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A RESEARCH STUDY EXPLORING THE AFFECTS OF AWARD-SYSTEMS ON LEARNER MOTIVATION, COLLABORATION AND SOCIAL-COHESION

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Supervisor: Dr Alison Kearney

ABSTRACT

Here I am again, sitting on the floor, in the school hall, palms sweaty, heart racing, listening intently and waiting expectantly to hear my name being called through the crowd. To my surprise my name was never called. Have you ever received an award at school, or were you like me, always hoping to get one but never walking across the stage trophy in hand? Literature shows that awards have an impact on motivation, collaboration and social cohesion of a learner.

The aim of this research project was to investigate learner perceptions of the award-system used by a private intermediate/senior primary school, in Johannesburg, and explore whether these awards promote or demote learner motivation, collaboration, and social cohesion. My investigation began with describing and analysing the award-system used by the school, followed by an exploration of learners' attitudes towards the award-system, in order to establish the ways in which this award-system promotes or inhibits learner motivation, collaboration, and social cohesion.

Following a post-structuralist research paradigm, I focused on the voices of those who received awards, as well as those who did not or felt marginalized as a result of not receiving any recognition, through critically analysing their responses to a questionnaire. Gazing at the award-system of the school, from the learners' perspective, afforded me the opportunity to gain insight into the effect this particular award- system has on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion, in this particular school. I present the research as a story of discovery and a journey. This research becomes *our story* as I, the teacher, am encouraged to look 'deeper' at the award-system of the school. The design I have chosen is qualitative, the reason for this is because I wanted to understand the actual award-system, as well as, individual perceptions of these awards. The questionnaire is considered qualitative in the way that it makes use of open-ended questions to provoke informative, in-depth responses from the learners, it does, however, include closed (yes/no) questions, which are recorded using percentages. The findings were unexpected, as the award-system generally had a positive impact on the motivation, collaboration and social cohesion of the Grade 7 learners in this school.

DECLARATION

I hereby confirm that this research project is my own unaided work. It is being submitted for the Bachelor's degree of Education with Masters at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any university.

Signed: 

Ceanne Sham

Date: 31 March 2021

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CHAPTER ONE

1. **My Story, Their Story, Our Story…**

1.1 **My Story**

Here I am again, sitting on the floor, in the school hall, palms sweaty, heart racing, listening intently and waiting expectantly to hear my name being called through the crowd. To my surprise my name was never called. This happened at every award ceremony that I attended from Grade 7- 12. Despite the disappointment and sadness I felt, year after year, I never gave up hope. I tried my best in academics, but I was never a top ten learner. I was more talented in the arts- drama and dance- than academics. These talents of mine went unnoticed in my school career, not once was I mentioned for my commitment to the drama department of the school, nor was my dance achievement or my effort of trying my best in everything I did, recognised. This experience was soul-destroying, making me think that because I was not *clever*, I was not good enough. It was this experience that made me want to pursue teaching as a profession. My purpose in life became to ensure that all children, especially those who are not academically inclined, feel capable, deserving and worth it. The award ceremonies and the disappointment it caused for me, made me want to make a difference, however, this could have gone very differently. I could have despised the school-system completely, but instead I became a teacher.

In my experience, schools' award-systems are usually representations of what has been or is valued by the education system and what is regarded as learner achievement, and in particular contexts, is a microcosm of what is valued in broader society. I have been the learner who did not receive many awards in school, although I always worked to the best of my ability. My efforts were never recognised, and thus I never felt that my effort was valued. Award-systems are a form of reinforcement.

Now that I am a teacher in a private school, in Johannesburg, I notice that there are still school awards. I see the faces of those who win, term after term, and those, who like me, sit on the side-lines, watching and waiting.

1.2 **Their Story**

The school in which I currently teach, prides itself in taking a *holistic approach* to education and an *active curriculum* has been implemented.

The school believes in teaching the whole individual, valuing: academic, culture, community service and sports achievement. Thus the school is focused on holistic excellence, wherein each learner is encouraged to perform to their full potential in the classroom, on the stage, in the community and on the sports field. Excellence, from this perspective, is achieving certain criteria in all these recognised fields.
A philosophy of positive reinforcement is undertaken by the school, and according to the school's award policies (see Appendix A), the purpose of the awards at the school is to promote, recognise, and encourage positive participation. It also promotes loyalty and commitment to the activity. Furthermore, the award policy encourages personal development, socio-emotional growth and emotional intelligence. This signals a move away from the outdated (empiricist) behaviourist approach (Skinner, 1954) that promotes only academics.

The classic dispute in epistemology in the 19th century, concerning the acquisition of knowledge, was mainly between Empiricism and Rationalism (nature vs. nurture). This dualism is based on two very diverse ideas: on the one side of the debate knowledge is learned and developed from the environment and on the other side of that debate, learning is innate. Empiricists argue that knowledge can be observed and therefore studied and all knowledge is acquired from experience derived from the senses. Unlike the empiricists, rationalists believe that learning cannot be observed nor studied, therefore it cannot be predicted nor controlled. For the rationalist, learning is remembering, and teaching is reminding. However, a more contemporary view of the acquisition of knowledge stemmed from the critiques of the previous ideas of the learning process, and a twofold cognitive revolution resulted.

The once unimportant mind became the centre of the contemporary debate, and a new understanding of the mind derived. This 'new' idea of the mind- the embodied mind, focuses on the importance of the mind, the body and context of the individual. The way by which the learning process has been perceived, has changed. These 'new' suppositions can be referred to as either a *Constructivist* perspective, where Jean Piaget (1964) and Lev Vygotsky (1978) both argue that an individual

constructs knowledge through both internal factors and acting upon the environment (external) or an *Embodied* approach to learning where the focus is on the mind and body (Damasio, 2006; Johnson, 1989; Wilson, 2002; Christodoulou, 2010; Nūňez, Edwards, & Matos, 1999; Rambusch, and Ziemke, 2005; Barab, and Dodge, 2008; Barab, Zuiker, Warren, Hickey, Ingram-Goble, Kwon, Kouper, and Herring, 2007.). This contemporary approach to education is aligned with a holistic approach, where learning is an active process that is situated and the body and mind both play a key role. Therefore this 'new' approach to 'how one comes to know' needs to be taken into account when distributing awards. Thus the school needs to adopt this perspective if they want to uphold their ideals and this should be reflected by the school's award-system by recognising achievement in a variety of fields: academic, culture, sport and service. Is the school's award-system compatible with this perspective, does it also advocate for (intrinsic) learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion?

1.3 **Our Story and Problem Statement**

Schools' award systems, such as the rewarding of school colours or trophies, play a key role in recognising the achievements of a learner. In many schools these achievements are focused on four areas: academics, culture, service and sport. These awards-systems can be understood as celebrations of achievement that contribute to the culture of the school:

> "One of the most important effective strategies for shaping the culture of any organization is celebration. The celebrations, ceremonies, and rituals of any organization reveal a great deal about its culture- how its people link their past with their present, what behaviours are reinforced, what assumptions are at work, and what is valued." (DuFour, 1998, p. 1.).

While DuFour (1998) argues that celebrating achievement promotes and reinforces the culture and ethos of the organisation, the possibility exists that award systems could have a negative effect on those learners who do not achieve according to the criteria. It is also possible that some awards may set up unrealistic goals, causing pressure on the learners who do achieve to continue achieving. It is also plausible that because the award-systems reinforce social structure- they may alienate learners who do not fit into this social structure as well as reproduce its toxic values.

All award-systems promote a construction of value. Although these awards appear to promote a more holistic approach to education, I question whether the school promotes an all-inclusive environment, where learners are leading learners, or whether the award-system is a device that by its nature reproduces a particular social structure? Are learners encouraged by these awards-systems to work-hard, work collaboratively and address social inequalities? A critical lens reminds a school to apply caution when awarding individuals and to be mindful of what achievement they are celebrating. This research becomes *our story* as I, as the teacher, am encouraged to look 'deeper' at the structures that inform who is awarded, what is awarded, what awards are valued, how the process is celebrated and why.

1.4 **Rationale**

The importance of conducting this study is numerous. The award-system of a school exposes what is valued and reinforced by the school. The perception learners have on these award-systems allows one to gain insight into the impact and affect awards-systems have on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion.

In addition, while research on award systems has been conducted elsewhere: DuFour (1998), Keller (1987), Pan and Houser (2011), I, as the researcher, am unaware of the literature that addresses the impact and the influence it has on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion, in a private school in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Therefore this study seeks to contribute to the body of literature around understanding award-systems and their effects. It is hoped that this research project will benefit all parties involved in the school; especially the learners who are usually marginalized and left out of the decision making of the school, as they are able to voice their ideas and experiences.

1.5 **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this research project is to understand the impact of award-systems on learners' motivation to achieve through exploring the manner in which the award-system in a particular school encourages/discourages: collaboration, motivation and/or social cohesion.

1.6 **Aim**

The aim of this research project was to investigate learner perceptions of the award-system used by a private intermediate/senior primary school, in Johannesburg, and explore whether these awards promote or demote learner motivation, collaboration, and social cohesion. My investigation began with describing and analysing the award-system used by the school, followed by an exploration of learners' attitudes towards the award-system, in order to establish the ways in which this award-system promotes or inhibits learner motivation, collaboration, and social cohesion (the stated goals of the school). Following a post-structuralist research paradigm I focused on the voices of those who received awards, as well as those who may have been or felt marginalized as a result of not receiving any recognition through critically analysing their responses to a survey. Gazing at the award-system of the school, from the learners' perspective, afforded me the opportunity to gain insight into the effect this particular award- system has on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion in this particular school.

1.7 **Objectives**

The objectives of this research project are:

1. To describe the award-system used by the well-resourced Private School.
2. To understand the learners' attitudes towards the award-system.
3. To investigate how the award-system used by the school promotes learner motivation, collaboration and/or social cohesion.
4. To critically compare the values that are actually promoted through the awards with the school's stated objectives of being committed to 'holistic education'.

1.8 **Research questions**

Main Research Question

- In what ways do school award-systems affect learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion, in a Private School, in Johannesburg?

Research sub-questions

1. What are the different types of awards that are recognised by the school, and how are they administered?
2. What are the learner perceptions toward the school's award-system?
3. What values are promoted by this award-system?

1.9 **Outline of Chapters**

Anyon (1994) argued that postmodern and poststructuralist writers research does not match the theory that they are working within; in contrast to this, I am constructing my research project as a story (narrative) where the headings for each of my chapters relate to my research journey story. The focus will be on my lived experience of the research journey I embarked on.

Chapter 1: My story, their story, our story (the background) is based on my personal experience with awards and how it impacted my mind-set and perspective to teaching. This chapter also takes a look at the school approach to learning which should be reflected by their award-system. The purpose, aim and objective of my project is outlined as well as the main question, sub-questions and rationale is discussed.

Chapter 2: Setting the Scene (Theoretical Framework). This chapter explores the lens I used to gather and analyse the literature and data. I discuss the main characters whose theories informed my approach to this study.

Chapter 3: A Review of Themes (Literature Review). In this chapter I explore the themes that emerged from the literature and how these themes relate to my study.

Chapter 4: The Journey (Research Design and Methodology) is the method I used to gather the data needed for my study. This includes an explanation of the type of research design I utilized, the sample selection, sample sizes and site selection.

Chapter 5: An Observation (Data Presentation). In this chapter I present the data collected. The data is presented through pie-charts and direct-quotes from the participants' responses to the questions.

Chapter 6: A Reflection (Data Analysis). In this chapter, the collected and presented data is analysed and interpreted according to themes that emerged from the literature and the responses from the participants.

Chapter 7: The Story’s End (Conclusion). I conclude my study by discussing my limitations to the study and my final thoughts of the process and all the discoveries made on the journey.

CHAPTER TWO

2. **Setting the Scene**

In order to investigate the ways in which the school's award-system might affect learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion, I will be working from a post-structuralist perspective. Therefore I begin this chapter explaining the key tenets of post-structuralism, and then discuss the key post-structuralist concepts that I used by way of a conceptual framework. This will be followed by a discussion on cultural capital and behaviourism (input/response and reinforcement) in order to locate my study within the existing scholarship field.

2.1 **Post-Structuralism**

Around the 1970s (late modernity) the idea of post-structuralism emerged. Post-structuralism is a theoretical framework that brings with it the possibility of increased power and freedom from existing social structures, because of the manner in which post-structuralist theorists reveal the contradictions of many binary oppositional categories within social structures (Anyon, 1994.). Questioning such binary oppositional categories as: pass/fail, good/bad, acceptable/unacceptable; allows theorists to constantly question the origins of meaning, methods, concepts, power and knowledge within any system. Such questioning will assist me in assessing the award-system; what ideologies it promotes and the purpose it serves in the school where the study is being conducted. In a post-structural perspective there is multiplicity (*pluralism*), which means that post-structuralists understand that all knowledge and social activities are constructed (Anyon, 1994), and that therefore there is more than one way of approaching a situation; in this case the administering of awards. For post-structuralists, there is no ground to suggest that there is only one way, one method, one approach to the administering and celebrating awards.

Furthermore, the focus, for a post-structuralist, is on discourse. Although each discourse, and in this case award-systems/policies, produces its own 'truth', the precise meaning of this truth, however, cannot be claimed to be an absolute (Anyon, 1994). Post-structuralists argue against *grand narratives*, but rather are concerned with the *little/small narratives*. These little narratives are imperative, since they focus on the importance of *voice*, especially the voices of the silenced and (or)

marginalized. Hughes (2010) argued that for post-structuralists, meaning is made and identity is formed for an individual through their experience of the ‘world’; and meaning is influx. Every voice matters, every individual has a story to tell. As a result of post-structural discourse and postmodern literature, there has been a shift to focusing on agency, power and language in the field of the social sciences, qualitative research. Qualitative methodologies have emerged and there has been a shift of focus on power and language. Hughes (2010) argued that post-structuralists focus on human agency and argue that individuals understand their ‘world’ on a local level. In my study, I intend on focusing on the voices of the learners and their lived experiences of the award-system.

A post-structuralists' investigation of a schools’ award-system would therefore include a critical interrogation of the underlying social structures that inform the awards policy, as well as be concerned with how learners (who are frequently marginalized within schools, and have almost no voice in decision making) perceive and experience the award-system. I will unpack these social structures ahead in this journey.

A further reason I am using a post-structuralist approach is because the purpose of a post-structuralist is not to explain the systems they are investigating, but rather they display the underlying structural differences they embody (Anyon, 1994; Cherryholmes, 1987; Scott, 2008). This post-structuralist approach to education assigns value to certain concepts, subject-matter learning and educational objectives. This approach will help me discover the values promoted by award-systems used in the school, as well as investigate the effects of power on individuals (award structures are an enactment of power).

2.2 **Main Characters**

2.2.1 **Michel Foucault**

Anyon (1994) points out that “some postmodern and post-structural writers emphasize the political nature of discourse.” (Anyon, 1994, p. 120.). Michel Foucault is a French historian and philosopher whose theories mostly address the relationship between knowledge and power within discourses. Foucault is a post-structuralist theorist whose main concerns were with history, the historical constitution of

knowledge, power and practice (Olssen, 2003). Foucault focused on how discourse is shaped and in turn, how this discourse has influence on society (social structures). For Foucault, discourse is materially produced and has power. There is a political nature of discourse and history influences discursive practices, and *meanings* are created through and by power (Cherryholmes, 1987). For Foucault, knowledge and power are used as a form of social control through the institutions that exist in a society, and in the case of my study, it can be exercised through the award-system. The idea of power/knowledge is useful in understanding the award-system in the school, and it is through the discourses around the award-systems (school colours, certificates, trophies, badges, medals) that the power/knowledge systems, in the school, may be revealed and/or uncovered.

Hodgson and Standish (2009) argue that power is perceived as an entity, and there is power dualism in all social interaction (oppressed vs. oppressor). In the education field, the oppressor is the school, and the oppressed is the group/individual in the school (in this case the learners). Power exists through social and discursive actions and for Foucault “Power is produced only in action,” (Hodgson & Standish, 2009, p. 315.). This is not always the case, however, in micro situations our relationship to power changes. Individuals hold different power statuses in different contexts. Scott (2008) argued that people or institutions that are in a position of power, exercise this power over those who have less power, and that power exists at every level (it is dispersed). Each arrangement of power has its own ‘truths’ and this notion of truth is situated historically (Cherryholmes, 1987). For Foucault, disciplines are perceived to be discursive formations and are embedded in history (Scott, 2008). According to Foucault (1970), Discursive Formations are imperative in the construction of speech, as they organise ideas and concepts and produce objects of knowledge (of awards) which may be investigated. These discursive formations are established by the institution's use of text, events, paraphernalia and trophies to reinforce them. Every discipline has constructed a set of concepts that arranges and organises experiences in a certain way; they also have their own method of distinguishing fact over fiction (Scott, 2008). Knowledge is embedded in discourse and discourse is the means that power and knowledge are created and reinforced; therefore, Foucault uses the term power/knowledge, since they are intertwined and inseparable. In turn, those with authority determine and legitimize the discourse, thus making the

relationship between knowledge, power and discourse entwined. Discourses around awards legitimize what is recognized by the school as achievement. There is a link between disciplinary power and the power of awards.

Foucault (1970) argued that the 'level of success' of an individual is related to the discipline of the individual (the level of control the individual has over their actions working within a certain field). Discipline of the individual is constructed by the notion of 'disciplinary powers'. These disciplinary powers are derived through the use of three processes which are used to control and thereby construct the identity of the learner: *hierarchical observation*, *normalizing judgement* and *the examination* (Foucault, 1970). *Hierarchical observation* refers to the way in which architecture is used to maintain the power relations in a certain institution (Foucault, 1970). Learners' movement is controlled. Learners may be in certain places at certain times, but not other times. The disciplinary space for education is the school. The power of the school is used to construct the identity of the learner. *Normalizing judgement* is the process used to maintain control, through rewards and punishment. There are acceptable and unacceptable ways in which an individual may behave in a school. Learners who 'behave correctly' (in a manner acceptable to the ethos of the school) and conform to the rules are rewarded accordingly (Foucault, 1970). *The examination* combines the process of hierarchical observation and normalizing judgment (Foucault, 1970). This process results in the learner being objectified and converted into a case. The consequence of these techniques, according to Foucault, is the school shapes the identity of its learners and categorises them.

