade 6, from Kwa Zulu Natal said: "*Leaners here in the city dress nice and have cell phones which they bring to school. They also bring a lot of pocket money and always at the tuck shop during breaks*."

This was another form of social exclusion where a learner did not feel a sense of belonging. The learner felt as though she was not accommodated by other learners who grew up in the city simply because of self – image was peculiar to those who did not share the same dress code as hers. **L2 (**12 year old girl, in grade 5, from Kwa Zulu Natal) mentioned isolating herself from learners who did not understand her culture

L1 and **L2** above were coming from Kwa Zulu Natal where the Zulu culture was practiced and respected. Girls from that particular culture were taught from a young age how to conduct themselves based on the Zulu cultural

norms. **L1** and **L2** mentioned that according to the Zulu culture, girls were not allowed to wear trousers like boys nor were they allowed to wear mini dresses. They were taught that according to the Zulu culture they had to wear skirts that were below their knees.

What they saw in the new school was that girls were allowed to wear trousers and short skirts which were not allowed in their Zulu culture. These learners came to the new school still holding their cultural and ethical identity. Now that they were in an environment which had multiple cultures so they had to make a choice of how they were going to negotiate their identities to try to adapt in to the new environment. McLeod (2008) Padilla & Perez, (2003) believe that group expectations have an influence on an individual's identity because they determine individual's thoughts and behaviours. Subsequently Buckingham (2008) declares that even though identity was developed by the individual, it had to be recognized and confirmed by others (p 3). Now rural migrant learners had to cope with urban cultural –expectations and standards. In particular, dressing in long skirts led to the exclusion of the two girls above. Migrant leaners had to decide whether they were going to integrate themselves into their host culture and how they were going to do that. Integrating would mean these migrant learners could find ways of adapting to a new environment.

5. RESPECT AND IDENTITY

According to the rural migrant learners, the respect and moral values that were inculcated in urban learners was different from the respect and moral values that was instilled in rural learners. Migrant learners claimed that they show more respect than learners they found in the urban school.

One learner commented on the behaviour of urban learners, declaring that in the rural schools they were taught that a learner should never show disrespect. One way of disrespecting the elders was talking back at an elder person.

L5:14 year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State said "*What I saw here is that learners are very spoiled, they backchat teachers because they know that the teachers will not hit them. Some learners are rude and do not have respect for teachers. Some learners back chat teachers and some learners do not comply to the rules of the classroom, they talk all the time when they are not supposed to talk in class"* **L5** for example, was taught to behave like a submissive boy and that was expected of him, part of his identity as a young boy was to show respect to others. This form of respect was common amongst all learners. The reason why they mentioned that they were taught respect differently was the fact that according to them, urban learners were encouraged to exercise their rights. Rural learners mentioned that at home punishment was not lenient as they found in the urban school. In the rural learners when a learner misbehaved corporal punishment was used unlike in the urban school.

6. LANGUAGE AND LEARNERS'SOCIAL IDENTITY

According to Miller (2000) language reflects our social identity and membership. Urban schools in South Africa are sites of convergence for diverse ethnic groups and cultures, with multiple languages that are spoken throughout.

There are 11 official languages in South Africa with English and Afrikaans as the main languages of instruction. The participants in this study spoke Zulu, Xhosa, Pedi and Sotho. In the new urban school they were required to acquire English as the language of learning that was used in the new urban school. Research reflects that rural teachers' code-switch. Setati and Bapoo (2002) observed in their research that learners in rural areas are only exposed to speaking, reading and writing English in formal context. Code switching according to Setati et al (2002) could be used to maintain classroom communication in general as well as exploratory talk, the latter being a vital part of learning.

The predicament with code switching in this urban school in particular is that teachers were mixed races, some teachers only knew how to speak English and Afrikaans and did not understand other African languages, therefore it posed a challenge for rural migrant learners to understand these teachers and also the teachers that could not speak the learners language struggled to assist rural migrant learners in understanding concepts. Learners mentioned that urban learners were better than them because they spoke English. They

all learnt most of the subjects in school in their mother tongue in the previous schools. L1 and L2 learned in Zulu, L3 learned in Sotho, L4 learned in Xhosa and L5 learned in Sepedi. English to all these migrant learners was a subject and an additional subject which they learned in mother tongue.

