A Qualitative study of immigrant pupils in immigrant congested schools in Malmö.

- A study on how the pupils perceive their well-being and performance.-

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Abstract

This study explores how immigrant pupils feel about their own well-being and how they perceive their learning and performance. The analysis looks at the status of immigrant pupils, in immigrant congested schools and brings to light how they are influenced by their school conditions, social conditions and means of self-fulfillment in school. The study focuses on two dimensions of the pupils' experiences: well-being and learning/ performance in school. Learning and performance are used interchangeably in this study as they can be seen as naturally going hand-in-hand. Two immigrant congested schools are targeted and the study focuses on grade eight pupils only. The study was carried out using semi-structured interview questions with a phenomenological approach. Finally, the study as expected reveals in accordance to the literature consulted on the subject that there is to a substantial extent some adjustment difficulties in immigrant pupils as adolescents. The analysis discloses that there is some indication of lack of self-dependency, self-efficacy as well as self-esteem in these pupils. For future studies in this area, it would be of great accuracy if the health status was incorporated in the study.

Keywords & phrases:

Immigrant pupils

Well-being in school

Learning/ performance

School conditions

Social conditions in school

Self-fulfillment in school

Pupil's adjustment

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

A Qualitative study of immigrant pupils in immigrant congested schools in Malmö

‒ A study on how the pupils perceive their well-being and performance. -

INTRODUCTION

Generally speaking, it is often presumed that *well-being* and *performance* (*learning)* of immigrant pupils in schools is closely associated, and logically so. However, this is the case because from a general point of view, it is only natural that the performance of the pupil can be attributed to the well-being of that pupil. However, in his journal entitled *A Review of the Literature,* Michael Aronowitz, (1984) a professor at the university of California, Berkeley points out that "considering the ubiquity of immigrant populations in schools, relatively little research has been done into the social and emotional adjustment of these children" (p.237). Although professor Aronowitz's study was done mainly on immigrants in North America, perhaps his statement quoted above can also be implied in the case of immigrant pupils here in Malmö, Sweden. Evidently, there is a lack of literature on the subject, and the limited literature available is far from being comprehensive in this topic, pertaining studies done in Sweden.

In a local newspaper from Malmö, *Vårt Malmö* (200*6)* it read that the chairman of the Educational Group representing the policy *Welfare for All,* Bo Sjöström stated that "the School Board is critical against Malmö's schools", and that "Malmö's schools get both criticism and praise in the report which the school Board recently presented" (p. 7). Furthermore, Sjöström goes on to say that "the School Board has established that majority of pupils are happy in school and feel safe, but it is quite a big difference between schools in Malmö…And that "the differences depend on which part of town the school is situated" (pp.7-8)[1]. According to this article, immigrant congested schools got for the most part the criticism and schools that are mainly attended by Swedish native pupils received the most praise

In another newspaper, Sydsvenska Dagbladet (2006), there was an article about a school called Hermodsdal School, and another immigrant congested school in Malmö.
The development that was published in the newspaper regarding Hermodsdal School was quite interesting since it was one of the schools on the list of schools to approach for this study, but permission to interview the pupils was denied. Perhaps this article partly explains the reason why the permission was after all denied. However, the newspaper stated that, the teachers and officials

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[1]   Own loose translation of the quote

believe that the pupils from that school deliberately set it on fire. It went on to say that the Fosie township councilmen in charge of school matters have decided to close down the school because of the enormous amounts of money that has been poured into it, and according to the councilmen, both the bad grades, damages done to the school, lack of security for both pupils and teachers and finally the fire has led to the hasty decision in closing the school down. These two articles are but just a few that are published in newspapers about immigrant-congested schools yearly. One cannot help but wonder why things in these schools happen the way that they do, and what the pupils themselves feel about the situation. These are perhaps questions that need to be addressed in the future.