The aim of administering awards is to shape the individual through the process of normalization, and the individual constructs themselves to fit into what the institution requires them to be; as well as, to present to the group a 'model citizen' which will regulate both the group and the individual. The learner learns to self-regulate through the award selection and celebration process and learner identity is possibly formed (Scott, 2008). Particular forms of power have influence on subject (identity) formation within a certain category, while power/knowledge relations remain unquestioned. Foucault would have us question how these categories were formed and why certain categories have more *power* than others. Therefore, in my study, this helped me uncover which activities of the school and categories of awards hold more power than others. Foucault's work, according to Hubert Dreyfus (in Hodgson

& Standish. 2009.), is said to assist one in freeing oneself from being defined as *a unitary subject*, and understanding oneself as *a multifaceted subject*, for an individual cannot be simply classified, labelled or categorised as 'one thing'.

2.2.2 **Pierre Bourdieu**

Having discussed power/knowledge and the ways that power can be enacted in the school environment through award-systems, I now feel that it is necessary to engage with the work of Pierre Bourdieu and his concepts of *habitus, field, cultural reproduction and cultural capital*.

Pierre Bourdieu was a French social philosopher in the twentieth century who had a significant impact on the academic field. According to Grenfell, (2008) to understand the work of Bourdieu, one needs to understand the complex concepts he used in his work. Grenfell (2008) explains that these 'thinking tools' -concepts, expressed by Bourdieu, are used to explain, analyse and discuss particular phenomena discovered. He further argues that the terms used by Bourdieu should not be perceived to be independent entities, but rather interconnected and interdependent. The concepts, utilized by Bourdieu, "embody a dynamic and epistemology that make them active tools for deployment in the social sciences." (Grenfell, 2008, p. 3.). The three 'thinking tools' that I will attempt to discuss in this research journey are: *culture, habitus, and field*.

Schools, from a historical sociologist perspective, play the role of socialising children into society. There is a dialectical relationship between schools and society, schools reproduce society and transmit the existing cultural values and norms of that society. This can be referred to in Bourdieu's terms as *cultural reproduction* (Grenfell & James, 1998.). The customs, norms, and culture of the dominant class of the community are reproduced. Grenfell and James (1998), argue that the home-school partnership/relationship is a fundamental feature in cultural reproduction. Gordon (1980), focused on the effect of domination and was interested in how schools promote these dominant structures. The power the school possesses allows the school to legitimize the award-system policy they have put into practice. Therefore, the award-system structure and policies of the school determine and expose what is valued and recognised by the school.

The family is “both a habitus generating institution and a key site for accumulation of cultural capital” (Grenfell & James, 1998, p. 56.). Schools and parents help to reproduce the social advantages and disadvantages in society. Bourdieu refers to this as *habitus* and *field*. *Habitus* “is the structural view that postulates ‘practice provoking dispositions’ or dispositions to act in a certain way” (Grenfell & James, 1998, p. 15.). An individual’s habitus is systematically structured, which comprises dispositions which generate “practices, beliefs, perceptions, feelings and so forth…” (Matan, in Grenfell, 2008, p. 51.). According to Matan, in Grenfell (2008), habitus is a complex concept that synthesises the social structure (environment) and agency of an individual and focuses on an individual’s way “of acting, feeling, thinking and being.” (Matan, in Grenfell, 2008, p. 51.). There is a dynamic relationship between *habitus* and *field*.

“Field is therefore a structural system of social relations” of “individuals, institutions and groupings, both large and small.”(Grenfell & James, 1998, p. 15.). Field refers to the social space in which interactions occur. The field needs to be similar to the habitus (culture) of the individual, in order for it to be most beneficial for the individual.

Culture, according to Grenfell (2008), has two understandings: *structuralist* and *functionalist*. Structuralist culture refers to a common understanding of the world between groups of people (community/society), and is static in nature. Functionalist culture (ideology) is how human knowledge is perceived to be a product of the individual's social infrastructure. According to Grenfell (2008), Bourdieu criticised both ideas of culture, and therefore attempted to synthesise these two ideas by ‘generating terms’ to describe how he defined/understood *culture*, from a sociological perspective. According to Matan, in Grenfell (2008), habitus and field plus culture, results in the practice of an individual.

Capital, on the other hand, according to Richardson, (1986) “is accumulated labor” (Richardson, 1986, p. 15.), overtime it accumulates and makes the ‘playing field’, for individuals, unequal. Richardson (1986), argues that economic capital is the foundation for all other types of capital and that there is a possibility that economic capital can be converted into cultural capital through the individual's expenditure (spending) of time. For example, a parent may have more free time to assist their

children with achieving goals at school as they are afforded more ‘free-time’ due to their financial situation (economic capital).

Richardson (1986), argued that *cultural capital* has three possible forms: the *embodied state* (configuring of both mind and body), *objectified state* (cultural resources- material objects) and the *institutionalized state* (educational qualifications). Bourdieu's idea of cultural capital could be used to explain the significance given to different awards and the regard the teachers, parents and learners, in the school, may have for the winners of these awards.

According to Sullivan (2002), cultural capital refers to the individual’s familiarity with the *main/powerful/dominant* culture of society; and schools cater to the needs of this culture. Therefore learners who are not familiar or part of this culture struggle to succeed in the school environment. Although some learners from a lower-class background are able to achieve and receive awards; higher-class learners are afforded more opportunities and access to these awards, because they ‘understand’ the culture of the school.

Lee and Bowen (2006) suggested that the cultural capital possessed by middle class parents has a major influence on the involvement in their child’s schooling, and thus on their children’s achievement. Middle class parents have a pre-existing culture capital which gives them an advantage. They are at an advantage, because the school serves their values. “Everyone plays, but differential structures ensure that not everyone is equal.” (Grenfell & James, 1998, p. 25.). Therefore society serves middle class values, and schools are a mirror image of society; these values are perpetuated through rituals such as award-systems. The award-system and policies re-privilege the middle class parents of the school; and the transmission of cultural capital in schools generate, foster and reproduce the inequalities displayed in society.

> “success and failure in the education system is seen as being due to individual gifts (or lack of them). Therefore, for Bourdieu, educational credentials help reproduce and legitimate social inequalities, as higher-class individuals are seen to deserve their place in the social structure.” (Sullivan, 2002, p. 144.).

This links to Foucault's work on power/knowledge, power/knowledge are entwined therefore those with knowledge (have more value in the given context) and therefore have power. Academic 'top achievers' appear to have more status and are highly regarded in their community because of the power/knowledge they have accumulated, however, this has been discussed in more detail in Chapter Six .

However, the scope of my study is too narrow to be able to make claims against class, and because the focus of my study is in a private school, the learners have some advantages. My study does, however, consider the cultural capital of the types of awards, because within the social field, some activities count more than others.

Having briefly discussed the framework I will be working within and explaining some of the ideas expressed by particular tenets in this field; I now feel it is important to discuss some of the concepts utilized, to assist me on my journey.

2.3 **The Scene**

2.3.1 **School Climate**

Following Bourdieu and Foucault, I believe that it is through the school climate that values are reproduced. The school climate plays a major factor in how learning is acquired in school. According to Mestry (2017), the leadership of a school 'sets the tone' for the school climate, which in turn plays a major factor in how learning is acquired in school. Policy, alone, is not enough to 'set the tone'. The principal sets the tone by formalising rituals such as award ceremonies; they do this by how the award winner is treated (where they sit, how they dress, the citation, what they receive: trophies/certificates- both?), showcasing the value of this award in the process. A principal plays a vital role in this aspect of the schooling system and there needs to be a 'buy-in' from all the participants involved in the education process in order for the school environment to be conducive to teaching and learning, and the award-system to be successful.

It is important to note here that MacNeil, Prater, and Busch (2009), argue that there are significant differences between culture and climate. Culture can be referred to as the norms, values and ethos of the school. According to Nor and Roslan (2008), as well as Peterson and Skiba (2000), the school culture is the way the learners, staff and community view and feel about the school. There is a significant relationship

between the school and the community, as the school has a high-profile reputation to maintain. These authors argue that the school climate affects, either directly or indirectly, the attitudes, behaviour and learning outcomes of its learners, as well as the teaching and learning process.

Award-systems (policies, administering and celebrations) can be used as a strategy to create a positive or negative school climate by publicly recognising *desired behaviour*, through award ceremonies. It is important to note here that what is positive for some may be negative to others. All awards have attached value to them. In the same way knowledge/power is entwined, in this situation there is a positive/negative entanglement. Therefore, it is important to interrogate the specific values and behaviours that are being reinforced and reproduced through award-systems.

While Bourdieu and Foucault are useful for understanding the manner in which award-systems reproduce socio-structural values; theories of *behaviourism* and *applied behaviourism* are helpful in understanding how these award-systems work to regulate individual behaviours, despite how incongruous theses theoretical approaches may seem. In what follows. I will explore some key features of behaviourist theories that are useful in comprehending the ways in which award-systems operate in schools.

2. 3. 2 **Reinforcement**

Behaviourism- or Skinner (1954), argued that education of an individual is based on the exterior factors of an individual and not the internal (mind). He emphasizes the importance of the relationship between behaviour and consequence, and the impact that the immediate environment of the learner has on their learning. Deterline (1962) and Skinner (1954), both argue that behaviour can be acquired, by learning from the environment and that reinforcement helps enable one individual to shape/control the behaviour of another individual. The ‘desired’ behaviour can be achieved/developed in the classroom as well as during/through award ceremonies through reinforcement-recognising and rewarding ‘positive/desired’ behaviour/ ‘successes’. Therefore these authors believe that education or learning programs (in this case, award-systems/

ceremonies) need to be designed to control and shape the required behaviour that provokes a certain response to a certain stimulus.

Contemporary behaviourists (Bandura, 1977) such as those who believe that there is a relationship between the stimulus (student) and the response (organism/individual). The notion of relationships and the importance of interpersonal relationships, specifically, implies a holistic approach to education. There are external and internal factors that make up and influence these relationships. Observation, and elements that are measurable, still remains an important feature in this contemporary approach, but the situated mind is considered. For these contemporary behaviourists, the use of external reinforcement is important and effective in accomplishing the *desired behaviour*, however, not always necessary (Kitchener, 1972.). Awards (certificates, trophies and medals), are a good example of positive reinforces, as they indicate to the learner that what they have achieved is recognised and valued by the school. Eventually these reinforcements should be replaced by 'natural', 'intrinsic' reinforces. Behaviourist ideas can reinforce what is valued by the school (and society) by using awards to positively reinforce desired *behaviour*.

At this point, I feel that it is necessary for me to engage with the ideas outlined by Albert Bandura, about motivation and self-efficacy. Bandura (1977), like previous behaviourists such as Skinner (1954), argued that behaviour can be predicted and controlled, however, in contrast with Skinner (1968), Bandura (1977), believed that individuals are capable of decision-making. Bandura's (1977) *Social Learning Theory* is governed by three influences: *Vicarious Influences*, *Symbolic Influences*, and *Self-regulatory Influences*. *Vicarious Influence*, according to Bandura (1977), is learning from direct experience or by observing the behaviour of others; and learning about an individual through observing the individual's behaviour and the consequences of that behaviour. *Symbolic Influence* is where the individual is aware of how their experiences affect them and how their actions shape their future (Bandura, 1977). *Self-regulatory Influence* is the process by which individuals have control (to some degree) over their own behaviour. Bandura (1977) argues that individuals perform responses and they observe the consequences for different actions, therefore the actions of an individual are influenced and regulated by the anticipated consequences; thus these consequences motivate certain behaviour. According to Bandura (1977),

the individual needs to be aware of what is being reinforced. Skinner (1954, 1968) describes the importance of 'positive' and 'negative' reinforcement and believes that the individual's awareness of this reinforcement is important, because it hastens the learning process and makes the individual more efficient than when the individual is unaware. It is important to note here that reinforcement is only effective/influential when the individual is aware of the appropriate response and values the outcomes of these responses. Although, according to Bandura (1977), reinforcement (whether positive or negative) "is a powerful method for regulating behaviours…" (Bandura, 1977, p. 5.), it cannot create the desired behaviour; imitation, however, may have an impact. Imitation occurs when it is modelled for the 'observer', and observers need to be motivated to act (Bandura, 1977). He describes four processes in the modelling phenomena:

1) *Attentional Processes*- learning by example through observation.

2) *Retention Processes*- memory. Retaining what has been learned. There is verbal and image coding to remembering (remembering actions in symbolic form).

3) *Motoric Reproduction Processes*- actions/skills. An individual acts out or imitates what has been observed, and an individual's actions are governed by reinforcement contingencies.

4) *Reinforcement and Motivational Processes*- observers need to be motivated to act. Individuals are able to learn behaviour through observing the modelling of this behaviour.

According to Bandura (1977), different forms of modelling have different effects on the observers and human functioning depends on three regulatory processes: *Stimulus Control*, *Cognitive Control* and *Reinforcement Control*.

Social Theory tries to explain why actions are altered through witnessing rewards/punishment. Bandura (1977), argued that self-regulation is imperative in the learning process. This is when the individual will establish their "own standards and reward and punish themselves in accordance with them." (Crain, 1992, p. 218.). The individual adopts self-evaluation standards from models who have had influence over them (model influences can be teachers, parents, peers etc…). *Self-Efficacy*

Appraisals is another concept that Bandura believed to be very important. Self-Efficacy Appraisals are the judgments one makes of their responses/actions and draw conclusions from the outcomes of these responses/actions. It has an influence over one's motivation. It can either encourage an individual to do something or discourage them (depending on how they judge themselves). Bandura (1977), believed that an individual needs to be motivated by modelling influences to perform, rather than motivate themselves. In the case of my study, learners may be motivated by observing others receive awards. However, self-motivation does occur (to achieve personal goals/standard of the individual) through self-regulatory process and self-efficacy.

In Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory the ideas of *Reinforcement and Motivational Processes* become key concepts. In these processes observers need to be motivated to act. By witnessing these actions being positively reinforced, behaviour is learned. Therefore achievement being recognised in award ceremonies affords for the other learners to observe desired behaviour. Behaviourists believe that the thoughts, feelings and actions of a child are influenced and shaped by the reinforcement contingency and that their reinforcement contingencies is what controls behaviour. What is awarded and how it is awarded influences the learners' motivation to achieve certain awards.

According to Keller (1987), learners feel more confident and motivated to put in effort, when they know they are working toward a goal. Keller (1987), argued that learners need to feel that they have some control over their achievement, and therefore award criteria needs to be clearly specified; this personal control will increase motivation of a learner.

In his study of the importance of celebrating achievement, DuFour (1998) makes the argument that watching other individuals being recognised for their success, will provide others with examples and models that will motivate individuals to engage in similar behaviour. DuFour (1998) also stated that publicly recognising and reinforcing behaviour that is perceived to be consistent with the organisation's values, will remind individuals of the importance of those values, and will "reinforce the specific behaviours essential to the schools… "(DuFour, 1998, p. 1.). Therefore, as discussed previously, awards create, foster and reproduce certain values. *However, how do awards reinforce this desired behaviour?*

Furthermore, DuFour (1998) argues that recognising individual and group achievements plays a key role in influencing an institution's culture; and in this research story, the school. According to DuFour (1998), publicly recognising an individual on their achievement; influences their motivation, for they will believe that their effort is significant, valued and appreciated. Corroborating this view are Bandura (1977) and Keller (1987), who further argued that “people appreciate the external recognition that helps support the value of what they are doing.” (Keller, 1987, p. 6.). Extrinsic reinforcement, such as awards (certificates, medals and trophies), influence an individual's self-motivation, cooperation and satisfaction, according to Pan and Houser (2011) .

Linking to the impact of reinforcement as discussed earlier, positive consequences, reinforcement and extrinsic awards (rewards) can assist in shaping the desired behaviour in the school. Eventually (hopefully) extrinsic motivation will lead to intrinsic motivation and self-efficacy.

Although there are differences between the theories from behaviourism and post-structuralism; there are post-structuralist ideas that are compatible with behaviourist theories from Bandura. For behaviourists, such as Skinner (1954), there is no human agency; whereas for a post-structuralist human agency is a key concept, however, behaviourist ideas, discussed by Bandura (1977), is useful in understanding achievement and the intrinsic/extrinsic motivation behind that achievement. Behaviourists focus on how an individual works within a system, a post-structuralist will examine how that same system influences/impacts the individual. For a post-structuralist the structure of the award-system (stimuli) would be their main focus and for a behaviourist, the stimuli would be the focus. There are many useful comparisons that can be made between the two theories which will be discussed in detail in Chapters Six and Seven.

The scene has been established, and some main characters of my research journey have been identified. However, like any good adventurer, it is important to understand the broader context in which this story takes place. To this end, in the following chapter I will situate my research within other research on school awards. Through the following literature review the themes for analysis will be established.

CHAPTER THREE

3 **Reflecting on other studies**

In this chapter I review a selection of studies that have been carried out on school awards in a range of contexts. Through embarking on this component of my research journey I was surprised at how few studies there have been, how few of these are in South Africa, and that almost no other studies on school awards systems that I could find consider the learners' voices. While locating my study, this literature review reinforces the need and relevance of my own study. In the chapter that follows, I discuss a range of studies, according to emergent themes which I will subsequently relate to my project.