The language issue also affected learners negatively in their academic work. **L5:** 14 year boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo said "*Learning in English was more difficult because I knew only Sepedi. I couldn't follow teacher's explanation most of the times; I didn't know what and how to do my work."*

As the learners were engaging with the interview, I noticed that some learners referred to their mother tongue languages as *my language; I am a Zulu girl,* etc. Interestingly enough these leaners had been in an urban school for more than a year yet their home languages still remained as part of who they are.

Learners were asked to explain the academic challenges that they encountered when they were still new comers at the current urban school. The first question that they were asked was: Which learning area/s was most difficult with those learning areas? Afrikaans was one the common subject that was a challenge for all learners, the reason being that Afrikaans was the third language that these learners had to learn and they were learning it for the first time. They had to learn all subjects in English including Afrikaans, something they were not used to because they used to learning and being taught in their mother's tongue at their previous rural school: **L1** 13 year old girl, in grade 6, who came from a rural school in Kwa Zulu Natal said

"We were taught everything in Zulu. We learned English as a subject. Teachers spoke to us in Zulu but the English teacher sometimes spoke English with us, and then explains what she was saying in Zulu."

The above comment was common amongst all five learners. They were all taught in their mother tongue at their previous rural school. The lack of language understanding impacted negatively on the academic achievement of the learners. Learners mentioned not understanding what was taught and failing to complete the work given because they couldn't understand most of the things. The migrant learners mentioned that it was important for them to learn the language of the host. They stopped regarding their home language as important.

L4: 14 year old girl, in grade 7, from Eastern Cape said *"I had to learn to speak English, so I read English books and tried to speak English to my friends. I also listened when other people were speaking the language."*

L5: 14 year old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo said "My *English teacher spoke slowly when she was talking to me, so that I could understand what she was saying and gave me some books to read at home*"

Other learners were assigned to the two quotations above. In order for rural migrant learners to feel the sense of belonging in the new environment meant renegotiating their identities. In order for them to gain membership of the

majority group they had to conform to the expectation of the new majority group, the majority group being the city people.

7. INVISIABLE IDENTITIES IN THE CLASSROOM

Learners were asked about their level of participation in classes when they were still new comers at this urban school. The question was asking whether they could reply to the questions that were asked by the teachers and whether they were able to ask questions when they did not understand what was taught.

Learners mentioned that they used to sit quietly in class and not participate in the lessons. Some teachers would ask questions and they would not answer so the teachers left them alone and just ignore them. Learners declared that some teachers would shout at them for not completing their work so they would just write anything that came to mind.

L2: 12 year old girl, in grade 5, from Kwa Zulu Natal said "*I didn't participate in all the classes. I was scared that if I open my mouth other learners will laugh at me. The teachers knew that I didn't know how to speak English properly so they just ignored me and told me to copy corrections on the board. Some teachers would ask a learner that was sitting next to me to assist me by explaining the work to me. I always sat next to a black learner because some understood Zulu, so they helped me. I hated when we were placed in groups because I would just sit there and not participate because I didn't know what was going on.*"

When the multiple identities brought to the classroom are not acknowledged and appreciated, a sense of invisibility is felt. Teachers were aware that there are learners who were underperforming in their classrooms, but not all teachers were aware of all the causes that lead to some learners underperform in class. In this situation we have learners who are not coping because of the fact that they are not yet identifying themselves to the new environment that they have migrated into and therefor they do not feel the sense of belonging in that environment. When an individual does not feel like they belong, they struggle to express themselves. In this context the migrant learners are not participating in class, they are scared and not familiar with the environment and the people surrounding them in the new environment.

Learners were asked if they thought they were treated the same as other learners and whether they felt included in the new school. The responses from learners showed that these learners did not feel any sense of belonging and they felt isolated and excluded. They were ignored by teachers instead of helping them. They were not fluent with the English language therefore it was hard for them to engage with the lessons being taught and to interact with other learners. When learners were asked how often they talked to the teachers and how often they interacted with other learners in class. **L2** year old girl, in grade 5, from Kwa Zulu Natal said: "*Sometimes, I spoke to learners who spoke to me and other learners did not speak to me so I also did not bother trying to talk to them. Other learners were very rude so I didn't like talking to them. Some learners made fun of me so I would just keep quiet and not say anything*".