Theory and relevant research

In aronowitz's research review (1984), he states that the theoretical framework considered in his study is one based on elements, which would facilitate conceptualizing the process of immigration among children. He looks at their requirements and how these might best be met by primary and secondary preventive mental health interventions. In Hernandez's research (1999), he examines the health and risk behaviours of adolescents who are representative of the so-called *new immigration*. His study considers the revisionist theories that were developed from renewed scholarly interests in the social and economic dynamism of immigrants. These were based on the previously documented wave of the *new immigration* from the 1990 census. The revisionist theory supports the modification of the conditions of immigrants and their offsprings, suggesting for or against, the rules and regulations governing the immigration policies. The term *new immigration* supposedly means children born in or outside a particular country but having an immigrant background through their parents.

The concept used in Konu, Lintonen & Rimpelä, (2002) is based on Allardt's (1975, 1976 & 1989) sociological theory of welfare (having, loving, and being). However, the concepts that are representative of those in their study are those that looks at the quality of life. They were the concept that were closest to the phenomena the authors were interested in studying.

Furthermore, one of the relevant researches that have been done regarding these issues in Sweden is taken up by Aronowitz (1999). In his article, he states that it is widely argued amongst researchers that migration of children between nations, especially in cases entailing significant cultural changes tends to have grave repercussions on the emotional as well as the physical well-being of these children. The article goes on to say that:

> In Sweden, Takac (1976) compared the adjustment of immigrant children to
> that of native children in the city of Gothenburg. More immigrants than natives
> were rated poorly by their teachers on measures of anxiety, aggression,
> inability to tolerate frustration, low self-esteem, dependency and poor relations
> with peers. Another study in Sweden (Malmö Social Welfare Department,

1979) reported that 5.2 percent of the 6,300 immigrant children in the city required social welfare services, as compared with only 1.4 percent of the 46,000 native children. (Aronowitz, 1984. p. 241)

Furthermore, he writes that reports from other countries such as Germany, Switzerland as well as Canada have shown similar results. Aronowitz (1984) goes on to say that although there is a significant body of literature on the consequences of *international residential mobility for children's adjustment*, "this literature is seldom invoked in discussions of immigrant children's adjustment, though it is clearly relevant" (p. 240). In another study by Hernandez (1999), his findings were such that children from immigrant families may feel greater alienation among their school peers.

Moreover, feelings of alienation among immigrant adolescents stem not only from visual cues such as dress but also their lack of fluency in the language. He arrived at this result after a review on previous research that implies three social-psychological dimensions on which immigrant children may differ from native-born children. He reviewed racial, ethnic, and generational patterns of educational achievement and explored why there is an apparent anomaly as immigrant children may have lower self-perceptions yet still manage to do well in school, despite the well-documented link between mental health and educational performance among adolescents (Hernandez. 1999). Finally, another study, which focuses on the adjustment of children or pupils, is one by Konu, et al, (2002). The aim of this study was to confirm empirically the factor structure of the School Well-being Model. In this model, well-being was divided into school conditions, social relationships, means for self-fulfillment and health status. Data for the study was collected by the School Health Promotion Survey in Finland with 40 147 respondents from Grades 8 and 9. The 43 variables from the Survey were fitted into the *School Well-being Model* using confirmatory factor analysis. The categories *school conditions* and *health status* had many variables. However, they believe that the social relationships and the means for self-fulfillment categories would have benefited from additional questions. The authors explain that the *School Well-being Model* can be utilized to construct school well-being profiles both for groups of pupils and for schools as a whole. Furthermore, they add that the school well-being profile could highlight the area or areas in which schools could make improvements in order to promote the well-being of its pupils.

For this study, primary literature was gathered from current research article publications in cultural and social psychology and secondary literature was obtained from specialized and relevant book publications, involving course material. In order to review relevant and recent research literature electronic database searches were conducted. The principal databases for this study were: PsycARTICLES, PsycINFO, and ELIN (Electronic Information Navigator at Lund University) and data bases such as JSTOR and Oxford Journals through Malmö (University) as well. Initially

general search words such as "immigrants", "pupils" and "well-being" were used. Abstracts and full text versions of these selected articles were scanned, and thereafter a more comprehensive literature search followed. The second session included more specific key words – such as *immigrant pupils*, *pupils' well-being*, *performance and learning*. Full text articles with high relevance for the purpose and aim of this study were finally selected and thematically categorized in order to be applied to this study.