3.1 **Motivation**

3.1.1 **Positive effects of awards**

In their study with children (5–6 years old and 9–10 years old) and adults, Jin, Auyeung, and Chevalier (2020), compared the respective influences of external rewards and positive stimuli on childhood cognitive control. Participants involved in this study had to complete a cued task-switching paradigm in three conditions: positive-stimulus, external-reward and control conditions. Jin, Auyeung and Chevalier (2020), found that external rewards bring about different kinds of proactive approaches in individuals. “Cognitive control- the goal directed regulation of attention and actions- is often carried out in affective contexts.” (Jin, Auyeung & Chevalier 2020, p.1.). Jin, Auyeung and Chevalier (2020) argue that *cognitive control*, in an individual, is affected by mood, emotions and reward motivation. The cognitive control of an individual is influenced by *positive emotion* and *reward motivation*, although these two ideas are similar, they differ in the way that they function. According to Jin *et al* (2020) positive emotion promotes and encourages the individual’s ability to task-switch whereas motivational rewards (or the expectation of an award/reward) enhances the individual’s inhibition and working memory.

School plays an important role in this process, for schools lengthen working memory. Larger working memory leads to more information being processed and consolidated, it is important to note here that consolidation of processed information

is a biological process. In order for processing and consolidation to occur, a connection of new information/knowledge to prior knowledge needs to be made (Kirschner, Sweller & Clark, 2006). At this point, I feel that it is imperative to discuss the importance of knowledge transferring from a temporary working memory to a permanent long-term memory. Long term memory is important, as the knowledge stored here is permanent and may be accessed by an individual at any point (at any time). Kirschner *et al* (2006) argued that there is a relationship between long term and short term memory, and this relationship is key in the learning process. For Kirschner *et al* (2006) the purpose of the learning process is to transfer knowledge learned from working memory into long term memory (move from temporary to permanent); but in order for this to be done, learning needs to be meaningful.

Working load memory is short in time span and has a limited capacity, and functions in the visual and auditory regions. According to Miller (1956) the channel capacity for judgement of visual position is larger than the channel capacity for judgement of an auditory position. Therefore, if this is the case, there would be possible implications for the learning process and perhaps a teacher could use more visual aids as a resource in their classroom and the use of thinking routines could be applied as a tool/method to teach certain concepts, which could enhance performance and lead to a learner achieving an award.

Positive emotion signifies that an individual may feel safe and secure in their learning environment and therefore this emotion may encourage the individual to spread their attention across a variety of tasks and to new opportunities which may include flexibility in goal-setting. “In contrast, expectation of external rewards may serve as a motional signal that promotes cognitive effort, hence enhancing cognitive stability (i.e. maintenance of goals and task-sets)” (Jin, Auyeung & Chevalier, 2020, p.1.). *Proactive control*, according to Jin *et al* (2020), this “refers to the anticipation and preparation for an upcoming task…” (Jin, Auyeung & Chevalier, 2020, p.2.). While *reactive control* “works as a transient ‘late-correction’ mechanism while actually performing the task.” (Jin, Auyeung & Chevalier, 2020, p.2.).

3.1.2 **Does positive emotion and motivational rewards affect these controls?**

According to Jin *et al* (2020), as individuals become more flexible in their thinking, they engage more with proactive control. From their research, Jin *et al* (2020)

discovered that proactive control is influenced by reward motivation; and proactive control and reactive control vary in individuals at different stages of their maturation (and ages) “proactive control is engaged more consistently and efficiently with age” (Jin, Auyeung & Chevalier, 2020, p.6.).

Jin *et al* (2020) argue that external rewards promote and encourage cognitive control in individuals. The expectation of receiving an award elicits a reaction/response from an individual and according to these authors an individual focuses (pays more attention) on a task if there is a chance of receiving an award; “rewards may support task readiness through enhanced mobilization of attention ahead of the upcoming target.” (Jin, Auyeung & Chevalier, 2020, p.7.).

Rewards increase extrinsic motivation, in an individual, which serves as an incentive for individuals to adopt a surface approach to learning. This leads to the individual engaging more in cognitive effort across the board (Jin, Auyeung & Chevalier, 2020, p.7.). This research assisted me in identifying and analysing the implications of awards on motivation and the positive emotions the award-system of the school promotes.

3.1.3 **What implications do awards have in/on an institution?**

There are different forms of providing social recognition (awards) and according to Robinson, Gallus, Lee and Rogers (2019), there are two main types of awards: *retrospective* and *prospective*.

Retrospective awards “acknowledge a job well done after a task is complete and come as a surprise to recipients.” (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 2.). Robinson *et al* (2019) refer to these types of awards as “now-that” awards (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 2.). Robinson *et al* (2019) argued that these awards may be motivating as the recipient may be surprised by receiving the award and their achievement and therefore strive to work harder after being affirmed and reassured of their abilities.

Prospective awards are awards where an individual is given guidelines/outlines and/or expectations of the recipients and what they need to do to achieve these awards, “but they do not allow the person to draw inference about their own ability or

performance in that context." (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 2.). Robinson *et al* (2019) refer to these types of awards as "if… then" "work-towards" awards (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 2.). "Leaders define their expectations in advance and aspirants can work towards fulfilling them in order to attain the award." (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 2.).

"Receiving an award allows the recipients to make inferences about their performance and how it can be situated in a given environment." (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 2.). Anderson, Reder, and Simon (1996), describes situated learning as the idea that much of what has been learnt is bound and limited to the situation that it is learned in. Meaning making is not context-independent, but rather context dependent. Wilson (2002) explains situated cognition as a process when cognitive activity is located in a context and is situation-dependent. In the context of my research project, the learning is situated in this school, because the attitude of the learners is that they know if they behave or work in a particular way, they will achieve a particular result.

According to Robinson *et al* (2019), it is the individuals who did not receive awards who react more than and are more impacted than those individuals who did (in reference to performance). Some individuals are motivated by the status of the award within their community. This links to the discussion above which focused on Bandura (1977) and his theory of motivation and how extrinsic motivation may evolve into intrinsic motivation. "Awards are often used without a full understanding of whether or how they produce the intended behaviour." (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 3.).

Robinson *et al* (2019), argued that awards may not always promote or encourage the desired behaviour of an institution and they discussed potential negative implications of awards. They believed that not only is it possible for non-award winners to be envious of recipients and respond negatively to the process; "even recipients' behaviour can be adversely impacted." (Robinson, Gallus, Lee, & Rogers, 2019, p. 3.). According to Robinson *et al* (2019), there are three possible reasons why awards may have unintended negative effects on an individual's behaviour:

1. The award winner may assume that their performance does not conform to the social norms of the intuition and therefore they may reduce the effort they put in; especially if the award is not a true reflection of their ability.
2. The award-winner may feel that they have exceeded their institution's expectations (above the social norms of that institution) and therefore feel obliged to rather perform in a socially 'desirable' manner. According to Robinson *et al* (2019) individuals who feel that they have exceeded certain expectations of the institution may lower their performance (reduce effort) as a result.
3. By performing above the social norm of an institution and being socially recognised for this performance an individual may feel singled-out. The award-winner may feel 'out-casted' from their peers/colleagues because of their performance and therefore lower their performance standard as an effort to 'fit-in' and avoid social sanctions by their peers/colleagues.

Robinson *et al* (2019) analysis demonstrates that giving surprise awards to honour and reinforce certain behaviour may be counterproductive; and instead of motivating the individual to achieve the award and act in a particular way the individual may become demotivated and undesired behaviour may occur. These authors argued that age plays a factor in how an individual responds to an award (and how it will affect their motivation and behaviour); "younger students may have been motivated by the prospect of earning an award… but the positive effect disappeared as students grew older." (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 8.). There are unintended effects/implications of awards of an institution. There are underlying mechanisms (positive/negative) of the institution that influence the type of the awards given and the impact of these awards.

Prospective awards inform the individual about the social norms and expectations of the institution (school). The findings of research conducted by Robinson *et al* (2019), suggests that prospective awards do not motivate an individual and they argued that retrospective awards may even demotivate individuals. Receiving an award suggests that an individual has gone above the social norm of an institution therefore what is awarded exposes the values of an institution. My study seeks to examine the underlying values of a school and the effects these awards have on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion.

According to Robinson *et al* (2019), public displays of social recognition may result in negative implications. Robinson *et al* (2019), state that “different types of awards should be used to motivate desirable behaviours…” (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 11.), in an individual and in some cases certain awards may have the opposite effect which may provoke undesirable behaviour. Although “Awards are relatively cheap, easy to implement in institutions, and appear harmless.” (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 12.); they may have negative implications and the consequences may differ to what was expected by the institution.

Amabile, Hennessey and Grossman (1986), argued that it is difficult for an individual to reach their full potential when they are trying to meet the criteria set-up by others (this they describe as the wrong reasons). When an individual strives to work at achieving an award for the ‘wrong’ reasons (an example of a ‘wrong’ reason would be working for a reward offered by an institution), they are extrinsically motivated rather than intrinsically motivated. According to Amabile *et al* (1986), extrinsic rewards for achievement may hinder an individual’s intrinsic motivation, because they are working to achieve goals set-up by others, rather than working towards their own goals/interests. According to Amabile *et al* (1986), unexpected awards, that are symbolic, may lead to a learner being intrinsically motivated, however, awards with a material presence promote extrinsic motivation for an individual. Awards may add pressure for an individual and therefore may hinder their performance. When a material object is attached to performance, one takes less risks and exploration of new ideas is limited; therefore creativity in these learners may be stifled (Amabile *et al* 1986.). Working for an award may turn once interested individuals into disinterested participants as the ‘fun’ element is removed because the individual is working at meeting criteria for the activity. According to Amabile *et al* (1986), awards may have the same effects as evaluation, competition, restricted choice and surveillance, on an individual's performance. My study seeks to identify and analyse the implications of awards on learners in a Private School in South Africa, and the effect of the award-system and motivation.

3.2 **Collaboration**

3.2.1 **Awards and Collaboration**

Often institutions rely on award-systems which are aimed at recognising and motivating individuals to reach individual goals. According to Kirkman, Li, Zheng, Harris, and Liu (2016), this idea of rewarding individuals for individual performance can prohibit individuals from working collaboratively. According to Kirkman *et al* (2016), the effect of singling out an individual within a team results in the other team members (as well as the individual recognised) to enhance their performance, which in turn increases team performance. Their findings suggest "that it is possible to recognize top performers and boost team performance at the same time." (Kirkman, Li, Zheng, Harris, & Liu, 2016, p. 4.). This school of thought is in contrast with the traditional idea of recognising individual performance and encourages individuals to enhance their performance on a personal level as well as work collaboratively with others. Kirkman *et al* (2016), suggests that if this approach is used by an institution the institution needs to ensure that they use a fair decision-making criteria and a trust-worthy process when awarding (there can be no sense of biasness or favouritism in the selection process).This approach to award-systems does motivate individuals to increase their performance albeit for extrinsic purposes (and to collaborate with others).

3.3 **Social Cohesion**

3. 3. 1 **Social Cohesion and the Community**

I did engage with literature that focused on social cohesion, Chipkin and Ngqulunga (2008), *Friends and family: social cohesion in South Africa*; and Hudson, Phillips, Ray and Barnes (2007), *Social cohesion in diverse communities*; however, the premise of the articles did not directly relate to my study. Social cohesion refers to the attitude and behaviour of a community and the harmony within that community; with that community working together toward a common goal- the common good.

According to King, Samii and Snilstveit (2010), the terms *social cohesion* and *social capital* are interchangeable, however King *et al* (2010), refers to social

capital as an individual accumulation whereas social cohesion refers to a group/community. King *et al* (2010), argued that the education section can be used as a tool to encourage social cohesion through the literature they utilize, the actual curriculum activities implemented by the educators (although this might change norms and behaviour of an individual, but not their beliefs), and interventions could be put into place in the hidden curriculum and school climate (ethos) to promote social cohesion. It is important to note here that these types of interventions are context based and this relates to the discussion in Chapter Two/Three about *situated learning*. Therefore, if social cohesion could be encouraged in a school setting, a school could promote it using their award-system. They could do this through the criteria they set to achieve the award, the wording they use when awarding the award (citation) and the actual award itself. Social cohesion could be promoted and explored through the award-system of a school, and this study will assist me in identifying if *social cohesion* is encouraged in this school's award-system.

The scene has been set and some main characters as well as themes of my research project have been identified. In the following chapter I will proceed on a Journey by exploring and outlining the methodology utilized to assist me gathering and analysing the data of this Research Project.

CHAPTER FOUR

4. **The Journey**

This chapter presents and explains the research design and specific research methods selected. The learner questionnaire used in this study contained questions that would establish the learners' thoughts about the school's award-system. Learners were asked to respond in writing.

The instrument utilized in this project was designed to answer one main question: *In what ways do school award-systems affect learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion?* In this chapter I will provide an account for how the data was gathered, managed and analysed.

4.1. **Overview**

Research design refers to the strategy and methods that a researcher decides to use to collect data. I adopted an approach that is qualitative in nature (regarding the collection of data in my research project). The purpose of working qualitatively is based upon the nature of the problem that I am exploring.
At this point of the study it is important to understand the different types of research design processes that can be used in a project and the design I chose to utilize to gather data and the perspective from which I analysed the data.

Quantitative Research, according to Scott and Morrison (2005), is to apply the natural science approach of research (the scientific method) to studies in the education field, such as behaviour. Observation, variables and measurement are important in this type of research. Muijs (2011), explains quantitative research as using mathematical methods to analyse data collected in the study, and explaining the phenomena discovered. Scott and Morrison (2005), argued that quantitative research is concerned with the relationships between concept formation, observations and measurement. Furthermore, they argue that this type of research is interested in causality, and casual relationships between variables. The purpose of a quantitative researcher, according to Scott and Morrison (2005), is establishing that their findings can be generalised beyond where the study was situated. Although this type of research is not entirely objective, the concern is whether the research could be simulated elsewhere.

Qualitative Research, according to Maykut and Morehouse (1994), is to gain an understanding of a situation as it is presented by the participants in their setting. The participant, in qualitative research, needs to feel included in, and understand the discoveries made by the researcher (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Maykut and Morehouse (1994), generally define the task of the researcher as capturing the process of how individuals interpret the (their) world. This interpretation can be captured by recording and understanding the individual's words and actions; and should be conducted in a setting that is personal and natural to the participant. It is from their (the participant's) perspective that the researcher will gain an understanding of the social phenomena of research they are conducting (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006). In qualitative research, the researcher needs to identify patterns that emerge in responses (interpretations) from the participants, and then make discoveries about the problem, based on these responses (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994; Denzin, Lincoln, 2000; Silverman, 2004).

The design I have chosen is qualitative in nature, the reason for this is because I want to understand the actual award-system, as well as individual perceptions of these awards. In this research project I used a Qualitative Questionnaire (in a case-study)[1]. Although the closed questions in the questionnaire are recorded in a quantitative manner (using numbers, statistics and percentages) to determine and record the responses from the participants; this approach affords me (the researcher) the opportunity to address my research question. Furthermore, this approach "is inclusive, pluralistic and complementary…" (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 17.). The research design for this study is interpretive in nature and is a small scale research. It is predominantly qualitative, with elements of quantitative research. I feel it necessary that it is noted that the method of analysis of data was rooted in a post-structuralist paradigm.

[1] Originally, my intention was to host a focus-group interview with the participants who volunteered to join (after completing the questionnaire), unfortunately this was not possible due to certain circumstances.

4.2. **Setting**

Site Selection, is the location where the data collection of the study will be conducted. Qualitative researchers (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006) define site selection as the site that is selected where the participants involved in the study are situated.

My research site has been chosen due to convenience. I am a teacher at the school and have access. Furthermore, my research will have an impact on the community in which I work, therefore it is situated research. The Private Primary school is a well-resourced, middle/upper class school. The school offers education from Grade R-12. However, it is broken down into three sectors: Junior Preparatory, Grade R-3 (which is located on a separate site to the Preparatory and High School); Preparatory, Grade 4-7 and High School (Grade 8-12). The Preparatory School and High School share some facilities such as the tuck-shops, and all the sports facilities. The Junior Preparatory and Preparatory school combined, contains approximately 800 learners. The facilities of the school are: a tuck-shop, a café, hockey fields, multi-purpose sports fields (rugby, soccer, cricket…), an indoor pool, and outdoor pool, a cricket centre, a gym, a multipurpose hall, and a Chapel. Most of the learners are from affluent, middle class families with middle/high socioeconomic backgrounds. I feel that it is imperative to note here that all the Grade 7 learners had access to the resources needed to complete the questionnaire.

4.3 **Behind the Scenes**

The sample in a case study, such as this one, are the research participants. The sample is chosen by me, the researcher, following specific procedures.

Qualitative researchers, Maykut and Morehouse, (1994); McMillan and Schumacher, (2006); argued that the task of the researcher is to build a sample that will allow them to gain an in-depth understanding of situations that are experienced by a selected group of individuals. Qualitative approaches focus on obtaining research information from small groups of individuals rather than a larger population. Studying a few cases, instead of many, allows the researcher to go into detail, thus many insights about the topic may emerge (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006; Grbich, 2013). The size of the sample is irrelevant, it is the data collection strategy of the researcher and the richness

of information generated from qualitative inquiry that will determine what discoveries are made (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006).

In this research project, I used a purposeful sampling (recruited/homogenous/critical case/) approach. The sample unit chosen for this study was a group of Grade 7 learners, who have been through at least two award ceremonies where they were eligible to receive awards. Since I invited the whole grade to participate, the original sample size of this study was ninety-nine Grade 7 learners at the school. Thirty three learners responded to the questionnaire (⅓ of the grade). The qualitative questionnaire was sent to all the learners in the grade, which gave all the learners an opportunity to participate and make their voices heard.

4.4 **Plot and Props**

The data collection process commenced, after clearance had been granted by the Ethics Committee from the University, and I received a protocol number.