L1 (13 year old girl, in grade 6, from Kwa Zulu Natal)**, L3 (**13 year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State) and **L4 (**14 year old girl, in grade 6, from Eastern Cape) mentioned that they were more scared of white teachers because firstly they had never attended a multiracial school before and they did not know what to expect. The above learners mentioned that what made them scared is to see other learners who are the same race as them being able to interact and speak well with white teachers, so they thought they were not going to be accepted hence they didn't know how to speak English very well. They also mentioned that they avoided other learners of different races and those whom they thought would not understand them. **L5** (14 year old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo) mentioned that he only spoke to learners that understood his language; those were the learners he would ask to assist him. However he also mentioned that he was scared of speaking to teachers especially teachers of a different race. They were not engaging with the lessons, they were emotionally distraught.

8. EMBODYING URBAN IDENTITIES: LANGUAGE AND FRIENDSHIPS

Rural migrant learners first shared their experiences about how their identities shifted when they first started in the urban school. What was important was how these learners negotiated their identities in the new urban school environment and how they dealt with issues of belonging in the new urban school environment. The migrant learners revealed that after a while they grew accustomed to the urban school and the new ways of learning. Learners were asked to elaborate on what helped them to successfully adapt in the new environment. While migrant learners' challenges experiences with

English language were initially perceived as excluding, they later learnt to embody the language. Understanding, communication and being able to speak English according to migrant learners made them identify themselves as learners who are in a multiracial, multicultural and multilingual school. Learning the language made them feel the sense of belonging. Learning the language helped them with communicating with other people and felt included. **L1** 13 year old girl, in grade 6from Kwa Zulu Natal whose language was Zulu said:

"I learned how to speak English, I had friends that I spoke English to and now I can understand better compared to when I first started here. In the fourth term of my first year, my English teacher said I am getting better and I should keep trying."

Other learners also mentioned that mastering and embodying English language not only helped them to integrate socially but also assisted them improve academically. The learners were asked on how long it took them to feel the sense of belonging in the new urban environment. Their responses indicate that they adapted to the new environment at different times. L5 who came from Limpopo mentioned he was comfortable in the new urban school by the third term in the first year of enrolment whilst the rest declared that they gained their full confidence when they were repeating the following year. The reason being that they were taught by the same teachers and the work they were doing was not as difficult as the previous year. According to these learners there were no programs in the school to assist them to successfully and quickly integrate in the urban school context. Learning English language

was vital for the learners. When learners were asked how they mastered English. Learners gave different responses. Some mentioned that they were assisted by their family members at home; meanwhile some were helped by friends they made in the new school. Others mentioned that their English teachers gave them reading books and they read beyond lesson times. . **L2** who spoke Zulu language like **L1** said:

"*My other friend apart from L1 was also new, but she was coming from a township school, so she understood English and could also speak English better than us, so we tried to speak English together. We also read more books".*

Knowing how migrant leaners made friends and what kind of friends they met in the urban school was important because it assisted in finding out how these migrant learners negotiated their identities and included them socially in the new school or rather how they were included socially by other learners in the new school.

L1 13 year old girl, in grade 6, from Kwa Zulu Natal said: "*I have two friends, both my friends were also new at this school, but one was coming from a township school here in Johannesburg and my other friend is learner 2 (**L2**). "* **L2** *and I were coming from KZN. My other friend knew how to speak English better than us and she also knew how to speak Zulu like us. L2 and I met in class; we were attending the same class in our first year in this school."* **L1** and **L2** above befriended each other because they were both new and they were sharing the same experiences. The third friend also had a similar experience

because she was new at the school and could speak the same language as the other two even though she was coming from the Johannesburg.

L3: 13 year old boy, in grade 6, from Free State said *"Most of my friends are doing grade 5 this year." "I met my friends in the bus/taxi that we use to go to school; my friends and I stay in the same area at home so we are friends at home and at school. They can speak Sotho like me but now I can understand Zulu as well."*

The learners associated themselves more with people who were similar to them and who understood them and their situation. **L1** and **L2** above were both new leaners and spoke the similar language, the third friend was also new, even though the third friend was not coming from rural area, but her experiences were similar to the experiences of **L1** and **L2**. **L3** similar to **L5 (**14 years old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo) associated himself more with people who understood his language, that's how he felt included. . **L5**: said"…… *he is coming from Limpopo and speaks Sepedi like me, but I also learn to speak in English with him."*

These migrant learners had demonstrated what Eithier & Deaux (1994) claimed, "…people not only perceive themselves and others in consistent terms, but they also creatively create social situations that support their views of themselves" (p 243).