Nevertheless, for this present study two schools called Kroksbäck School (85 percent immigrant pupils)[2] and Sorgenfri School (over 50 percent immigrants- according to estimate by one of the vice principals at the School) were targeted. These two schools, like many other immigrant-congested schools have had their share of troubles and a negative reputation that is hard to shake off. As one pupil from Kroksbäck School puts it in *Vårt Malmö,* "We have a very good school. I do not understand why our school has a bad reputation, we are all open here[3]" (2006 p. 8). Nonetheless, for this study two concepts, *well-being* and *performance and learning* are explored from the perspective of the pupils themselves. This study explores perceptions of immigrant pupils about their own feelings and experiences in regards to these two concepts. In other words, the focus of the study is immigrant congested schools, and exploring how immigrant pupils experience and feel about their well-being and learning in these schools. The study aims at giving the pupils a voice with which to express how they feel about these two concepts.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore possible expressions, experiences and feelings of immigrant pupils in immigrant-congested schools. Because, it is through understanding other people that we learn about ourselves and also learn to tolerate and accept other people as they are.   The secondary purpose for this study is to try and document the pupils' experiences to ensure that they are not ignored in their feelings and wishes and that their position may in future be taken into consideration for further research. The study should help to highlight the variations in individual perception and description of the two concepts, *well-being* and *performance and learning* through the pupil's *lifeworld*. In short, the purpose is to give these immigrant pupils a voice to express their feelings, something that they rarely get to do.

METHOD

Sample Selection

The participants in this study had backgrounds that span from different geographic parts of the world and therefore it is quite uncontroversial to conclude that there are probable and distinct

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[2]   According to statistics supplied by the school and published in *Vårt Malmö,*.
[3]   Own loose translation of the quotation

cultural variations between our interview participants. However, it is important to stress that this study did not aim to identify or explore variations between "continental cultures" or "national cultures". Thus this sample cannot by any means be representative of national or regional cultures, little less "continental cultures". For this study, the focus was given only to a small sample (pupils) due to technical reasons as well as time constraints. However, these limitations made it possible to carry-out an in-depth study and exploration, rather than interviewing many pupils and coming up with contradicting and too much information, which might have prevented a comprehensive study and analysis. In short, it entailed concentrating on a small group to get into the depth of the samples' reasoning and feelings.

There was no particular pattern in selecting the sample size, nor was there some kind of selection plan for the participants. When permission slips were handed-out for the parents to sign, the pupils that returned them were then randomly chosen by their teachers for the interview. The only requirement that was to be upheld was that all the participants had to be of an immigrant background and that the school at which they attended classes had to have at least a minimum of fifty or above percentage of pupils with immigrant backgrounds. The pupils that were picked for the interview were then instructed to volunteer information about their own experiences and not that of their peers' or that of someone else. In selecting the sample, it was borne in mind that the sample had to be large enough to provide enough information on both similarities and differences amongst the participants' experiences.

Since the study was targeted at minors or pupils under the age of 18, permission from their parents was another determining factor as to who would be able to participate and who would not. All the participants were grade eight pupils. This was the case because the grade nines, at this time of year were preoccupied with their final examinations and the grade sevens at one school were unavailable to participate, so the choice automatically became limited to the grade eights. The schools were randomly picked, and of the seven schools that were on the interview list, only two were represented in this study as a result of their willingness to participate in the study.

However, the number of interviews presented in this study was partly determined by the responses of the parents and partly by the pupils. That was the case because the final influencing factor for determining the sample was actually the number of pupils that were willing to participate in the study (Smith, 2003). Pupils that showed no interest were left out and so the final number of participants came down to eleven, five from Kroksbäck School and six from Sorgenfri School. After the interviews, further selections were made from these eleven participants as to who would finally be included in the study. This selection was based on the response styles of the participants. An explanation and example for this is that, the participants that did not require too much prompting with explanatory statements and questions are the ones that were deemed the most suitable

candidates.