The process began when I approached the school to seek permission to conduct my study in their school. I sent a letter (see Appendix B) to the School's Head about my study. Once consent (see Appendix C) had been granted, by the Executive Board Member (for the private primary school), I gave each Grade 7 learner and parent an information letter, describing the purpose of this study. They were also each given a consent form to sign (see Appendices D, E, F, G, H and I).

Once the Grade 7 parents gave their consent for their children to participate in the study, I sent out the qualitative questionnaire (see Appendix J) and information letter and consent to each learner (whose parents consented) via email. Each learner was given a month to complete the questionnaire. The questionnaire was emailed on 21 October 2020 and completed by 21 November 2020.

The main instrument used in this study was a qualitative questionnaire (Appendix J). Some of the data collected, from this questionnaire, for this study, can be observed and measured. Although, at first, this instrument appears to be entirely quantitative in nature; the questions posed in the questionnaire encouraged the participants to share their thoughts and express their opinion on the matter at hand, and they were given the opportunity to use their voice (using the text-boxes provided on the form). Therefore my research design is a mainly qualitative (methods and language),

with elements of quantitative techniques. Furthermore, this study has plurality and is inclusive in nature.

I began my research investigation by compiling a qualitative questionnaire that was generated on Google Forms, and distributed via email- Google. These questions were theme based (learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion) and were constructed in a way that was suitable for the participants engaging with them, and 'easy' to understand and answer. The questionnaire was generated on Google Forms and sent via email (google accounts) only to the Grade 7 participants (whose parents consented and they assented), these participants then completed the form digitally (online). The questionnaire was focused on the learners' perceptions toward the awards, in the school, and was entirely voluntary.

The age-group of my sample is a factor, and guidance is needed for these participants to engage, therefore structured questions assist the participants in expressing their voices through their answers. The questions in this questionnaire were structured, however, they were mainly open-ended, and arranged in themes: motivation, collaboration and social cohesion. Text-boxes were also provided, where the participants were afforded the opportunity to make comments. Volunteering to partake in this questionnaire, affords for the learner to exercise their agency. Although the learners' identities were revealed to the researcher (me), their identity will remain anonymous on the records (as no names are given). The quantitative nature of the questionnaire afforded me the opportunity to utilize percentages to gain insight of the overall picture which emerged within certain themes.

The qualitative nature of the questionnaire afforded me the opportunity to understand the topic being researched from the perspective of the Grade 7 learners. My research is situated in the school context and specifically focused on awards and the learners' experiences of these awards. The questionnaire is unobtrusive in nature and I, the researcher, did not have direct contact with the learners.

4.5 **Ethical Considerations**

McMillian and Schumacher (2006) emphasize that ethics deal with beliefs about what is right and what is not. Research ethical considerations are imperative for a number of reasons. They promote the aims of the study by extending the knowledge base by

using social and moral guidelines that ensure the data collection process is conducted in a professional manner whilst ensuring the protection of all those involved (especially in my study where the participants are vulnerable- children). There are certain guidelines to how a researcher conducts themselves, and what the ethically correct way to conduct research is. These guidelines are: informed consent, voluntary participation, protection of identity (anonymity and confidentiality) and the protection and storage of raw data.

I applied for an ethics clearance certificate and was granted permission to conduct my study. This certificate certifies that my research is ethical, and will bring no 'harm' to the participants.

An application form and a letter of consent (see Appendices B and C) was sent to the Executive Board Member of the Private Primary School, seeking permission to conduct my data collection in his school. An application form and a letter of consent (see Appendix D and E) was sent to the Principal of the Private Primary School, seeking permission to conduct my data collection in his school.

Letters accompanied by a description of the study were emailed to the parents and learners (participants) of the school (see Appendix F and H). Consent forms (see Appendix G and I) were attached to those letters seeking the permission to undertake the study, as well as informing all participants that their confidentiality and anonymity will be guaranteed, they do not need to answer all the questions asked and they may withdraw from the study at any time**.**

The type of risks involved in the study were clearly classified. I am aware that there is risk involved in this study, for the learners, as they are classified vulnerable participants (children) and I tried my best to mitigate these risks, by ensuring confidentiality and anonymity for the participants. I exercised extra caution in protecting the confidentiality of the selected school and the participants. The learners voluntarily participated in completing the questionnaires, online.

The data collected will be stored at the Wits School of Education for 3-5 years, and on my personal laptop. The laptop is only accessible by me (the researcher), and is secured with a password only known by myself. No else other than the researcher is able to access the data on the laptop.

The issue of trustworthiness of responses (and interpretation of) may be obtained by looking across the data for similarities and congruence. Many participants responded in a similar way. The indicator of the level of trustworthiness in this project is the use of the participants own quotes in the data- collection and analysis chapters. Although I teach at the school, I am not a class/register teacher of any of the participants in the group. The participants volunteered to participate in this study and no pressure was placed on the participants to complete or submit the Google Form- Questionnaire. I did not follow-up and I did not use my school account to upload the Google Forms or email them. I made it clear to the learners that this project had nothing to do with marks/subjects and that I was asking these questions as a means to improve the current award-system of the school (therefore their opinion/voice on the subject was an imperative). The purpose of this project stems from the perspective that the responses of the participants will assist in the improvement (changes) of the current award-system.

4.6 **Review**

"The process of data-analysis in qualitative research is complex."(Grbich, 2013, p. 1). It involves: the persons, the process and the presentation (Grbich, 2013). The person, refers to the person conducting the study (the researcher). The process refers to the research design and methodology that the researcher will be using to gather and manage the data collected, and the presentation refers to how the findings are interpreted, and analysed and displayed for reading purposes (Grbich, 2013).

In data analysis, the researcher needs to identify recurring patterns in the data collected, and interpret and display these patterns.

The information gathered from the various research instruments has been sorted and arranged to assist with the interpretation of the findings. The researcher (me) coded the data collected from the case study questionnaires, and grouped patterns that occurred together, in relation to the themes setup in the questionnaires. Coding can be viewed as grouping patterns together, and it is the process where themes are identified and labelled (Grbich, 2013). From my coding, the researcher (I) managed to identify patterns that occurred within the themes, and collate them. The purpose of

dividing data up into themes is so that I, the researcher, could arrange and reorganise data in order to work with it effectively.

The data was used to establish common themes that emerged from the answers given by Grade 7 learners. I commented on the responses given by the participants, drawing on similarities and differences in their reactions. The information of the answers (data-collected) were presented on pie-charts (see Chapter 5).

CHAPTER FIVE

5. **An Observation**

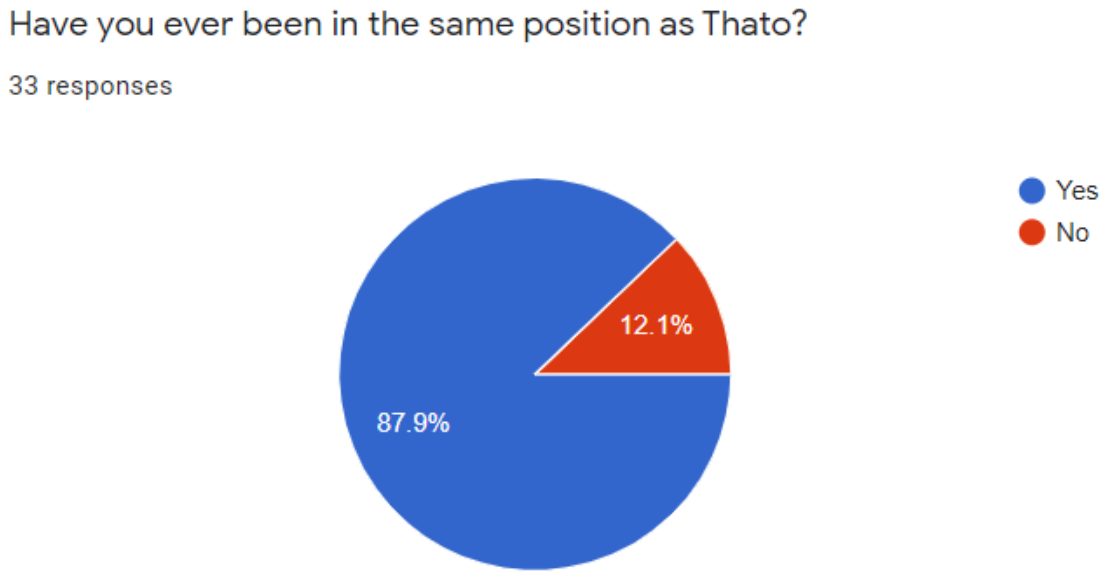
Having journeyed thus far, the next part of the story takes place with the learners who volunteered to participate in the data-collection process. In this chapter I will be presenting the data collected from the thirty-three participants who responded to the case study-questionnaire.

The data collected will be presented in two ways. The closed questions will be presented in a pie-chart format, showing the percentage of *yes* answers in comparison with the response of *no*. The other way that the data will be presented will be extracting the quotes from the participants (their direct responses to the open questions). An account of each question in the case-study questionnaire will be outlined and explored in this Chapter and the data will analysed according to themes.

5.1 **Anticipating an Award**

A vignette was typed out and presented at the beginning of the questionnaire, encouraging the participants to understand the scenario and to increase engagement with the questions they were being asked.

> *Thato, a boy at the end of his grade 6 year, was sitting on the floor in his school hall, waiting nervously and excitedly for the prize-giving (award ceremony) to begin. His heart was racing as his mind began to wonder about all the possible awards that he may receive. He thought back to the effort he made throughout the year and wondered if he had done enough.*



Eighty-eight percent of the participants, from the questionnaire, have felt that they have been in the same position as Thato).

Thirty-three out of the 33 participants believe that Thato was nervous and excited while waiting in anticipation to hear the outcome of all the hard effort over the course of the year. One hundred percent of participants state that they feel similar emotions to what Thato was experiencing during their own award-ceremonies. This suggested that the participants could relate to the case-study being presented.

> "I think Thato was feeling nervous before the award ceremony due to the fact that he may feel that he hasn't done enough to receive an award or because he was feeling extremely excited for this special event and thinking that he has done extremely well for a prize/award." - Respondent 1
>
> "He would be nervous because there is a chance he doesn't get any prizes but he would be excited that he could get very prestigious prizes."- Respondent 2
>
> "I think Thato was feeling nervous and/or excited about the award ceremony/ prize-giving because he was anticipating the awards he may receive."- Respondent 3

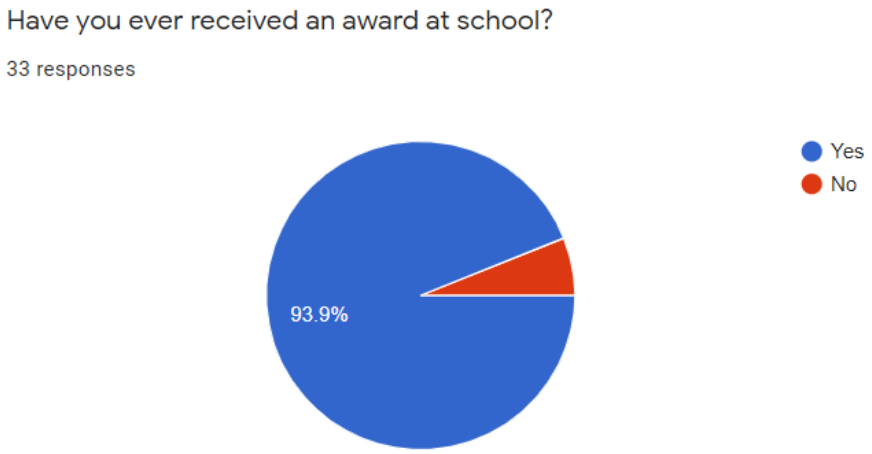
Approximately 88% of participants feel that they have been in the same position as Thato while anticipating the possibility of receiving an award at prize-giving.

> "I would say to Thato you have to work hard and will get a reward even if it is just for dedication and persistence." Respondent 4

The general response of the participants was to advise Thato to never give up and to keep persisting, this type of response suggests that these participants believe that hard-work pays off and that motivation to persevere is intrinsic rather than externally motivated by the award itself.

> “”Don't worry Thato I’m sure you have done enough and if not at least you got to have the fun of trying”- Respondent 5
>
> “Thato I think you have done really well this year, no matter whether you get an award or not, you know that you have done your best.”- Respondent 6
>
> “You have tried your best and that is what counts.”- Respondent 7

5.2. **What is awarded?**



If yes, what was it for?

31 responses

Pipe Band

It was for pipe band

It was for my academics and cultural activities.

I got half colours for swimming and a trophy for swimming

Re ✝️, Music 🎶, Sports 🏈 and Culture 🎨🎭.
But my favorite award I have ever gotten was for Religious Education.

The school merit

Most improved rower and most improved soccer player

Colours for Art, Chess, Tennis, Cross Country and Athletics. Certificate for Academics.

Waterpolo
Full colors for cross country and half colors for soccer
I have received a trophy for public speaking in grade 5 and it is curently sitting in the reception and also my drama and choir colours in grade 6.
For mirimba
it was Bronze for academicsin grade 4
Academic awards, sports, cultural and service awards
respect, behavior, soccer, basketball, rugby
Academics, Tennis and Chess

For the best overall marks in my class.
Community Service
Rugby and swimming and basketball
Sport, service and academics
I have received half colors for academics and numerous sports awards.
Head of house,Waterpolo captain,Drama full colours, waterpolo half colours and ora et labora
Drama, Choir, Rugby, Academics.
Running
Academics

Zulu
sport
Overall Academic Dux (Highest Mark) Grade 5 and Grade 6
Best u13 rower
Sports colours.
Sports half colours for rugby & golf.

The above information are direct responses from the participants, indicating the types/kinds of awards distributed at the school. This illustrates that the school celebrates achievement in a variety of fields.

5.3. **Motivation**

Out of the 33 participants involved in this questionnaire, 93.9% (31) have received an award, and their reaction to receiving an award has been positive and encouraging. Majority of the participants felt that after receiving an award they felt proud and confident, and were motivated to achieve better or more. The feeling of all their effort and hard-work being recognized was greatly appreciated.

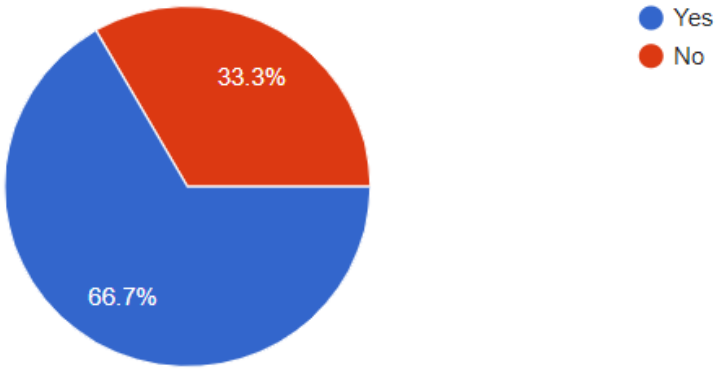
> “It made me feel special, that my hard work was being noticed and that I was receiving a form of personal recognition.”-Respondent 30
> “Accomplished”- Respondent 21
> “I felt a boost in my confidence which helped me achieve more than I expected.”- Respondent 29
> “Made me feel awesome and to strive even more to become even better”- Respondent 31
> “It made me feel happy as my hard work paid off”- Respondent 33

For those learners who did not receive an award, they took responsibility for their actions and admitted to not working hard enough.

> “I did not work hard enough”- Respondent 9
> “I think I did not receive one because I feel I didn't work hard enough.”- Respondent 17

Has there been a time when you were not expecting an award and received one?

33 responses



“To bring out the best of any student's potential and to give motivation to the students. “- Respondent 1

“To show the students what they can achieve.”- Respondent 2

“To reward the students for their hard work.”- Respondent 5

“I think my school has these awards for motivational purposes and to recognize and reward the right people.”- Respondent 14

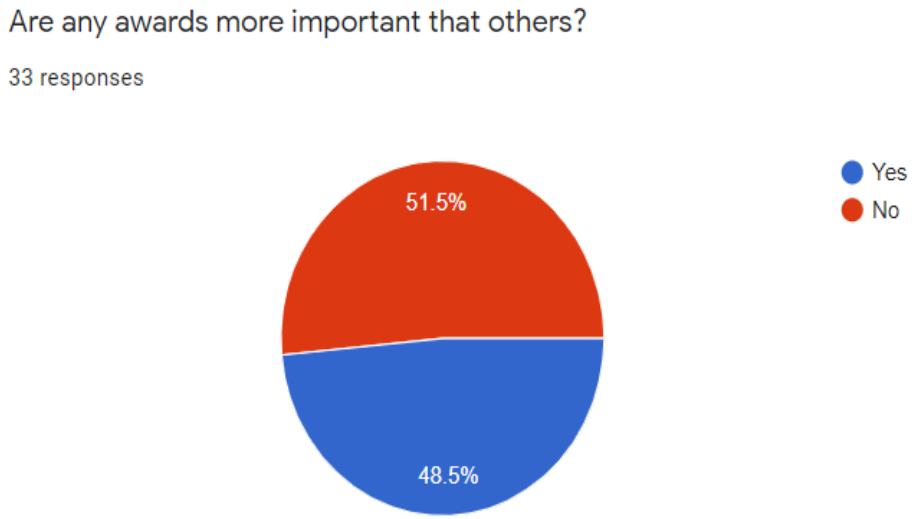
“I think the school has these awards to motivate children to either get them next time or get them again.”- Respondent 16

“I think our school has these awards because it pushes us to work harder.” - Respondent 19

“To recognize effort and ability.”- Respondent 27

“I think my school has these awards because it helps those who receive the awards feel like they have truly accomplished something and it also inspires those who didn't receive awards, to strive for them.” - Respondent 30

Sixty-seven percent of participants stated that they receive an award without expectation (surprise-award).



From the data the 49% of participants believe that academic and sport achievement is valued more than the other awards given at the school, because these two fields are apparently more prestigious.