L4: 14 year old girl in grade 6, from Eastern Cape declared that that even though the friends didn't speak her language very well but they understood it; she also understood them when they spoke in Zulu because a Zulu language was not too different from IsiXhosa. What she liked was that they understood English well and could speak the language better than her so they taught her. She said they spoke in English most of the time.

The impression that was demonstrated here was that these learners isolated themselves from other urban learners because they possibly felt ignored and isolated by the urban learners when they realised that they were different from them.

Learners were asked to reflect on how they position themselves now as compared to when they were still in the rural areas **L1:** 13 years old girl, in grade 6, from Kwa Zulu Nata said**:** "*I think I am a bit different. I know a lot of things now, I can use computers and I have learned a lot of other things in the city. I think I look differently now. I'm allowed to grow my hair and wear pants in my new school. Although I have changed a bit I'm still respecting like the girl I was in KZN back home."*

L1 (13 years old girl, in grade 6, from Kwa Zulu Natal) identified herself more as the urban learner. She did not identify herself as a disadvantage or an inferior learner anymore. **L2 (**12 years old girl, in grade 5, from Kwa Zulu Natal) declared not having changed a lot; "*I am still a Zulu girl from Natal."* She mentioned that her parents still did not allow her to wear pants like other

girls. **L4 (**14 years old girl in grade 6, from Eastern Cape) mentioned that she has changed a lot compared to when she was at the rural areas and also does not identify herself as a learner who was back ward anymore. She learned and was still learning how to use computers and adopting the ways of learning that are used in the urban school. What other learners have mentioned is that their personal identities have not changed at all, they still hold the values that their rural culture had taught them, however their social identity has shifted based on the fact that they related more to the city now. **L5 (**14 years old boy, in grade 7, from Limpopo) mentioned that he is still a "Pedi boy from Limpopo" this shows that the leaners did not lose the sense of who they are, which is their core identity. What changed is how they perceived themselves in their society especially the new urban society. According to Eithier & Deaux (1994) if social identity was supported by a network of relationships, then one would anticipate that a change in context would have some impact on identity. In this context if migrant learners needed support from the host group to help them feel the sense of belonging in order for them to change the way they perceived themselves when they were still new in the urban school. Now that they have the support of the people around them and no longer receive negative labels and bad comments from educators, some of the identities that they first held when they were still new comers were no longer valid to them. They have changed the way they constructed their identities. They re-established their confidence and positive identity. One can therefore conclude that the migrant learners have negotiated their identities in ways that allow them to belong to the host group in the urban environment. However they also

sustained their uniqueness in terms of their cultural values of respect, language and dress cod

Chapter 6: Summary and Recommendations

The above chapter illustrated how rural migrant learners perceived the urban environment and learners who grew up in the city when they first arrived in the urban school. From the learners' perspective it emerged that their rural schools were underdeveloped and lacking resources. It also emerged that rural and urban student cultures were different, in ways that shaped student identities differently. Coming from an underprivileged school to a school that is in the city with a lot of privileges and resources was bound to challenge the migrant learners and they therefore identified themselves as inferior, disadvantaged leaners whilst they were perceived as underperforming learners. Apart from not knowing how to use computers, language was the foremost challenging transaction for these rural learners, in their rural schools they were taught in their mother tongue language now they had to transform and adapt in learning in English. Learners also mentioned that other learning areas like Afrikaans they were learning them for the first time which was also a challenge. Learners managed to learn as much English as they could and also tried to conform to what was required by the new school in order for them to minimise exclusion and promote belonging.