Although it is absolutely alright to follow up interview questions with prompts, when the interviewee responds to every question with another question and requires too much prompting, it might undermine the validity of the questions in that these prompts might contaminate the originally prepared interview questions unawares, turning them into leading questions. An example of this from my list of questions is one with a question about how pupils learn the different subjects and what study techniques they use to remember what they have learnt[4]. If a pupil responded to this question by asking what was meant with it or suggested that an example be given of what was meant with the question, it was unavoidable that one study technique or another was offered in response. Thereby, from the suggested techniques, it then becomes easy for a pupil to pick one technique or another, from the examples given. This was not unusual if a pupil did not have a study technique of his or her own. Hence, the final seven participants were pupils that could elaborate their answers extensively, and requiring very little prompting.

Phenomenology (IPA)

There are inherently fundamental methodological matters to consider when conducting a qualitative research method. Phenomenological studies tend to focus on the subjective experience of the individuals or persons that are being studied. The researcher must ask questions such as "what is their experience like? How can one understand and describe what happens to them from their own point of view? (Robson, 2004. p. 195) Phenomenological researches have had quite major influence on establishing other qualitative methodology.

However, the phenomenological approach used for this study is the *interpretive phenomenological analysis*. IPA is also known to provide philosophical basis for interpretive research strategies that might incorporate ethno- methodology as well as conversational analysis (Holstein and Gubrium, 1994). Like the phenomenological method, *interpretive phenomenological analysis* (IPA) is concerned with trying to understand what it is like, from the point of view of the participants and to take their side. Thus this method uses a "two-stage interpretation process, or a double hermeneutic, is involved. The participants are trying to make sense of their world; the researcher is trying to make sense of the participants trying to make sense of their world" (Smith, 2003. p 51). As a result, an analysis of how the immigrant pupils perceive their situation will be laid-out.

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[4]   See question   on the appended interview questions.

Research material and input collection

The initial input collection phase involved collecting relevant background information and reviewing recent research findings. The second collection method phase subsequently involved conducting the interviews and thereby collecting the main data for the study. Permission slips were handed out to pupils for their parents to consent and this was done before the interviews. The number of questions that were asked determined the time it took for the interviews. The time taken for the interviews also varied from pupil to pupil. Thus, the responses were the main determinants of how long an interview took. Originally, it was intended that repeated interviews would be carried out, meaning that the plan was to meet the pupils over a period of a few days in-order for them to establish trust and openness for the interviewer, but this was not possible as their teachers felt that the pupils were too busy with other school activities. During the interviews, the pupils were regarded as the experts of the issues asked and the information that they were imparting as the absolute truth. The pupils were asked questions which focused mainly on their feelings about the two concepts *Well-being* and *performance and learning* in school (see attachment of the interview questions)[5].

The questions used for the interview are semi-structured, meaning that very little prompting or explanations were or might have been added. However there was to a certain extent prompts that were added to the prepared interview questions spontaneously, depending on the responses that were received from the pupils. Nevertheless, in spite the fact that the researcher has a good idea of the areas that he/she wants to cover, the *schedule* and maybe also what answers would be interesting, the phenomenological approach does not allowed the researcher to ask questions about leading specific areas or to guide the responses in any way or manner about specific areas, or to guide the discussion in any way (Smith. 2003). However, it is necessary as an interviewer, to facilitate the interview by rephrasing the question if the interviewee does not answer or understand the question, or refrain from questions that the interviewee might find offensive (Smith. 2003). The interviews were carried out one on one with the pupils.

Profile model for well-being

Below is the model *Well-being in schools* (Konu, et al, 2002) that was used as a guideline for establishing which information was relevant for the study. The model helped to define the meaning and understanding of the concept of well-being, which is linked to the learning and performance of the pupils. The model outlines themes that can be presumed to be relevant for exploring the two concepts that were in focus for this study.

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[5] The self-designed questions are attached to this paper.