> “Academics and sport”- Respondent 18 and 19
>
> “Sports and academics”- Respondent 2
>
> “Sporting and academic awards”- Respondent 13
>
> “I think this because the school wants to attract more students to the school, so they try to impress other students to join their school by showing off their good academics and sports.” - Respondent 3
>
> “Academics is more important than most awards because academics is what you need to survive in life because becoming a pro sport player is rare and hard”- Respondent 16

Fifty-two percent of participants believe that all awards and achievements are equally important and valued.

> “I feel that all awards are valued”- Respondent 1
>
> “I think they are all as important as the rest of them.”- Respondent 2

These participants believe this because:

> “For it shows that the [learner] has a heart, mind, body and soul“- Respondent 1
>
> “It is important for the school to have high achieving students, in all fields and aspects of the school. “-Respondent 2

Equal recognition appears to be an important principle to these participants and recognition for achievements (hard-work, effort and ability) seems to be valued and appreciated.

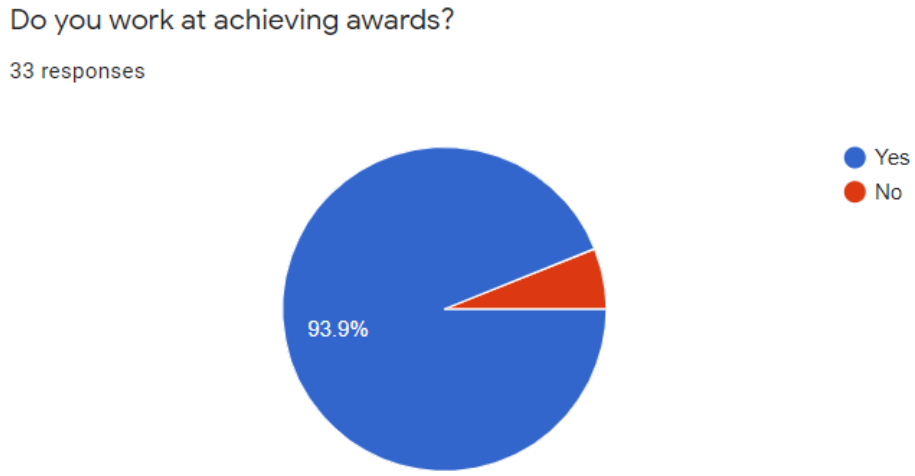
> “Because if you get an award for marimba you should be appreciated the same as someone who has received an award for academics. “- Respondent 2

The participants largely agree that the main values promoted by the awards recognised by the school are: teamwork, dedication, commitment, self-confidence, perseverance, a strong mind-set, effort, hard-work, self-determination, work-ethic, pride, diligence, good behaviour, sportsmanship, drive and growth.

> “These awards promote emotional, academic, physical and cultural growth.”- Respondent 4

One response, however, stood out to me and that was about status. This links to Pierre Bourdieu’s idea on cultural capital and maintaining one's position in society.

> “I believe this is a sign of status and that you must continue to work and keep up with that status.”- Respondent 29



Ninety-four percent of participants work at achieving awards and according to the data the main motivation for these participants achieving an award is intrinsic. 27 out 33 participants state that the reason they work at achieving an award is for self-satisfaction, self-fulfilment, future goals and the feeling of accomplishment.
One of the participants stated that nothing motivated them.

> “To know I achieved something”- Respondent 7

> “I strive for awards in what I enjoy doing”- Respondent 10

“The amazing feeling of getting the award and the understanding of the effort I put in to get the award encourages me to work for it.”- Respondent 22

“The feeling you get when you stand on the stage receiving the award and your parents or family cheers you on.”- Respondent 15

“Nothing”- Respondent 13

Six out of the thirty-three participants state that nothing discourages them from trying to achieve an award. Fifty-eight percent of the participants are discouraged from working toward an award because of fear of failure, the pressure they experience, the effort needed to achieve the award (hard-work, discipline and dedication), not being encouraged by extrinsic factors, not feeling ‘good enough’ and afraid their peers are more deserving. Three of the participants felt nervous that there may be jealousy, judgement and being teased by their peers because of the ‘fame’ and recognition caused by the award. Three participants believe that the process is unfair and there is favouritism by selectors. One participant never responded and another participant felt that they only focus on academics because according to them it is the most important area.

“Nothing discourages me from getting an award.”- Respondent 1

“The fact that I might just not be good enough.”- Respondent 2

“The hard work you have got to put in.”- Respondent 3

“I get discouraged from an award when I know that there is someone better than me that will stop me and then I lose all hope.”- Respondent 4

“When I am told I can't do it”- Respondent 7

“From not getting encouraged by my dad.”- Respondent 15

“The 'fame' and the sometimes jealousy I get from other boys.”- Respondent 28

“The negative vibes (feelings) from people or insults.”- Respondent 29

“Favouritism”- Respondent 30

“Unfairness in the process of selection.”- Respondent 31

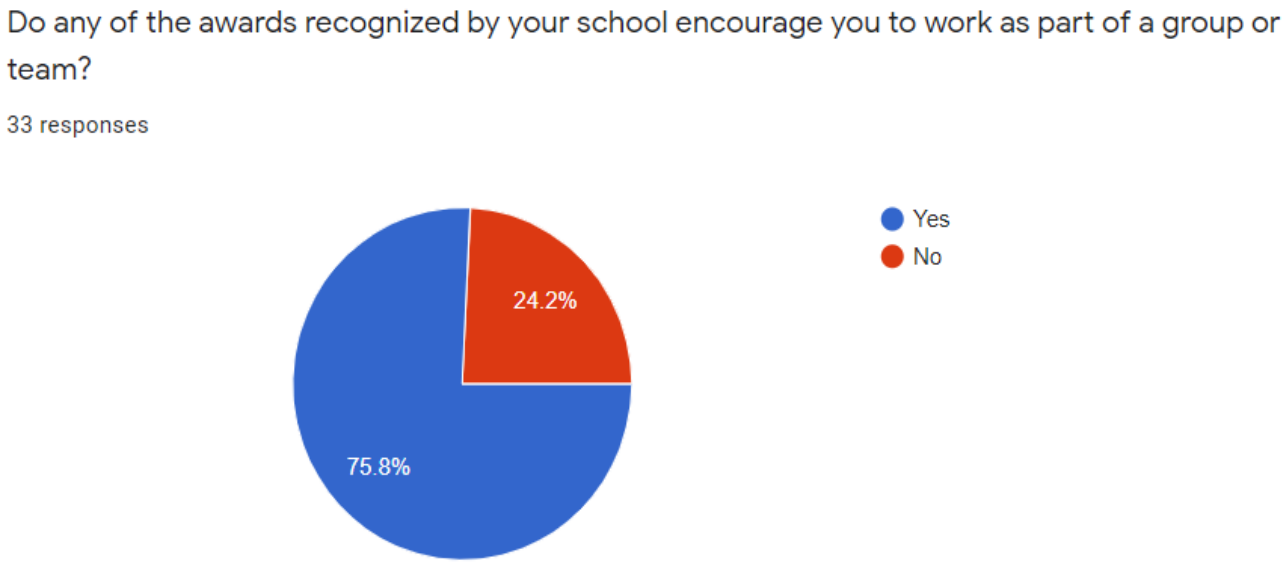
“I would like to focus on my academics rather than something that has no real world weight yet.”- Respondent 32

The participants were asked how their school could encourage more learners to work at achieving an award. The responses varied. Majority of the participants (16 out the 33) suggested that school should constantly remind the learners about the criteria needed to be met to achieve the award, as well as continuously encourage and motivate learners to set goals and support/assist them in accomplishing these

goals. Two participants suggested making the criteria more fun. Two participants suggested making the criteria easier so that it becomes more achievable, as well as introducing more (different) awards. Four participants were unsure how the school could become more encouraging.

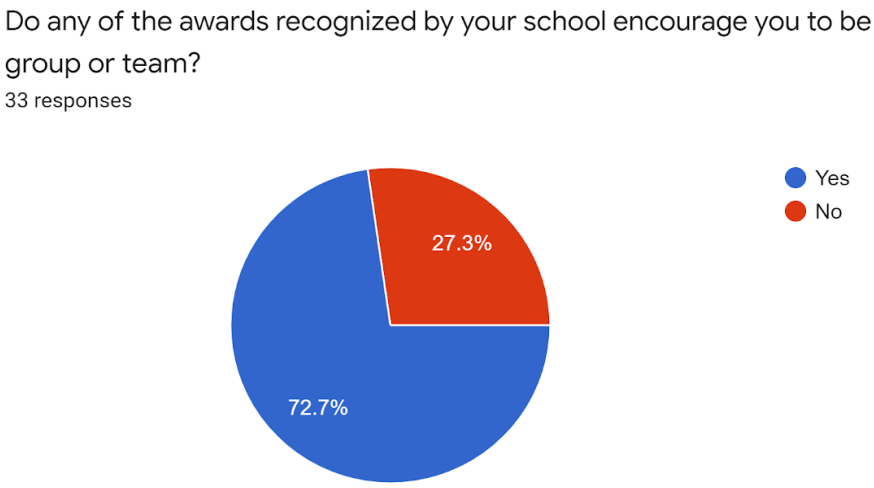
> “I think my school could make it everyone gets an award which boosts their self-esteem and will try to get awards” - Respondent 5
>
> “Make it like a big important day”- Respondent 7
>
> “Make it fun.”- Respondent 9
>
> “Our school can encourage us to achieve goals when we know that they are behind us and rooting for us to win.”- Respondent 12
>
> “Let you know how to improve so you can get the awards.”- Respondent 15
>
> “My school could introduce awards for other things as well as academics, culture and sport. Not all boys can achieve in these categories.”- Respondent 20
>
> “By making more awards available.”- Respondent 22
>
> “Make a few of them easier to achieve.”- Respondent 27
>
> “I don’t know” - Respondent 17
>
> “I am not sure”- Respondent 24

5.4 **Collaboration**

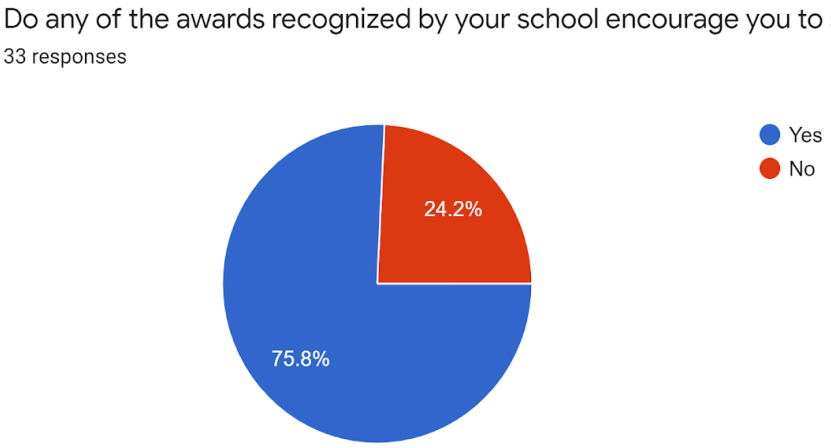


Seventy-six of participants believe that their school encourages their learners to work together (collaborate).

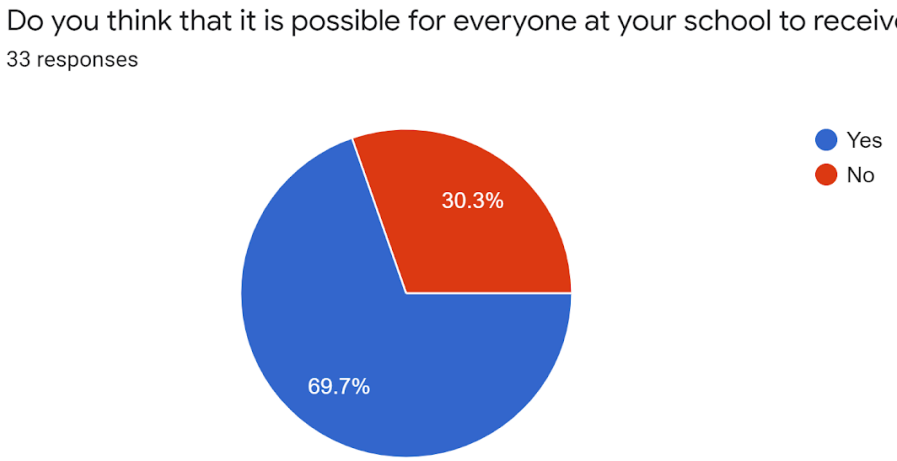
5.5 **Social Cohesion**



Seventy-three percent of the participants believe that their school promotes a servant-leadership approach to teamwork.



Seventy-six percent of the participants think that the *service awards, which* are recognised by their school, advocates for community service (serving the needs of their community). 20 out of the 33 participants believe that the criteria applied in achieving a service award encourages an individual to serve their school and their community.



Overall seventy percent of participants felt that the awards at the school were possible to achieve.

> “If you try hard enough you will be rewarded for your effort.”- Respondent 1
>
> “If they try hard enough!”- Respondent 2
>
> “If everyone works hard everyone can achieve an award.”- Respondent 3
>
> “If everyone was truly working hard and achieving it would be possible for everyone to get an award.”- Respondent 8
>
> “If we put our mind to it we can accomplish anything.”- Respondent 10

Five of the thirty-three participants feel that it is not possible for everyone to achieve, as some learners choose not to make the effort or work toward an award.

> “I feel this way because some people are just trying to pass, not go for gold.”- Respondent 16
>
> “Lots of boys do not strive for awards.”- Respondent 30
>
> “Some people care and work more than others.”- Respondent 33

Some of the participants believe that there are not enough awards recognised by the school for all the learners to achieve an award.

> “There are not enough awards.”- Respondent 4

This Chapter has outlined and discussed the themes that were a focus for the study: *Motivation*, *Collaboration* and *Social Cohesion*. Pie-charts and direct quotes were used to illustrate and present the data collected and discussed.

CHAPTER SIX

6. **A Reflection and the Journey's End**

In this Chapter I carry out an in-depth analysis of the data that includes the learners' written responses and information about the schools' award system. I begin with a short reflection on my research journey. Then, making use of a thematic content analysis, I analysed the content and language used by the school for the criteria of the awards, as well as the language used by the learners in their responses to the questionnaire questions. Language holds power, as well as influences individuals. I will interrogate the role language plays in framing the award-system, through investigating what is valued and how those values are communicated in the language used. I will engage with more literature pertaining to this topic, and its relevance to this study.

6.1 **Evaluating the Journey**

I used a post-structuralist approach in analysing my data. Using this approach assisted me in identifying the underlying themes and structures of power inherent in the school award-system, and the ways that the participants fit into/resist those structures of power that emerge from the data.

In this post-structuralist approach, narrative has been used as a tool to voice the experiences/stories of the 'author' as the research has unfolded, and thus narrative methodologies have been adopted. For post-structuralists, it is the 'small' narratives that are important, therefore in my study, I have focused on the learners' voices (in written form), and focused on what they said about: their feelings towards those who receive awards, the award ceremony itself, the values promoted by these awards, and if they believe that these awards encourage a holistic approach to education (including collaboration, motivation and social cohesion). Every Grade 7 voice matters and each one has a story to tell or a lived-experience to share of the awards. The themes that emerged from the study were learner agency, motivation, collaboration, social cohesion, achievement experience of receiving the awards. These themes link to post-structuralist themes: power, language, human agency, discourse, identity formation (through experience), concepts, and education objectives.

Foucault encourages us to discuss the subjugated voices and dominant voices, and to question power relations in any given situation (Hodgson and Standish, 2009). In the field of education, Butin (2006) suggests that "one can carefully examine and undercut the experiences that have calcified into singular and unidirectional relations." (Butin, 2006, p. 379.). In this study, rooted in my personal experience, I used my 'power' (dominant voice) as a teacher to illuminate/ bring forward the subjugated voice (the voices of the Grade 7 learners). It is the learners' lived-experience of awards and the awards-system that my study is focused on. From a post-structuralist perspective one should question power structures in their school as well as bring meaning to education. In the process of collecting data, the learners were afforded the opportunity of questioning the award-system and what is valued by their school. Using a qualitative approach, I was able to identify themes that emerged from the data collected. In this Chapter I aim to discuss the emerging themes from the data, using key concepts from my literature review as my point of reference. The key concepts that I focus on are: motivation collaboration and social cohesion.

6.2 **Anticipating an Award**

I began the questionnaire with a vignette of a boy named Thato, anticipating an award:

> *Thato, a boy at the end of his grade 6 year, was sitting on the floor in his school hall, waiting nervously and excitedly for the prize-giving (award ceremony) to begin. His heart was racing as his mind began to wonder about all the possible awards that he may receive. He thought back to the effort he made throughout the year and wondered if he had done enough.*

Approximately 88% of participants reported that they have been in the same position as Thato while anticipating the possibility of receiving an award at prize-giving. This number is significant because it suggests that the learners perceive that the awards are attainable. This could mean that the learners are confident, or that the school is generous in awarding its learners and that awards are possible to achieve/receive for the majority of the learners, or that the participants in the study were those who routinely get awards. After considering this data, I investigated further, and realised that of the 33 who participated, 31 participants have received awards, and 8 participants were amongst the top academic achievers. Five participants were

amongst the top achievers in culture. Nine participants were amongst the top achievers in sport. Nine participants were amongst the top achievers in service. Five of these participants are all-rounders and achieved in more than one field. As the majority of the participants have experienced a situation similar to the one in the questionnaire, the participants are able to empathize with Thato's situation and voice their encouragement.