The identities of these rural migrant learners were marginalized because they mentioned that there were no programs offered by teachers and schools to help them to integrate quickly… Learners mentioned that they didn't receive help from educators; instead they were retained in their grades because they

were underperforming learners. They were excluded in most times during learning sessions because they couldn't understand the process. The problem is that teachers were excluding these learners by treating them the same as other learners without considering their cultural rural sentimentalities. In some cases learners mentioned feeling ignored, not assisted by teachers and neglected by other learners. There were no programs implemented by the school to assist these learners to adapt to the new environment. Socially rural learners isolated themselves from urban learners who did not understand their social identity and chose learners who were similar to them and those who understood their language and their identities. Learning the language and familiarizing themselves with the new urban school assisted them in negotiating their identities and get a sense of belonging in the new environment.

The educational and pedagogical implication of this study is that the social identities of rural migrant learners need to be known and acknowledged by the school and educators to promote effective learning and to assist rural migrant learners to feel included and belonging in the new urban school environment. It is argued here that effective teaching and learning requires mastery of content knowledge and pedagogical skills, yet too many teachers are still finding it rigorous to accommodate and teach multilingual and multicultural learners in urban schools despise the growing number of migrant learners in urban schools. Gay (2013) argues that explicit knowledge about cultural diversity is imperative to meeting the educational needs of ethnically diverse student (p 107). This study has demonstrated

that rural migrant learners face challenges of negotiating their social identities in the new urban environment because of their different cultures and languages that are different from that of the host environment. Teachers according to Gay (2013) need to know firstly, which cultural groups give priority to communal living and cooperative problem solving and how these preferences affect educational motivation, aspiration and task performance, secondly, how different cultural groups 'protocols of appropriate ways for learners to interact with adults are exhibited in instructional settings and thirdly, the implications of gender role socialization in different cultural groups for implementing equity initiatives in classroom instructions (p108). Furthermore Seattle argues that culturally responsive teaching deals as much with using multicultural instructional strategies as with adding multicultural content to the curriculum (p108). More research on the social identities of rural learners in urban school is needed.

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APPENDIX A – WITS ETHICS CLEARANCE



Wits School of Education

27 St Andrews Road, Park town, Johannesburg, 2193 Private Bag 3, Wits 2050, South Africa. Tel: +27 11 717-3064 Fax: +27 11 717-3100 E-mail: enquiries@educ.wits.ac.za Website: www.wits.ac.za

08 October 2014

Student Number: 0505996V

Protocol Number: 2014ECE047M

Dear Nomathamsanqa Wongo

Application for Ethics Clearance: Master of Education

Thank you very much for your ethics application. The Ethics Committee in Education of the Faculty of Humanities, acting on behalf of the Senate, has considered your application for ethics clearance for your proposal entitled:

Negotiating identities: Migrant rural learners in an urban school in Johannesburg

The committee recently met and I am pleased to inform you that **clearance was granted**.

Please use the above protocol number in all correspondence to the relevant research parties (schools, parents, learners etc.) and include it in your research report or project on the title page.

The Protocol Number above should be submitted to the Graduate Studies in Education Committee upon submission of your final research report.

All the best with your research project.

Yours sincerely,

Wits School of Education

011 717-3416

cc Supervisor: Dr. Alfred Masinire

Appendix B

Parent/ Guardian Consent

Dear Parent/ Guardian

My name is Nomathamsanqa Wongo. I am a Masters student at the University of Witwatersrand. I am carrying out a research, Titled: Negotiating identities: Migrant rural learners in an urban school in Johannesburg

The findings of this research will benefit learners from rural schools who have migrated to urban schools.

I am asking for your permission to interview your child about the above topic. The study is to find out how rural learners negotiate their identities when they migrate to urban schools.

Your child's participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may participate in the study by being part of the group interview that will last about one hour during break time. There are no costs for participating in this study. The interview will be strictly confidential and what your child says will only be used for the purpose of this study. I will not tell anyone about the information your child gives me. Your child's name will not be revealed in the final research report.

If this consent form contains language that is unclear, please ask Nomathamsanqa Wongo or Alfred Masinire of the Wits School of Education to answer any questions or address any concerns you may have about the

consent process and /or the study in general. If you allow your child to participate in the study, please sign below.

Ms Nomathamsanqa Wongo

011 903 1652

073 444 1170 nwongo@hotmail.co.za

Consent

I have been given the chance to read this consent form. I understand the information about the study. My signature says that I am willing to allow my child to participate in this study.