Well-being in Schools

TIME ──→

HOME

SURROUNDING

COMMUNITY

TEACHING AND EDUCATION ──────── **LEARNING**

SCHOOL

WELL-BEING

having   loving   being   health

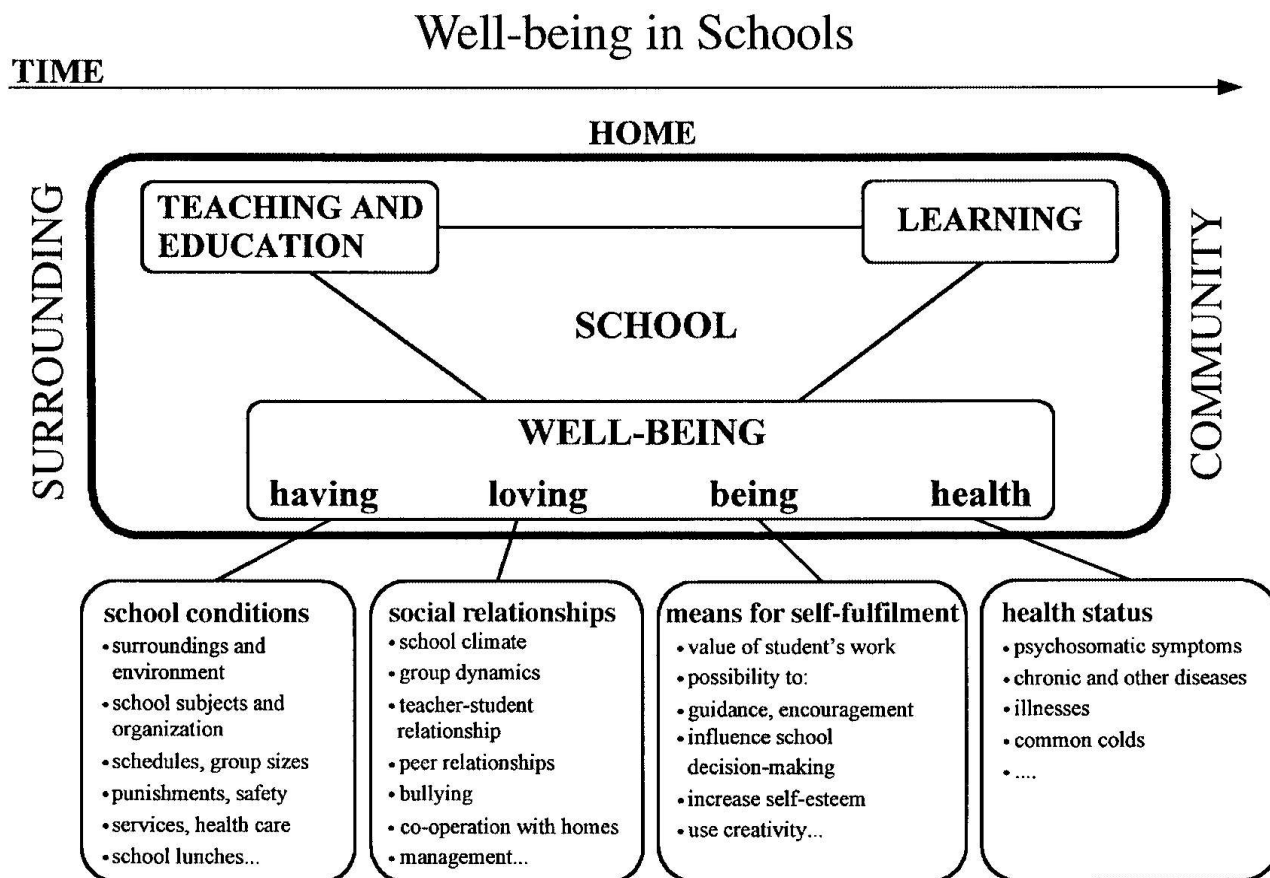| school conditions	social relationships	means for self-fulfilment	health status
• surroundings and environment	• school climate	• value of student's work	• psychosomatic symptoms
• school subjects and organization	• group dynamics	• possibility to:	• chronic and other diseases
• schedules, group sizes	• teacher-student relationship	• guidance, encouragement	• illnesses
• punishments, safety	• peer relationships	• influence school decision-making	• common colds
• services, health care	• bullying	• increase self-esteem	• ....
• school lunches...	• co-operation with homes	• use creativity...	
	• management...		