6.3 **What is awarded?**

At this particular school there is more than one approach of administering and celebrating awards. The school recognises achievements in a variety of fields (Academic-Mind, Culture-Heart, Service-Soul and Sport-Body). This speaks to the holistic approach undertaken by the school. The criteria for awards are clearly outlined in the schools Award Policy (see Appendix A) and learners in the school are made aware of the achievements recognised and awarded by the school. According to Keller (1987) and Bandura (1977), this is imperative, as learners become more motivated and confident when they are aware of the expectations/criteria for achievement.

Majority of the participants (94% of the participants) felt that it was possible to achieve an award. This speaks to the learners' self-esteem. According to the data, there are a variety of awards given by the school and each award holds different criteria and value. The data suggests that the academic and sporting awards hold more power, and are consequently valued more than the culture or service awards. Majority of the participants in this survey have received awards across multiple fields.

There are fourteen Academic awards and colours awards (for Grade 7), and it is possible for these awards and colours to be awarded to more than one learner. There are twenty-two Culture Awards, in the various areas, and these awards are possible to achieve for all learners participating in the cultural activities of the school. There are team and individual awards for Culture, and there are trophies and certificates that may be awarded for each area, as well as colours: Chess, Drama Public-Speaking, Visual Arts, and Music.

There are fourteen Service awards, in Grade 7, which can only be awarded to one learner (maximum two). However, colours may be awarded to more than one Grade 7 learner. There are team and individual awards for Service, and there are trophies

and certificates that may be awarded for each area, as well as colours: Service Arts, Library, Outreach, Tech, Team, Enviro Club and Johannesburg Mini City Council. There are fifty sports awards as well as team and individual awards for Sports; and there are trophies and certificates that may be awarded for each sporting code, as well as colours: Athletics, Basketball, Cricket, Cross-Country, Golf, Hockey, Athletics, Cross Country, Golf, Rugby, Rowing, Hockey Cricket, Soccer, Swimming, Tennis, Water polo (see Appendix A for list of all the awards). There are one hundred awards in total; 50 % of these awards are sport, 22 %are cultural, 14 % are academic and 14 are service. This is due to the amount of sport and cultural offering of the school. Although culture has more awards offered, some of the learners believe that academics is more prestigious and holds more value.

6.4 **Motivation**

According to Bandura (1977), the learner learns to self-regulate through the award selection, administering and celebration process. This is evident in my data in that, out of the 33 participants involved in this questionnaire, 93.9% (31) have received an award, and their reaction to receiving an award has been positive and encouraging. The majority of the participants felt that after receiving an award they felt proud and confident and were motivated to achieve better or more. The feeling of all their effort and hard-work being recognised was greatly appreciated, one participant responded to the question 'How did getting this award make you feel?' stating that "It made me feel special, that my hard work was being noticed and that I was receiving a form of personal recognition." (Respondent 30) This response to receiving an award is completely in contradiction to claims made by Robinson *et al* (2019) in their literature, where they argued that awards may have the opposite effect of what it is trying to achieve and may have a counteractive effect and may even undermine the potential benefits of awards (Robinson, Gallus, Lee & Rogers, 2019, p. 12.). For those learners who did not receive an award, they took responsibility for their actions and admitted to not working hard enough. Learners display a sense of agency when they take control of their own situation, in this case, receiving awards for their hard work, as they have some (most of) control over their performance and achievement. They also recognise that they have to put in the effort and work hard to achieve their goals (awards). The learners appear to be able to self- evaluate and self-regulate, which is an important part of the schooling and learning process (as discussed in

Chapter Two). Awards are a tool for Self-Efficacy Appraisals and the learners make judgments of their actions (and draw conclusions about these actions) from either receiving or not receiving an award. From the reaction to these questions, one may argue that these participants are working for themselves and their own achievement. Their motivation for achieving an award is intrinsic rather than extrinsic motivation.

Sixty-seven percent of the participants who received an award without expectation were pleasantly surprised by the announcement. This pleasant surprise has caused most of the participants to work harder to achieve more in the next prize-giving/award ceremony. The effect seems to have motivated those learners who received awards and even those who did not receive as they began to feel inspired that it is possible for anyone to achieve and receive an award if they put the effort in and meet the criteria.

From the data collected, it emerged that 67% of the participants felt that the school has certain awards to motivate and encourage its learners to reach their full potential. Some responses for the participants were: “I think my school has these awards for motivational purposes and to recognise and reward the right people.” “I think the school has these awards to motivate children to either get them next time or get them again.”
These participants believe this because they feel the school values Academics and Sports to attract more students to the school. Sports and Academics are also perceived to be more prestigious and important than other awards because they are skills needed by an individual to have a successive, prosperous future. Some responses from the participants were: “Academics and sport” (Respondents 18 and 19), “Sports and academics” (Respondent 2), “Sporting and academic awards” (Respondent 3).

Some responses to the question: Why do you think these awards are more important than the others, were: “I think this because the school wants to attract more students to the school, so they try to impress other students to join their school by showing off their good academics and sports” (Respondent 3), while another learner wrote: “Academics is more important than most awards because academics is what you need to survive in life because becoming a pro sport player is rare and hard”

(Respondent 16). These responses link to Bourdieu's (in Grenfell, 2008) argument, that schooling prepares learners for society (from a sociological perspective). Schools reproduce society and transmit the existing culture, values and norms of that community (Bourdieu's idea of cultural reproduction, as discussed in Chapter Two). The school determines and exposes what is valued by school itself and the society in which it functions. The hierarchy of awards serves a particular set of values and these values are perpetuated through the award-system of the school. By publicly recognising (reinforcing) the desired attitude or behaviour (through awards). The participants from the study appear to understand the *culture* of the school and therefore understand the culture of their community/society.

I think it's important to note here that the Academic, Cultural, Service and Sports awards are all recognised separately, in their own respective fields guided by their own criteria.
The participants largely agree that the main values promoted by the awards recognised by the school are: teamwork, dedication, commitment, self-confidence, perseverance, a strong mind-set, effort, hard-work, self-determination, work-ethic, pride, diligence, good behaviour, sportsmanship, drive and growth.

Ninety-four percent of the participants involved in this study state that they 'work-at' achieving awards. The awards these participants mainly strive toward the ones that appeal to their interests. While others focus on sports and Academics and it appears these awards hold more value (5 out 33). Ninety-four percent of participants work at achieving awards and according to the data the main motivation for these participants achieving an award is intrinsic: 27 out 33 participants state that they work at achieving an award is for self-satisfaction, self-fulfilment, future goals and the feeling of accomplishment. According to Robinson *et al* (2019) some individuals are motivated by the status of the award within their community, from this study 5 out of the 33 participants stated they work at achieving an award for their family, parents and friends. This indicates that these learners want to be recognised by others for their achievements. Bandura (1977) believes that an individual needs to be motivated by modelling influences to perform, rather than motivate themselves. In the case of my study, learners may be motivated by observing others receive awards. However, self-motivation does occur (to achieve personal goals/standard of

the individual) through self-regulatory process and self-efficacy. In Bandura's (1977) Social Learning Theory the ideas of *Reinforcement and Motivational Processes become* key concepts. In these processes observers (learners) need to be motivated to act. By the learners witnessing those learners receiving, the learners observing this process are being positively reinforced, behaviour is learned. Therefore achievement being recognised in award ceremonies afford for the other learners to observe desired behaviour. Behaviourists believe that the thoughts, feelings and actions of a child are influenced and shaped by the reinforcement contingency and that their reinforcement contingencies is what controls behaviour. What is awarded and how it is awarded, and how public the award ceremony is, influences the learners' motivation to achieve certain awards.

Six out of the thirty-three participants state that nothing discourages them from trying to achieve an award. Fifty-eight percent of the participants are discouraged from working toward an award because of fear of failure, the pressure, the effort needed to achieve the award (hard-work, discipline and dedication), not being encouraged by extrinsic factors, not feeling 'good enough' and are afraid that their peers are more deserving. Three of the participants felt nervous that there may be jealousy, judgement and being teased by their peers because of the 'fame' and recognition caused by the award. This point links to Robinson *et al* (2019) argument that by performing above the social norm of an institution and being socially recognised for this performance an individual may feel singled-out. The award-winner may feel 'out-casted' from their peers/colleagues because of their performance and therefore lower their performance and as an effort to 'fit-in' and avoid social sanctions by their peers/colleagues. Three participants believe that the process is unfair and there is favouritism by selectors. One participant never responded and another participant felt that they only focus on academics because according to them it is the most important area. This suggests that the learner's participating in this questionnaire were mature in their responses and were able to realistically reflect on their performance.

The participants were asked how their school could encourage more learners to work at achieving an award. The responses varied, some participants suggested that the school should award all learners, other participants suggested that the school

have a massive celebration to recognise and celebrate award-winners, majority of the participants (16 out the 33) suggested that school should constantly remind the learners about the criteria needed to be met to achieve the award, as well as continuously encourage and motivate learners to set goals and support/assist them in accomplishing these goals. Two participants suggested making the criteria more fun. Two participants suggested making the criteria easier so that it becomes more achievable, as well as introducing more (different) awards. Four participants were unsure how the school could become more encouraging.

6.5 **Collaboration**

Seventy-six of the participants believe that their school encourages their learners to work together (collaborate). Many schools rely on award-systems which are aimed at recognising and motivating individuals to reach individual goals. According to Kirkman, Li, Zheng, Harris and Liu (2016) rewarding individuals for individual performance can prohibit individuals from working collaboratively. However, it was found that this particular school recognises and awards group effort as well as individuals. This, according to Kirkman *et al* (2016), will enhance an individual's performance, which in turn increases team performance. Kirkman *et al* (2016) suggests that if this approach is used by an institution the institution needs to ensure that they use a fair decision-making criteria and trust-worthy process when awarding (there can be no sense of biasness of favouritism in the selection process). According to the criteria presented in the Award Policy of the School (see Appendix A), the criteria, process and administering appears to be fair and trust-worthy.

6.6 **Social Cohesion**

Seventy-three percent of the participants believe that their school promotes a servant-leadership approach to teamwork. Seventy-six percent of the participants think that the *service awards, which* are recognised by their school, advocates for community service (serving the needs of their community). Twenty out of the thirty participants believe that the criteria applied in achieving a service award encourages an individual to serve their school and their community. The learners receive service awards if they do some service to the school that will contribute to the school, either by participating in open days or being hosts at a school event, making art for the school that could be used by the school or enhances the ascetics of the school.

Service awards also encourage the learners to reach out to the broader community through community service. Examples would be picking up litter in local parks or riverbanks, visiting animal shelters and spending time with these animals, visiting old age homes and/or orphanages and spending time with the residents. Donating clothes, food, toys to various organisations. By serving the community the learners become aware of ‘privilege’ and use their ‘privilege’ to empower those in their community. This point speaks to the idea of equity and therefore promotes social cohesion.

Overall, 70% of participants felt that the awards at the school were possible to achieve. They felt this way because they believe that if an individual puts in the effort, has commitment, is determined and persistent, and works hard it is possible to achieve any goal. This speaks to the social cohesion of the school.

Five of the thirty-three participants feel that it is not possible for everyone to achieve, as some learners choose not to make the effort or work toward an award. Some of the participants believe that there are not enough awards recognised by the school for all the learners to achieve an award.

6.7 **Discoveries made from the Journey**

Having taken this journey of analysing the data and studying the participants' responses, I believe that the learners in this school feel encouraged to work toward achieving an award. Their motivation is mostly intrinsic with a few seeking public recognition or extrinsic rewards. Although it appears that some fields hold more power than others (academic and sport over culture and service); the award-system promotes collaboration and teamwork, where the learners are encouraged to work together. To some extent the award-systems advocates for social cohesion within the school and the broader community.

6.8 **The Story’s End**

The following section provides a summary of the current study. For the reader’s convenience the research question, methodology and main findings are briefly reiterated below, after which conclusions are drawn in relation to the research questions. Finally, based on the study’s conclusions, recommendations for further study have been suggested.

6.9 **Summary**

Main Research Question: *In what ways do school award-systems affect learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion, in a Private School, in Johannesburg*?

The Research sub-questions were:

1. What are the different types of awards that are recognised by the school, and how are they administered?
2. What are the learner perceptions toward the school's award-system?
3. What values are promoted by this award-system?

The research design of this study was predominantly qualitative, with quantitative elements. Once I was granted permission by the Ethics Committee at the University of the Witwatersrand, and was given permission from the Executive Member of the board and the Principal to conduct my study at their school, I collected data through the use of learner questionnaires. The case-study questionnaire was designed to address three major themes of this research project, and they were interpreted and analysed accordingly. I made use of pie-charts and analysed quoted text, to interpret the data that I was presented with.

6. 10 **Findings and Conclusion**

In using my story to discover and explore the stories of the learners in the school, I have made some key discoveries about the award-system and learners perceptions about the awards.

The findings from this study have been interesting and are different from what I initially expected. At the start of the study, I expected that the majority of the learners would have been extrinsically motivated to achieve awards, because of my personal experience of awards and the high pressure to achieve. However, as the data has shown, the majority of the learners reported that they were intrinsically motivated to perform well and achieve an award. Another assumption I had made was that these learners were working towards a goal to either impress their friends, peers, teachers or parents, however, the response showed that they worked towards the award for self-satisfaction. This data has made me rethink my assumptions, and what I now know is that it is possible for learners to be self-motivated and to perform well for

their own achievement, the responses help me come to the realisation that there needs to be interest and inspiration in the field (subject) for one to achieve and the award-system needs to recognise a variety of fields for learners to be encouraged to perform well, in their field of choice. Furthermore, there is evidence that the learners responded positively to Thato and Thato's predicament in question one. In their responses, learners encouraged Thato to preserve, never give up and offered advice that 'hard-work pays off', this suggests that the learners have some sense of agency and understand the process of *cause and effect*. The learners responded positively to receiving an award, and that encouraged them to strive to achieve more and perform better. They appreciated being recognised for their achievement and felt inspired. The responses from the learners were very mature and were well thought-out. Those learners who did not receive many awards did not blame the school (*the system*) but rather took responsibility for their actions and stated that they needed to work-harder if they wanted to meet the criteria. Surprise awards can be used as a tool to inspire learners to set-goals in achieving awards, as well as recognise desired behaviour through publicly awarding this desired behaviour. The awards encouraged teamwork as the learners felt it was important to work together.

To conclude, my study found that this school does have an award-system which promotes a holistic approach to education by recognising a variety of fields in the school. This school's award system promotes intrinsic *learner motivation* where the learners strive to work towards an award for self-satisfaction and are able to self-regulate. It also promotes *collaboration*, because learners are inspired to work as a team and work together to achieve an award (either individual or as a group/team). S*ocial cohesion* is promoted because learners are encouraged to serve their school and the broader community by working towards the common good of society and by sharing what they have to promote equity. A holistic approach to education that is not only stated in policy but applied in actuality, through the award-system, where the body and mind is considered and recognised. This affords its learners the opportunity to excel in a variety of fields and motivate themselves (self-regulate), work collaboratively and promote social cohesion in their society. The school appears to value the learner as a whole-being, and aspires to inspire their learners to achieve. Recognising a variety of fields (Academic, Culture, Service and Sport) and administering (treating) the awards equally in these fields affords the

perception that all these fields are equally valued in the school. Overall the learners' perception of the award-system is positive and the school's award-system compatible with a constructivist/embodied perspective that advocates for (intrinsic) learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion.

6.11 **Limitations**

My research study was very context specific. Only one third (33/99) of the Grade responded to the questionnaire. The majority of learners who chose to participate in the learner questionnaire were those who have achieved awards throughout their schooling career. Majority of those who did not achieve awards chose not to participate in this study, I wonder if my findings would be different if they were the ones who answered? This research is voluntary so one cannot force participation. I suggest that future study be conducted that focuses only on those who have not received awards to see if the data would be different. The school not only states that they take a holistic approach to education they are doing it in action.

6.12 **What this means for My Story**

After collecting and analysing the data, I have found some sense of closure that this school is heading in the 'right' direction, by recognising learners for their achievements in a variety of fields and not just Academics and Sports. If my school took this approach when I was in Grade 7 I perhaps would have been recognised for my performance in the arts, and thus not have been so hard on myself about my academic achievement. Although I used my experience to advocate for change in award-systems, it would have been nice to be publicly recognised for my hard-work and effort. Although I was able to self-regulate, it was not due to the award-system at my school.

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APPENDIX A

A description of the school's awards as set out in the school policy for Academics, Cultural, Service and Sport.

Academic Awards

Academic and Special awards are handed out at the final Awards Assembly held during the final week of the academic year. Awards are handed out in each grade to learners who have attained the necessary criteria.

- Gr 4 Academic Awards:
    - **Diligence:**
      Presented to learners who, at the teachers' discretion, have worked hard and have been conscientious in their approach to their school work, working consistently throughout the year.
    - **Progress:**
      Presented to a learner who has improved in their overall average from semester one to semester two.
    - **Critical Thinkers' Award:**
      Presented to learners, who at the Gr 4 teachers' discretion, have accepted the challenges placed before them and risen to the occasion.
    - **Academic Excellence:**
      Awarded to learners who have attained excellence in English, Afrikaans/isiZulu and Mathematics throughout the whole year.
- Gr 5-7 Academic Awards:
    - **Diligence:**
      Presented to learners who, at the teachers' discretion, have worked hard and have been conscientious in their approach to their school work, working consistently throughout the year.
    - **Progress:**
      Presented to a learner who has improved in their overall average from semester one to semester two.
    - **Bronze Award:**

Awarded to learners who achieved a year average of from 74.5% to 79.4%.

- **Silver Award:**
  Awarded to learners who have achieved a year average from 79.5% to 84.4%
- **Gold Award**:
  Awarded to learners who have achieved a year average above 84.4%.
- **Subject Dux Awards:**
  Awarded to the learners who achieves the highest year average in a subject.

Colours Criteria for ACADEMIC Activities

A scroll and certificate are awarded for Academic colours to a Grade 5 – 7 learner in recognition of their hard work and achievements in the classroom.