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree that my child may be audiotaped during interview. YES/NO

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only YES/NO

Permission to be interview

I agree that my child may be interviewed for this study. YES/NO

I know that he/she can stop the interview at any time and doesn't have to

Answer all the questions asked. YES/NO

Parent's name_____ parents signature_____

Consent

I have been given the chance to read this consent form. I understand the information about the study. My signature says that I am willing to allow my child to participate in this study.

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree that my child may be audiotaped during interview. YES/NO I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only YES/NO

Permission to be interview

I agree that my child may be interviewed for this study. YES/NO

I know that he/she can stop the interview at any time and doesn't have to

Answer all the questions asked. YES/NO

Parents name _____ parents signature_____

Name of the learner _____

Appendix C - Letter to Principal

Dear Sir

I am a master's student at the University of the Witwatersrand; I am kindly asking you to allow me to conduct my research project in your school. I will be conducting research on how rural migrant learners negotiate their identities when they migrate to urban schools.

The participants will be 5 learners who are coming from the rural areas and are enrolled in your school. I would like to interview the participants during their break time. The interview will last for about an hour. There are no costs for participating in this study other than the time they will spend completing the interview.

Their responses to the interview will be strictly confidential. I will not tell anyone their answers they will give us. Their names and the school name will not be reported. The period for gathering the data will be during the third term in 2014. A copy of the findings from this research will be given to your school.

Kind Regards

GAUTENG PROVINCE
Department: Education
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

For administrative use:
Reference no: D2015 / 307

GDE RESEARCH APPROVAL LETTER

Date:	**26 September 2014**
Validity of Research Approval:	**26 September 2014 to 3 October 2014**
Name of Researcher:	**Wongo N.A.**
Address of Researcher:	**2878 Siluma View**
	Katlehong
	1431
Telephone Number:	**011 903 1652; 079 822 8265**
Fax Number:	**011 828 1926**
Email address:	**nwongo@hotmail.co.za**
Research Topic:	**Negotiating identities: Migrant rural learners in an urban school in Johannesburg**
Number and type of schools:	**ONE Primary School**
District/s/HO	**Ekurhuleni North**

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

This letter serves to indicate that approval is hereby granted to the above-mentioned researcher to proceed with research in respect of the study indicated above. The onus rests with the researcher to negotiate appropriate and relevant time schedules with the school/s and/or offices involved. A separate copy of this letter must be presented to the Principal, SGB and the relevant District/Head Office Senior Manager confirming that permission has been granted for the research to be conducted. However participation is VOLUNTARY.

2014/09/29

The following conditions apply to GDE research. The researcher has agreed to and may proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met. Approval may be withdrawn should any of the conditions listed below be flouted:

CONDITIONS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN GDE

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

1. The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter;
2. A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB.)
3. A letter / document that outlines the purpose of the research and the anticipated outcomes of such research must be made available to the principals, SGBs and District/Head Office Senior Managers of the schools and districts/offices concerned;.
4. The Researcher will make every effort obtain the goodwill and co-operation of all the GDE officials, principals, SGBs, teachers and learners involved. Participation is voluntary and additional remuneration will not be paid;
5. Research may only be conducted after school hours so that the normal school programme is not interrupted. The Principal and/or Director must be consulted about an appropriate time when the researcher/s may carry out their research at the sites that they manage.
6. Research may only commence from the second week of February and must be concluded before the beginning of the last quarter of the academic year. If incomplete, an amended Research Approval letter may be requested to conduct research in the following year.
7. Items 6 and 7 will not apply to any research effort being undertaken on behalf of the GDE. Such research will have been commissioned and be paid for by the Gauteng Department of Education.
8. It is the researcher's responsibility to obtain written parental consent and learner;
9. The researcher is responsible for supplying and utilising his/her own research resources, such as stationery, photocopies, transport, faxes and telephones and should not depend on the goodwill of the institutions and/or the offices visited for supplying such resources.
10. The names of the GDE officials, schools, principals, parents, teachers and learners that participate in the study may not appear in the research report without the written consent of each of these individuals and/or organisations.
11. On completion of the study the researcher must supply the Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management with one Hard Cover, an electronic copy and a Research Summary of the completed Research Report;
12. The researcher may be expected to provide short presentations on the purpose, findings and recommendations of his/her research to both GDE officials and the schools concerned;
13. Should the researcher have been involved with research at a school and/or a district/head office level, the Director and school concerned must also be supplied with a brief summary of the purpose, findings and recommendations of the research study.