Fig 1. The school well-being model (Konu & Rimpelä.2002)

The *Well-being in schools* model is based on Konu's and colleagues' research on school well-being. The project is for the *well-being* technology venture involving two universities and two polytechnics in Tampere, Finland. Originally, the profile for this model was created to provide information on the well-being of pupils in schools. It was intended to be used in the development of what they termed as the "health knowledge" for schools to use independently as a self-evaluation tool.

The model is divided into four categories: *school conditions, social relationship* under *school, means for self-fulfilment in school and health status.* These categories further contain themes within that area. Under *School conditions,* there is physical and organizational conditions and services like school lunch, health care, counselling and psychological services. Under *Social relationships in school*, is: pupil-to-pupil, teacher- (and other personnel) to-pupil relationships and also the relationships between pupils' homes and school. In the *Means for self-fulfilment in school*, the model can be seen as pertaining the pupils' possibilities to study according to their own capabilities and abilities and at the same time receive feedback, encouragement and stimulation. According to Konu and colleagues, the *Health status* can be viewed mainly through psychosomatic symptoms, which are known to reflect mental health issues especially among adolescents (Konu, 2001). For this study, the health status has been omitted. The model played a significant role for this study in

that it was partly used in the formulation of the interview question and also provided a basis for the analysis of the responses from the interviewees. It acted as a guideline in establishing what themes were present and relevant for analysis of this study.

Interview methodology

The qualitative interview method can be compared to a conversational atmosphere whereby the researcher asks the interview participant open questions in order to stimulate conversational communication based on a certain subject area and research purpose (Smith, 2003). Hence, hopefully the interview participant can openly reason about the provided thematic questions. Based on the literature findings, the *well-being in schools profile*, and the pilot testing of the questions which were initially suggested, the final questions were constructed and a decision on which questions to apply during the interviews was made. Below are a few examples of the thematic questions that were asked[6]:

Well-Being

- Vad får dig att mår bra i skolan?
  What makes you feel good and well in school?

- Om du skulle få problem med ditt lärande, vem skulle du vända dig till?
  If you had some problems with your learning, to whom would you turn to?*

- Var i skolan känner du dig trygg?
  Whereabouts in school do you feel safe?*

Learning and Performance

- Beskriv vad du tycker om lektionerna i din skola.
  Describe what you think about your lessons in your school.*

- Ange någonting som du tror är viktigaste för att kunna förbättra hur du mår i skolan?
  Mention something that you believe would be important in improving how you feel in school.[7]

- Berätta lite om vad dina föräldrar tycker i fall det är viktigt att får bra betyg.
  Tell me a bit about what your parents think in regards to whether or not it is important to obtain good grades.*

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[6]   Full list of the interview questions are attached.

[7]

*   Own English translation of the questions.

The questions were deliberately open and semi-structured in character as pointed out above, in order to promote individually specific descriptions and reasoning about *well-being* and *performance and learning.* Questions that were regarded as leading and might have resulted in producing yes and no answers were left out (Breakwell, Hammond & Schaw, The aim was to generate enough relevant and valid input through elaborately answered questions. The reason for using many questions, as was the case for this study was to capture the multifaceted reasons that are involved in these issues. With so little time allowed for the interviews and no follow-up questions encouraged or allowed, it was necessary to have that many questions in order to cover the concepts comprehensively and to make accurate assumptions about the data.

When the teachers from these two schools were consulted for advice as to how to approach the pupils in order to get to know them a bit better, the advice that was communicated back was that it was likely that the pupils would be reserved during the interviews, because they were usually sceptic towards situations where meeting new people was involved, possibly believing that negative information might be written about them. Such tips as beginning the interviews by introducing oneself and telling a little bit about ones own background and interests to the pupil proved fruitful for this study.