Half Academic Colours are awarded to a Grade 5- 7 learner who has achieved an 80% average for two semesters (not necessarily consecutive semesters)

- A Grade 5 learner can be awarded his Half Academic Colours if they achieve an 80% and above average for both semesters during his Grade 5 year.
- A Grade 6 learner can be awarded his Half Academic Colours if they achieve an 80% and above average for both semesters during their Gr6 year or if they receive an 80% average and above for one semester in Grade 5 and one semester in Grade 6.*
- A Grade 7 learner can be awarded their Half Academic Colours if they achieve an 80% and above average for one semester during their Grade 5 year and a semester in Grade 7.*

*There are other permutations

A scroll and certificate are awarded for Full Academic Colours to a Grade 6 or 7 learner who has achieved an 80% average for three semesters (not necessarily consecutive.

- A Grade 6 or 7 learner can be awarded their full academic colours once they have achieved an 80% average for a third semester, not necessarily directly after achieving their half academic colours.

A learner who has achieved their Academic Half Colours and then achieves their Full Academic Colours may only wear their Academic Full Colours scroll on their blazer.

TOP TEN AWARDS:

Grade 5- 7 learners receive a Top Ten Award if they have achieved an overall semester average that has placed them in the top ten ranking for their grade. The overall semester average does not have to be 80% and above.

A badge is awarded at the end/beginning of the semester at assembly, i.e. Top Ten for Semester One is handed out at the end of Semester One. The badge is returned to their Head of Grade at the end of each semester and will be re-awarded should the learner earn a place in the Top Ten at the end of the next semester.

RAVEN'S BADGE:

The Raven's badge and certificate are awarded to a Grade 6 or 7 learner who has achieved an 80% average for five or more semesters across Grades 5, 6 and 7 (not necessarily consecutively).
Should a learner receive an 80 % average after they have received their Raven's badge, they will be mentioned as a re-award, but not receive another badge.

TROPHIES

- **Joy of Learning Award:**
  Presented to a Gr 6 learner, at the discretion of the Gr 6 teachers, who displays a true enthusiasm and love for learning. The learner should actively participate in class discussions and make meaningful contributions to group activities.

- **Afrikaans Award:**
  Presented to a Grade 6 learner who, at the discretion of the Gr 6 Afrikaans teacher, displays true enthusiasm and diligence in the learning of Afrikaans. This learner should have worked consistently throughout the year and shown progress in Afrikaans.
- **Grade Dux Award**:
  An award presented to the learner in Gr 5-7, who has obtained the highest overall average in the grade for the academic year.
- **Language Award:**
  Presented to a Gr 7 learner who achieves the highest combined average for both English and Afrikaans/isiZulu.
- **Mathematics Trophy:**
  Presented to a Gr 7 learner who achieved the highest OVERALL Mathematics mark for the year.

Culture Awards

The recognition of achievement and participation is an integral part of the school culture in the School. Prize giving ceremonies are held annually for Grade 4 – 7 with colours assemblies scheduled seasonally.

- Recognition takes place through coach praise, leadership roles proffered, through awards made at assembly and through once-termly colours assemblies. The objective is to acknowledge learners formally soon after a season is completed and allow them to wear their awards with pride forthwith. There is an annual Sports and Cultural Assembly that recognizes the top accolades for the year.
- Awards are made only to learners who have always demonstrated outstanding behaviour, good manners, good sportsmanship, commitment and loyalty in their school and respective school activities. In all sports, attendance will only be mediated if the boy is at another school event.
- All awards and prizes include a discretionary clause and may be withheld if the staff and principal so choose. The Principal must give permission for any prize and award to be withheld.
- Every learner in Grade 4 - 7 who regularly attends and engages in the School afternoon sporting programme must receive at least one certificate at the end of the year. Any exception to this ruling must be agreed upon by the Principal.
- Only Grade 6 and 7 learners are eligible to receive half and full colours.
- Sports awards and colours are only presented for those activities that are offered as official school sporting activities at the School and only to learners who have participated in that sport in a school team.
- Achievement at club level is not considered as criteria for the awarding of school colours. Regional or provincial awards at school level may be considered as additional motivation for an award. The most important consideration for half and full colours is a learner’s commitment to his sport at school and their performance as part of the school team.
- All awards are decided by the School colours committee

Extra-curricular cultural activities allow for the development of:

- a deeper understanding of the arts
- confidence and self-esteem,
- appreciation for others
- creativity
- new skills

Cultural activities at the School include the following extra-curricular clubs:

- Chess
- Drama
- Public Speaking
- Visual Arts
- Music

Learners can only accumulate points for awards through cultural extra-curricular activities as mentioned above.

The purpose of the award structure for cultural activities at the School is to promote, encourage, recognise and reward the following:

- Passionate participation in school activities
- Loyalty and commitment
- Service to the school, fellow learners and the broader community
- Recognition of achievement and excellence in a cultural field as defined in this policy

It is a prerequisite for a learner to be in Grade 6 or 7 for colours consideration for any cultural activities.

Points are accumulated throughout a learner's school career.
Continuity of service is recognized as a criteria when considering each learner's award.

Point allocation for Awards	
Team (Certificate)	6 points
Merit (Certificate)	12 points
Half Colours (Silver Scroll)	70 - 79%
Full Colours (Gold Scroll)	80% and above

The final decision in awarding colours or certificates to any learner is at the sole discretion of the colours committee, comprising that of the applicable teacher / coach involved, the Head of Culture and the Head of School.

CHESS

Playing chess is encouraged as a valuable means of enhancing critical thinking and problem solving skills, creativity and academic performance, within a fun and dynamic space. Candidates are to be rated on ability, school contribution and years of involvement.

Players selected to formally compete within that of the chess team are considered for colours, per the criteria listed below:

PARTICIPATION AND COMMITMENT

1. Attendance

Rating	Descriptor	Criteria
3	Excellent	90-100%
2	Very good	80-89%
1	Good	75-80%

A maximum of 3 points may be allocated.

2. Conduct and Attitude

Rating	***Descriptor***	***Criteria***
3	Excellent	90-100%
2	Very good	80-89%
1	Good	75-80%

A maximum of 3 points may be allocated.

3. Continuity and involvement

Criteria A	***Points awarded***
Involvement for 4 years	4
Involvement for 3 years	3
Involvement for 2 years	2
Involvement for 1 years	1
Criteria B	
Played 10 or more matches throughout the year	3
Played 7-9 matches throughout the year	2
Played 4-6 matches throughout the year	1
Criteria C	
1 point will be awarded for participation in the inter house chess tournament	1

A maximum of 9 points may be allocated.

EXCELLENCE IN CHESS

Criteria D	*Points awarded*
Won 10 or more matches throughout the year	7
Won 7-9 matches throughout the year	5
Won 4-6 matches throughout the year	3
Won 3 matches throughout the year	1
Criteria E	
Held position 1 or 2 on the top ten ladder for 80% of the year	5
Held position 3 - 5 on the top ten ladder for 80% of the year	4
Held a position on the top ten ladder for 80% of the year.	3
Criteria F	
First in inter house Chess	3
Second in inter house Chess	2
Third in inter house Chess	1

A maximum of 15 points may be allocated.

Chess Points Calculator							
Participation & Commitment (50%= 15 marks)				**Match performance. (50 %= 15 marks)**			
Attendance	**Attitude & Conduct**	**Continuity and involvement**	**Interhouse Participation**	**Excellence in Participation**	**Top Ten**	**Top 3 Interhouse**	**Total**
3	**3**	**8**	**1**	**7**	**5**	**3**	**30**

DRAMA

The Drama component is confidence-building and the boys are expected to explore different media of expression. Colours may be awarded to boys who have achieved a standard of excellence in Drama. Candidates are to be rated on ability, school contribution and years of involvement.

In order to qualify for drama colours, it is necessary for learners to have participated in 2 School run events such as the School's Eisteddfod and the School's Inter House Drama.

Points will be awarded for meeting the following criteria:

PARTICIPATION AND COMMITMENT

1. Attendance

Rating	***Descriptor***	***Criteria***
3	Excellent	90-100%
2	Very good	80-89%
1	Good	75-80%

A maximum of 3 points may be allocated.

2. Conduct and Attitude

Rating	***Descriptor***	***Criteria***
3	Excellent	90-100%
2	Very good	80-89%
1	Good	75-80%

A maximum of 3 points may be allocated.

3. Continuity and involvement

Criteria A	*Points awarded*
Involvement for 4 years	4
Involvement for 3 years	3
Involvement for 2 years	2
Involvement for 1 years	1
Criteria B	
Participation in the inter house drama	1 (compulsory point)
Participation in the School's Eisteddfod	1(compulsory point)
1 point per participation in other Eisteddfod/s	Max 2 points
Taking part in a school play	1

A maximum of 9 points may be allocated.

EXCELLENCE IN DRAMA

Criteria C	*Points awarded*
1 point will be awarded for every 'A' symbol (80% or more) achieved in eisteddfods or inter house competitions. Maximum of 6 points will be awarded per year for a variety of items.	6
Criteria D	
Taking a sizable speaking role in the school production	5
Taking part in the main cast of the school production	3
Criteria E	
First place in inter house competition	4

Second Place in inter house competition	3
Third place in inter house competition	2

A maximum of 15 points may be allocated.

Drama Points Calculator					
Participation & Commitment (50%= 15 marks)			**Performance. (50 %= 15 marks)**		
Attendance **3**	**Attitude & Conduct** **3**	**Continuity and Participation** **9**	**Excellence in Participation** **11**	**Top 3 Interhouse** **4**	**Total** **30**

Public Speaking

Colours may be awarded to boys who have achieved a standard of excellence in Public Speaking. Candidates are to be rated on ability, school contribution and years of involvement.

Points will be awarded for meeting the following criteria:

PARTICIPATION AND COMMITMENT

1. Attendance

Rating	***Descriptor***	***Criteria***
3	Excellent	90-100%
2	Very good	80-89%
1	Good	75-80%

2. Conduct and Attitude

Rating	***Descriptor***	***Criteria***
3	Excellent	90-100%
2	Very good	80-89%
1	Good	75-80%

A maximum of 3 points may be allocated.

3. Continuity and involvement

Criteria A	*Points awarded*
Involvement for 4 years	4
Involvement for 3 years	3
Involvement for 2 years	2
Involvement for 1 years	1
Criteria B	
Participation in the inter house public Speaking	1 (compulsory point)
1 point will be awarded for each Public Speaking event attended, both at School or externally (maximum 3 points per year - 1 per term)	3
1 point per participation in other Eisteddfod/s	Max 2 points

A maximum of 10 points may be allocated.

EXCELLENCE IN PUBLIC SPEAKING

Criteria C	*Points awarded*
1 point will be awarded for every 'A' symbol (80% or more) achieved in eisteddfods or inter house competitions. Maximum of 7 points will be awarded per year.	1-7
Criteria D	
MC for any event (max 3 points)	1-3
Criteria E	
First place in inter house competition	5
Second Place in inter house competition	3
Third place in inter house competition	1

A maximum of 15 points may be allocated.

Public Speaking Points Calculator					
Participation & Commitment (50%= 15 marks)			**Performance. (50 %= 15 marks)**		
Attendance	**Attitude & Conduct**	**Continuity and Participation**	**Excellence in Participation**	**Top 3 Interhouse**	**Total**
3	**3**	**9**	**10**	**5**	**30**

Extramural Visual Art

Participating in Creative Arts is encouraged as a valuable means of creativity and developing imagination within an environment that encourages freedom of expression. Candidates are to be rated on ability, school contribution and years of involvement.

Points will be awarded for meeting the following criteria:

PARTICIPATION AND COMMITMENT

1. Attendance

Rating	***Descriptor***	***Criteria***
3	Excellent	90-100%
2	Very good	80-89%
1	Good	75-80%

A maximum of 3 points may be allocated.

2. Conduct and Attitude

Rating	***Descriptor***	***Criteria***
3	Excellent	90-100%
2	Very good	80-89%
1	Good	75-80%

A maximum of 3 points may be allocated.

3. Continuity and involvement

Criteria A	*Points awarded*
Involvement for 4 years	4
Involvement for 3 years	3
Involvement for 2 years	2
Involvement for 1 years	1
Criteria B	
Participation in the inter house art competition	1 (compulsory point)
Participation in the School's Eisteddfod	1 (compulsory point)
Participation in other Eisteddfods or art competitions	1

A maximum of 7 points may be allocated.

EXCELLENCE IN VISUAL ART

Criteria C	*Points awarded*
2 points will be awarded for every 'A' symbol (80% or more) achieved in eisteddfods or competitions. Maximum of 8 points will be awarded per year.	1-8
Criteria D	
First place in inter house competition	5
Second Place in inter house competition	4
Third place in inter house competition	3
Placement in the top ten of inter house competition (excl first, second and third place)	2

Visual Art Points Calculator					
Participation & Commitment (50%= 13 marks)			**Performance. (50 %= 13 marks)**		
Attendance	**Attitude & Conduct**	**Continuity and Participation**	**Excellence in Participation**	**Top 10 Interhouse**	**Total**
3	**3**	**7**	**8**	**5**	**26**

- **Creative Arts Award:**
  Presented to a Gr 7 learner who, at the discretion of the Art teacher, has shown passion, interest and enthusiasm in Visual Art. This award is not necessarily linked to their academic achievement in the subject.

Service Awards

- **RE Awards:**
  Presented to a learner in each grade who, at the discretion of the RE department, has been inspired and shown clear signs of spiritual growth during the year.
- **The Grade Four Friendship Award:**
  Presented to a Gr 4 learner in each class who has shown friendship and consideration towards their peers. All Gr 4 learners are given an opportunity to vote for a learner in their class.
- **Humanitas Award:**
  Presented to a learner in Gr 5-7 who displays the characteristics of a “truly good human being”. The characteristics that we wish each learner in the school to aspire to. The Humanitas Award recognises those most desirable human qualities and is not in any way linked to top academic, cultural, service or sporting achievement.
  Each learner in the grade is given an opportunity to vote for a learner in their particular grade who consistently and sincerely displayed the characteristics of compassion, genuine concern, true friendship, loyalty, manners and sportsmanship.
- **Red, Blue and Gold Badges:**
  Learners are awarded their Red, Blue or Gold badges on completion of criteria set out by each badge.
  They are presented to a Gr5-7 learner who has spent much of the year demonstrating leadership through completing additional organisational, personal development, physical and community service tasks. The awards recognise initiative, commitment and servant leadership.
- **The Good Fellow Award:**
  Presented to a Gr 7 learner. Each Gr 7 learner is given the opportunity to vote for one learner in their peer group on whom they can rely, whatever the circumstances.
- **The Service Trophy:**
  Presented to a learner who has displayed commitment and loyalty as well as a positive attitude throughout the year in their particular area of responsibility.

This award fully defines the learner who goes above and beyond the call of duty.

- **The Commitment Award:**
  Presented to a Gr 7 learner who has displayed commitment to the School. This award recognises a learner who has participated extensively in summer and winter sports as well as having achieved an 80% and above average for their final promotion mark.
- **The Principal's Award:**
  Presented to a Gr 7 learner who is his opinion has truly grown over the course of the year. The award seeks to recognise the personal growth of a learner who has truly displayed those characteristics of the type of learner that we would most like to have enrolled at the School.
- **Example Shield:**
  Presented to a Gr 7 learner who has shown through their cooperation, support, responsible behaviour and daily role modelling of a learner's values and a demonstration of all the qualities necessary for them to be an example of servant leadership in the School.
- **House Shield:**
  Awarded to the house that has accumulated the highest number of points over the year. It is accepted by the House Captain.

Colours Criteria for SERVICE Activities

The purpose of the Award Structure for Service activities at the School is to promote, encourage, recognise and reward the following:

- Passionate participation in service activities
- Loyalty and commitment
- Service to the school, fellow learners and the broader community
- Recognition of achievement and excellence in any field of service

Being of Service is encouraged, as a valuable means of enhancing personal development, socio-emotional growth and emotional intelligence. Candidates are expected to offer service without expectation of reward or recognition, but such awards are made as part of a philosophy of positive reinforcement for effort and the correct values of humility and service.

To receive Half or Full Colours for Service, the learner should be in Grade 6 or 7

Points will be awarded for meeting the following criteria:

Creative Arts

Library

Outreach

Tech Team

Enviro Club

Johannesburg Mini City Council

Half Colours X 7 points

Full Colours X 9 points

Sports Awards

The recognition of achievement and participation is an integral part of the school culture in the School. Prize giving ceremonies are held annually for Grade 4 – 7 with colours assemblies scheduled seasonally - this policy outlines the awards and prizes presented.

These awards and prizes rest on the following guiding principles:

- Aims to recognise excellence as well as participation and contribution to the life of the school. Recognition takes place through coach's praise, leadership roles offered, through awards received at assemblies and through termly colours assemblies.
- The objective is to acknowledge learners formally, after a season is completed, and allow them to wear their awards with pride forthwith. There is an annual Sports Assembly that recognises the top accolades for the year.
- Awards are made only to learners who have always demonstrated outstanding behaviour, good manners, good sportsmanship, commitment and loyalty in their school and respective school activities.
- All awards and prizes include a discretionary clause and may be withheld if the staff and Principal so choose. The Principal must give permission for any prize and award to be withheld.
- Recognises the role of all the components of the school programme as a single aspect should not be regarded as more important or more valuable than another and it aims to recognise the contribution of all learners in the School.
- Only Grade 6 and 7 learners are eligible to receive merit, half and full colours.

Sports awards are only presented for activities that are offered as official school sporting codes at the School and only to learners who have participated in that sport in a school team.
Achievement at club or regional level is not considered as criteria for the awarding of school colours.

A learner should have only one scroll per sport displayed on their blazer - on full colours receipt, half colours must be removed.
All awards are decided by the School awards committee assembled by the Head of Sport, in consultation with the Principal.