The Gauteng Department of Education wishes you well in this important undertaking and looks forward to examining the findings of your research study.

Kind regards

.....

Dr David Makhado

Director: Education Research and Knowledge Management

DATE: 2014/09/29

Office of the Director: Knowledge Management and Research
9th Floor, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2001
P.O. Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000 Tel: (011) 355 0506
Email: David.Makhado@gauteng.gov.za
Website: www.education.gpg.gov.za

Appendix E

INFORMATION SHEET LEARNERS

Dear Learner

My name is Nomathamsanqa Wongo and I am a Masters student at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on Negotiating identities: Migrant rural learners in an urban school in Johannesburg

My investigation involves learners that are coming from rural areas and are now living and attending school in the city. I want to find out how you adapted to the new school environment. I want to find out how you saw yourself among learners who grew up in the city and what challenges you had in adapting to the new school. I also want to find out how you were included in the new school or how you think you were excluded in the new school.

I need your help with the interview that will take place during break times.

Remember, this is not a test, it is not for marks and it is voluntary, which means that you don't have to do it. Also, if you decide halfway through that you prefer to stop, this is completely your choice and will not affect you negatively in any way.

I will not be using your actual names so that no one can identify you. All information about you will be kept confidential in all my writing about the study.

Also, all collected information will be stored safely and destroyed between 3-5 years after I have completed my project.

Your parents have also been given an information sheet and consent form, but at the end of the day it is your decision to join the study.

I look forward to working with you

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you

SIGNATURE: N. A. WONGO

NAME: Nomathamsanqa Wongo

ADDRESS: 2878 Siluma View: Katlehong : 1432

EMAIL: nwongo@hotmail.co.za

TELEPHONE NUMBERS: 079 822 82 65 and 073 444 1170

Learner Consent Form

Please fill in the reply slip below if you agree to participate in my study called: Negotiating identities: Migrant rural learners in an urban school in Johannesburg

My name is: _____

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview. YES/NO

APPENDIX F: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.

1. Which provinces are you coming from? Tell me a bit about your background?
2. Which year did you enroll at this school?
3. How is the current school different from your previous school?
4. How is teaching and learning different from your rural experience?
    - What is the language of instruction in this urban school? Do you have problem with understanding the language of instruction? How is this language of instruction different from your rural language experience?
    - What do you think is the difference between your previous school and current school in terms of learning?
    - Do you have problems in the use of learning resources like computers?
    - Library books?
    - And other facilities of in the school?
    - Do you receive the same treatment as other learners in the classroom or are you taught differently? If yes how?
    - Can you please elaborate the kind of problems you face in the use of these resources?
    - What kind of help would be most useful in overcoming these problems?
5. How did you feel when you first came in this school?
    - Tell me what your experiences were in relating to other students in your class, outside the class and the teachers?
6. What did you hate most about this experience of coming to the new school?
7. Did you see yourself different from other learners? Why?
8. How did you view other learners, especially those who grew up in the city? What is it that you saw different from learners like you who are coming from the rural environment?
9. How did they relate to other learners in the school and teachers?

10. Did you feel included or isolated when you first came to this school?
11. Do you think learners who grew up in the city behave differently from learners who grew up in the rural area? How do they differ in bahviour if they do?

Do you now feel like you belong in the urban school environment?

12. Do you have any new friends? What do you do with your friends during breaks and lunch?
13. How did you adapt to the new environment?
14. Are there any special programs in which new students are initiated? If yes, which are these?
15. Do you now see yourselves as different from who you were when you first got into this school? If yes how do you view yourself now?
16. How do you identify yourselves now?
17. Now that you have lived in the two environments (rural and urban), which environmnent do you identify yourself with?
18. Did the urban environment change you as a person?

Appendix G

LEARNER MIGRATION INFORMATION (2013/2014)

Specify the number of learners from other provinces and other countries that have registered at your school for the first time	TOTAL
Eastern Cape	25
Free State	20
KwaZulu Natal	38
Limpompo/ Northern Province	47
Mpumalanga	24
Northern Cape	11
Western Cape	23
Other countries: specify Zimbabwe, Ruwanda, Kenya	36
Mozambique	30
TOTAL	254