Research Procedure

It was necessary to use a Dictaphone for recording the interviews because this ensured that there was no verbal information lost from the pupils, and that the information could then be listened to over and over before and during transcribing it into text. The pupils were informed prior to the interview that the information that they were providing would be recorded and then later transcribed into text. Recording the interview made it much easier to concentrate on the quality of the responses from the pupils. However, a notebook was also at hand to write down any interesting and relevant information that might not have been able to be recorded on the Dictaphone, such as the body language. Nevertheless, using the Dictaphone had its own downside such as the risk to miss the non-verbal language cues, the transcription and interpretation is that of the researcher's (Smith, 2003). Following this procedure, the interviews were carried out individually. The pupils' answers were transcribed onto notebook papers and then later transferred to the computer. The transcriptions of the interviews are direct, meaning that there was no selection of information done during the transcription process. The transcription into text was done word for word as it can be heard on the Dictaphone.

Data interpretation methodology

This study's design was based on a phenomenological approach. Therefore, it can be considered as being a highly valid approach in intercultural studies, which is commonly used in order to promote comprehension of how interview participants reason contextually during a specific period in time. The central focus of interpretative phenomenological analysis involves the exploration of how interview participants understand and make sense of their personal and social world (Smith, 2003). After the transcription of the interviews, the following stages of analysis were to look for themes and then connecting them, in order to come to some concrete interpretation (Smith. 2003). There was no requirement that the text be divided into meaning units and assign a comment for each unit. This was the case because some parts of the interview were more informative than others and so the more informative parts were rendered commentary whilst the others not (Smith. 2003).

The data that was collected was then translated from themes into narrative accounts. The analysis became expansive again, as the themes were explained, illustrated and nuanced (smith, 2003). The process was as follows: the interview data was reviewed, thereafter thematically categorized into data with identified systematic patterns that could be identified amongst the interview participants. In order to reduce the data to over-viewable systematic paragraphs (Breakwell et al, 1995), selected content representative quotations were chosen from the interviews, with the help of concepts or themes stated in the *well-being* profile model and then presented in the following results and discussion sections.

RESULTS

Group 1 – Kroksbäck School

The backgrounds of the pupils whose results were presented here below somewhat vary, although not too significantly. The variations were geographical meaning that the pupils come from different countries and below; two boys and one girl were presented in the results. One can say that similarities other than that the pupils attended the same school were that they all had an immigrant background and came to Sweden when they were below the age of five but they were not born in Sweden. Two of the interviewees were of Arabic descent, one from South America and the other from Eastern Europe.

Pupils' performance/learning

Pupil number one's replies: the lessons were sometimes fun and sometimes long and boring. His favourite subject was Swedish, physical education (sports) Photoshop and he had good grades in these subjects. To help him learn, he revised what he learnt, usually before the tests. Sometimes he

used study questions to help him remember. When he had problems, he turned to the teacher in that subject and they had a system where they could get help with their studies with the help of designated teachers. *The pupil's response suggested a partial sense of responsibility by identifying help sources and methods of study.* His Break-time was usually calm but it had happened before that there had been some fights but he anticipated that it would get better when the weather was better, because the pupils would not be confined indoors by the weather. *Above, he showed unfounded optimism in the improvement of the situation in school due to change of weather.* The school and his parents had a good communication system and his parents were happy about it. When asked what he thought would have helped him to improve in his learning, he replied that if he spoke less in class, listened more and worked harder, he would probably have gotten good grades. When asked why he did not do it then, his answer was that he did not know why.

When asked when he had good times in school, he replied that the best times were when school days were short and so were the lessons. *The pupil showed tendencies of lacking interest and motivation in his studies.* When asked if he cut classes ever, he said that he did not do it too often he had done it only four hours this term and that was not much, according to him. *Here, he displays denial in that it is a bad thing to cut classes.* He thought that if he worked hard in the rest of the subjects, he would probably have gotten very good grades in them too. When asked why he did not do that then, he replied that he lacked interest in the subjects. He pointed out that his parents would have liked him to work harder in school and they thought that school was important. *The themes that come-up in this passage are: partial sense of responsibility, unfounded optimism, lack of motivation and interest and finally denial.*