Colours Criteria for SPORT Activities

TEAM OF THE SEASON
- All teams are eligible for consideration (Grade 4 - 7, A - F, all sporting codes officially offered by the School) - Awarded to at least one team per sport - All learners in the team will be awarded a Certificate. - This will be awarded for either good performance, hard work, dedication, or showing true spirit while competing for the School at the discretion of the School's Colours Committee

TEAM SPORTS
CRITERIA - Only Grade 6 and 7 learners are eligible to receive merit, half and full colours. - The following awards can be achieved: - MERIT AWARD (a certificate of merit) - HALF COLOURS - FULL COLOURS - Awards are judged on the performance of their current season only - All learners must have represented the A team in a minimum of 60% of the fixtures offered. - Learners will have to achieve points as per the table below:

POINTS ALLOCATION TABLE (to be read in conjunction with the Indicators and Points Table)							
Name	**Grade**	**Sportsmanship & Attitude /2**	**Commitment & Attendance /2**	**Performance & Ability /5**	**Years in service /4**	**TOTAL /13**	**AWARD**
	6	1	2	2	3	8	**Merit**
	6	1	2	3	3	9	**Half**
	7	2	1	3	4	10	**Half**
	7	2	2	4	4	12	**Full**

Points Scale		
Grade 6 & 7		
Merit	8	62%
Half Colours	10	77%
Full Colours	12	92%

INDICATORS	
Sportsmanship & Attitude	0 - Has **not** met the minimum level expected. 1 - Has met the required level expected. 2 - Has exceeded the expectation.
Commitment & Attendance	0 - Has **not** met the minimum level expected. 1 - Has met the required level expected. 2 - Has exceeded the expectation.
Performance / Ability / Effort (within team) (against opposition)	**BASKETBALL** 1 - Ball Control: The ability to change direction while dribbling. 2 - Full understanding of rules and regulations 3 - Must display the correct level of speed, stamina and strength while on the court. 4 - Possess all defensive capabilities; intercept, blocking, rebounds and positional play. 5 - Be fully competent in the free-throw, layup, open play shot, passing and receiving. **CRICKET** 1 - Skill and technique: Correct technique from batting, bowling and fielding and the ability to possess all three. 2 - Balance & Coordination: Two key components for a fielder. 3 - Must understand all rules and regulations 4 - Batting: within the team, achieved a top 3 status based on statistics. 5 - Bowling: within the team, achieved a top 3 status based on statistics. **HOCKEY** 1 - Ball Control: The ability to carry the ball in the correct position while dribbling.

	2 - Stick control: The ability to hold the stick in the correct position when passing, hitting, slapping, and receiving. 3 - Full understanding of rules and regulations 4 - Must display the correct level of speed, stamina and strength while on the turf. 5 - Possess all defensive capabilities, channeling, marking and positional play. 5 - Goalkeepers must possess the correct level of speed, stamina, agility, positional play, bravery, ball control. **RUGBY** 1 - Ball Control: Must possess the ability to distribute the ball both to the left and right. Must be able to catch a high ball, as well as a general pass. 2 - Must understand their positioning on the field and possess the ability to support the runner of the ball. 3 - Tackle confidently with the correct posture. 4 - Possess an understanding of the breakdown, as well as the correct rucking technique 5 - Full understanding of the rules of the game, including; offside laws, breakdown laws and safely tackling an opposition player. **ROWING** 1 - Must have passed a Standard Sculling Test 2 - Ability to Feather and Square 3 - Proficient in the Drive Phase 4 - Proficient in floating the Slide in the Preparation Phase 5 - Exhibits an excellent feel for the boat **SOCCER** 1 - Must possess attacking and defensive capabilities, tackling, marking, and shooting. 2 - Ability to read the game, defensive and attacking play. 3 - Must display the correct level of speed, stamina and strength.

	4 - Ball control, must be able to pass, cross and dribble at a high level. 5 - Full understanding of rules and regulations. 5 - Goalkeepers must possess the correct level of speed, stamina, agility, positional play, bravery, ball control. **TENNIS** 1 - Pesse the correct level of stamina, agility and speed. 2 - Win 80% of the matches participated in. 3 - Full understanding of rules and regulations. 4 - Perfected the drop-shot, forehand, backhand, volley and baseline play. 5 - Mastered the technique of the serve. **WATER POLO** 1 - Ball Control: Ability to pass, catch, shoot, swim with the ball and change direction. 2 - Full understanding of rules and regulations. 3 - Must display the correct level of speed, stamina and strength while in the pool. 4 - Possess all defensive capabilities; intercept, blocking and positional play. 5 - Be fully competent in reading the game, and setting up structured play..
Years in service	Years that players have participated and fully committed to the sport in question If a sport was not offered in a specific grade, a point will automatically be awarded. E.g. Basketball in Grade 4

INDIVIDUAL SPORTS

(Athletics, Cross Country, Golf, Swimming)

CRITERIA

- Only Grade 6 and 7 learners are eligible to receive merit, half and full colours.

- Awards are judged on the performance of their current season only
- All learners must have represented the A team in a minimum of 3 fixtures
- Learners will have to achieve points as per the sports codes below:

ATHLETICS

- Must achieve a minimum of 550 - 649 points per event according to the point's table criteria to qualify for half colours.
- Must achieve a minimum of 650 - 1000 points per event according to the point's table criteria to qualify for full colours.

Grade 6 - Half Colours
times/heights/distances

100m	200m	800m	70mH	High Jump	Long Jump	Shot Put
13.6	29.3	2.31	14	1.36	4.58	9.36 (3kg)

Grade 6 - Full Colours
times/heights/distances

100m	200m	800m	70mH	High Jump	Long Jump	Shot Put
12.8	27.72	2.21	12.6	1.44	4.86	10.88 (3kg)

Grade 7 - Half Colours
times/heights/distances

100m	200m	800m	70mH	High Jump	Long Jump	Shot Put
13.2	28.9	2.24.00	13.68	1.4	4.96	9.69 (4kg)

Grade 7 - Full Colours
times/heights/distances

100m	200m	800m	70mH	High Jump	Long Jump	Shot Put
12.4	26.9	2.18	12.42	1.5	5.24	10.79 (4kg)

CROSS COUNTRY

- Athletes need a 50% top 10 placement at a minimum of 3 meetings to qualify for half colours.
- Athletes need a 75% top 5 placement at a minimum of 3 meetings to qualify for full colours.

Points Scale			
Grade 6		**Grade 7**	
Merit	Top 15	Merit	Top 15
Half Colours	Top 10	Half Colours	Top 10
Full Colours	Top 5	Full Colours	Top 5

GOLF

- Golfers need to participate in a minimum of 5 games throughout the year.
- An average of their best 5 games will determine their point's for the year.

Points Scale			
Grade 6		**Grade 7**	
Merit	48	Merit	47
Half Colours	46	Half Colours	45
Full Colours	44	Full Colours	43

SWIMMING

- 'A' swimmers must obtain the allocated "colours required time" for his respective stroke at 3 'A League' School Galas

GRADE 6				GRADE 7			
EVENT	**MERIT**	**HALF**	**FULL**	**EVENT**	**MERIT**	**HALF**	**FULL**
BUTTERFLY	18.60	16.89	15.37	**BUTTERFLY**	17.16	15. 85	14. 35
BACKSTROKE	43.88	40.34	37.35	**BACKSTROKE**	40.89	38.17	35.11
BREASTSTROKE	48.15	44.20	41.23	**BREASTSTROKE**	44.81	41.77	37.79
FREESTYLE	36.55	33.37	30.61	**FREESTYLE**	34.86	32.42	29.83

SPORTS TROPHIES

CRITERIA

- Awarded to learners who have shown exceptional performance, sportsmanship, dedication and commitment in their chosen sport.
- Awarded at the Sports Prize Giving which takes place at the end of the year.
- A Gold Certificate and Floating Trophy are awarded.
- The following sports trophies will be awarded:

- Junior Athlete of the year
- Senior Athlete of the year

- The Cross Country Award

- Junior Basketball player of the year
- Senior Basketball player of the year

- Junior Cricket Player of the Year Award
- Bodyline series cricket trophy
- The Cricketer Trophy

- The Golfer of the Year Trophy

- Junior Hockey Player of the Year Award.
- The Senior Hockey Trophy

- Rowing Trophy (Best Grade 7 Rower)

- Junior Rugby Player of the Year Award
- The Rugby Trophy

- Junior Soccer Player of the Year Award
- Senior Soccer Player of the Year Award.

- The Soccer Trophy

- Junior Swimming Trophy
- The Swimming Special Award

- Junior Tennis Trophy
- The Tennis Award

- Junior Water polo player of the year
- Senior Water polo player of the year

- Sportsmanship Award
- The All Sports Trophy
- Sportsman of the year award

APPENDIX B

Executive Headmaster Information Letter

Dear Executive Member of the Board (Executive Head of the School)

I Ceanne Sham, am currently a student at the University of the Witwatersrand, studying for my Master's Degree in Education.

I am undertaking a Research Project that is a part of the curriculum of the Master's Degree course. **Topic:** A Research Study exploring the effects of award-systems on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion. The main question this Research Report is directed to address is: *In what ways do school award-systems affect learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion?*

This research is important in identifying what awards the school values and if these awards promote learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion. It will help the school to reassess what they award and why.

I hereby request permission to conduct research in your school. This will entail Grade 7 learners voluntarily completing an online survey.

My Research aims to identify the awards recognized and valued by the school, and to investigate how the awards affect the learners, through asking participants to be involved in answering questions on a survey. All information collected from these surveys will be used as empirical evidence for the Research Report, and will remain completely confidential. The school will not be named in the final report or when discussing my research with my supervisor, no personal names will be used when discussing my data. The final draft of the Research Report will be made available to the participants, on request.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE that your school's participation is voluntary. You may discontinue the school's participation at any time without penalty. All research data will be kept in a secure access controlled office and destroyed 3-5 years after completion of the project. Once I have achieved my Master's Degree in Education, this research report will be made available in the Witwatersrand Library and the data may be used to write scholarly articles.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as it is convenient.

Ceanne Sham

ceannes@hotmail.com

076 110 1359

APPENDIX C

Executive Headmaster Consent Form

Please fill in and return the slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: **A Research Study exploring the effects of award-systems on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion.**

I give my consent for the following:

Permission to review/collect documents/artefacts Circle one

I agree that Grade 7 learners may be approached to participate in a survey and can be used for this
study. YES /NO

I know that I can stop this permission at any time. YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that;

· The names of the school, and all its participants will not be revealed.

· The school can withdraw from the study at any time.

· All data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Sign:

Date:

APPENDIX D

Principal Information Letter

Dear Principal

I Ceanne Sham, am currently a student at the University of the Witwatersrand, studying for my Master's Degree in Education.

I am undertaking a Research Project that is a part of the curriculum of the Master's Degree course. **Topic:** A Research Study exploring the effects of award-systems on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion. The main question this Research Report is directed to address is: *In what ways do school award-systems affect learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion?*

This research is important in identifying what awards the school values and if these awards promote learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion. It will help the school to reassess what they award and why.

I hereby request permission to conduct research in your school. This will entail Grade 7 learners voluntarily completing an online survey.

My Research aims to identify the awards recognized and valued by the school, and to investigate how the awards affect the learners, through asking participants to be involved in answering questions on a survey. All information collected from these surveys will be used as empirical evidence for the Research Report, and will remain completely confidential. The school will not be named in the final report or when discussing my research with my supervisor, no personal names will be used when discussing my data. The final draft of the Research Report will be made available to the participants, on request.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE that your school's participation is voluntary. You may discontinue the school's participation at any time without penalty. All research data will be kept in a secure access controlled office and destroyed 3-5 years after completion of the project. Once I have achieved my Master's Degree in Education, this research report will be made available in the Witwatersrand Library and the data may be used to write scholarly articles.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as it is convenient.

Ceanne Sham

ceannes@hotmail.com

076 110 1359

APPENDIX E

Principal Consent Form

Please fill in and return the slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: **A Research Study exploring the effects of award-systems on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion.**

I give my consent for the following:

Permission to review/collect documents/artefacts Circle one

I agree that Grade 7 learners may be approached to participate in a survey and can be used for this
study. YES /NO

I know that I can stop this permission at any time. YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that;

· The names of the school, and all its participants will not be revealed.

· The school can withdraw from the study at any time.

· All data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Sign:

Date:

APPENDIX F

Parent Information Letter

Dear Parents

I Ceanne Sham, am currently a student at the University of the Witwatersrand, studying for my Master's Degree in Education.

I am undertaking a Research Project that is a part of the curriculum of the Master's Degree course. **Topic:** A Research Study exploring the effects of award-systems on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion. The main question this Research Report is directed to address is: *In what ways do school award-systems affect learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion?*

This research is important in identifying what awards the school values and if these awards promote learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion. It will help the school to reassess what they award and why.

I hereby request permission to conduct research in the school. This will entail Grade 7 learners voluntarily completing an online survey.

My Research aims to identify the awards recognized and valued by the school, and to investigate how the awards affect the learners, through asking participants to be involved in answering questions on a survey. All information collected from these surveys will be used as empirical evidence for the Research Report, and will remain completely confidential. The school will not be named in the final report or when discussing my research with my supervisor, no personal names will be used when discussing my data. The final draft of the Research Report will be made available to the participants, on request.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE that your son's participation is voluntary. You may discontinue the school's participation at any time without penalty. All research data will be kept in a secure access controlled office and destroyed 3-5 years after completion of the project. Once I have achieved my Master's Degree in Education, this research report will be made available in the Witwatersrand Library and the data may be used to write scholarly articles.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as it is convenient.

Ceanne Sham

ceannes@hotmail.com

076 110 1359

APPENDIX G

Parent Consent Form

Please fill in and return the slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: **A Research Study exploring the effects of award-systems on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion.**

I give my consent for the following:

Permission to review/collect documents/artefacts Circle one

I agree that my son may be approached to participate in a survey and can be used for this study. YES/NO

I know that I can stop this permission at any time. YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that;

· My child's name and information will not be revealed.

· There is no benefit or penalty from participation in this study

· My child does not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.

· All data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Sign:

Date:

APPENDIX H

Learner Information Letter

Dear Grade 7 Learner

I Ceanne Sham, am currently a student at the University of the Witwatersrand, studying for my Master's Degree in Education.

I am undertaking a Research Project that is a part of the curriculum of the Master's Degree course.
Topic: A Research Study exploring the effects of award-systems on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion. The main question this Research Report is directed to address is: *In what ways do school award-systems affect learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion?*
This research is important in identifying what awards the school values and if these awards promote learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion. It will help the school to reassess what they award and why.
I invite you to participate in this Research Project by completing a survey created by myself, and overseen by a lecturer at the University.
This Research Report is to identify the awards recognized and valued by your school. The Research Report will be done over a course of six months, and you are expected to be involved in answering questions on a survey. Assistance in answering certain questions will be provided (if requested/needed) by myself. All information collected from these surveys will be used to assist me in completing this Research Report, your name will not be used, and your information and assistance will remain unknown. The final draft of the Research Report will be made available to you, if wished.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE that your participation is voluntary. You may discontinue your participation at any time without penalty. All research data will be kept in a secure access controlled office and destroyed 3-5 years after completion of the project. Once I have achieved my Master's Degree in Education, this research report will be made available in the Witwatersrand Library and the data may be used to write scholarly articles.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as it is convenient.

Ceanne Sham

ceannes@hotmail.com

076 110 1359

APPENDIX I

Grader 7 Learner Assent Form

Please fill in and return the slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called: **A Research Study exploring the effects of award-systems on learner motivation, collaboration and social cohesion.**

I give my consent for the following:

Permission to answer questions on a survey. Circle one

I agree to participate in a survey that will be used for this this study YES/NO

Permission to participate in a survey. Circle one

I would like to participate in a focus group interview for this study. YES/NO

I know that I can stop this permission at any time. YES/NO

I know that I can stop this permission at any time YES/NO

I know that I do not have to answer all the questions YES/NO

Informed Assent

I understand that;

· My name and information will not be revealed.

· The is no benefit or penalty from participation in this study

· I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.

· All data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of the project.

Sign:

Date:

APPENDIX J

Survey

*Survey Questions Time: 30 minutes Grade 7***-** Please answer all these questions to the best of your ability.

Vinaigrette

Thato, a boy at the end of his grade 6 year, was sitting on the floor in his school hall, waiting nervously and excitedly for the prize-giving (award ceremony) to begin. His heart was racing as his mind began to wonder about all the possible awards that he may receive. He thought back to the effort he made throughout the year and wondered if he had done enough.

1. Why do you think Thato was feeling nervous and/or excited about the award ceremony/ prize-giving?
2. What words of encouragement and/or comfort would you give Thato?
3. Have you ever been in the same position as Thato?
4. Have you ever received an award at school?
5. If yes, what was it for?
6. How did getting this award make you feel?
7. If no, why do you think you did not receive one?
8. Has there been a time when you were not expecting an award and received one?
9. How did it make you feel when you got the award?
10. List all the awards given at your school
11. Why do you think your school has these awards?
12. Are any awards more important than others?
13. If yes, which ones and why?
14. Which awards do you think are most important or valued at your school?
15. Why do you think this?
16. What values do you think these awards promote?
17. Do you work at achieving awards?
18. What awards do you try to achieve
19. What encourages you to work towards an award?

20. What discourages you from trying to get an award?
21. How do you think your school could encourage you (or others) to achieve awards?
22. Do any of the awards recognized by your school encourage you to work as part of a group or team?
23. If yes, which ones?
24. Do any of the awards recognized by your school encourage you to be a servant leader to (in) your group or team?
25. If yes, which ones
26. Do any of the awards recognized by your school encourage you to serve your community?
27. If yes, which ones?
28. How do you feel about the boys who receive awards? Why?
29. Do you think that it is possible for everyone at your school to receive an award?
30. Why do you feel this way?