Pupil number two's replies: when this pupil was asked what he thought and felt about the lessons, he replied that they were sometimes good and sometimes boring. When asked to elaborate, he said that some teachers were boring and some lessons were too long. The short lessons were the best he said. *This pupil lacks motivation and interest in most lessons.* His favourite subject was sports because he was very good at them. To help him learn, he usually asked his mother to pose questions to him on the subject. He also did exercises on the subject that he needed to learn. When he had trouble in school, he usually turned to his parents or his teacher for help. He also added that there was good contact between the school and his parents so when he did something foolish, the school usually called his parents. *He displayed responsibility towards his studies.*

He stated that he had the best and most fun times when they went out on excursions, because the lessons were too boring for him. When asked about break-time, he replied that it was quiet noisy and troublesome and sometimes, some pupils fought and so on. He could not think of anything that could have helped him improve his learning. When asked if he ever cut classes, he replied that he never did that. He added that everything was going just fine in the other subjects as well. *Here one*

can trace a sense of reluctancy and lack of motivation. His best subjects were the science subjects, sports and English. He was not so good at the science subjects, Photoshop and music. Finally he stated that his parents thought that it was very important for him to obtain good grades so that they could be proud of him. When asked if they were not proud of him if he got bad grades anyway, he replied that they were not. *The pupil clearly displays disappointment, rejection and sadness. Themes that appeared in this passage were: lack of motivation and interest, some responsibility towards studying, reluctancy and disappointment, rejection and sadness.*

Pupil number three's replies: she described the lessons as being calm and that one did not need to study a lot in that school. When asked about her study techniques, she pointed out that she had a bad memory. For this reason, she added that she has difficulties in memorising what she had learnt, but writing it down over and over seemed to work a bit. *Here she displayed a sense of helplessness.* When asked whom she turned to when she had problems in school and at home, she replied that she turned to her mentor or the teacher. When asked about the contact between the school and her parents she replied that her mother does not understand or know anything about school, but the school keeps sending report notes to her in Swedish and she can not read them. *Above, she showed feelings of incomprehension and embarrassment and fear of being discovered that her mother did not speak Swedish.*

When asked what she felt was important for her learning, she answered "something that I can use to train my memory in order to improve it". She added that she had the funniest times when her teachers were creative and they came-up with something interesting and challenging. She went on to say that she used to cut-classes before but she does not do it any longer. Her favourite subjects are Photoshop and music because one does not have to remember much she explained. *Here, she showed a sense of acceptance towards her position.* She added that the school and lessons were not at all challenging compared to the lessons at Dammfri School, a school she attended after being assaulted at Kroksbäck school. "All other subjects I forget and sports are boring. I am actually not bad at mathematics, but I tend to forget a lot". She explained. Finally she stated that her parents think that one gets only one chance in life therefore it is important to learn and get good grades. *Themes that appeared here are: helplessness, shame and embarrassment, fear of being discovered and accepting of her position*

Pupils' well-being

Pupil number one's replies: "I think my friends think that I am a good and just guy". He said when asked what he thought his friends thought about him. When he has trouble in school or at home, he turned to his mentor, his cousins and his parents for help. *The pupil displayed confidence in himself.* When asked what got him to feel good, he replied that he felt well in school when he got good grades. When asked about what he thought to be the most important thing that would help him to

improve his well-being in school, he replied that a reduction in the number of pupils that caused trouble in school would help. *Above, one can see a possible conflicting situation where the pupil feels good in a troublesome environment.* However, he went on to say that he was happiest when he had no lessons and everything was going well for him and his friends. When asked what the "everything" was, he replied "my grades". He described the atmosphere at his school as being unstable, meaning that there were fights sometimes and other times just noise and trouble. *There is a lack of interest and motivation towards school from this pupil.*

What usually made him sad at school was obtaining bad grades, that something was done unfairly or that his friends were being provocative towards him. When this happened, he usually turned to the teachers for help. He added that he felt saddest when there was too much trouble at school with friends and teachers. *Here, the pupil displays a sense of lack of control.* The best times in school for him, was when they were going out on an excursion tour or when they went to the cinema as a class. *Here he displays a sense of belonging, with the class.* The place was he felt most secure was in the classroom because it was quiet and calmer. When asked when he felt left out, he replied that he did not know. When asked what he thought would improve his well-being in school, re replied that if everybody had a good time and things were going well with them, he would feel much better too. *The themes identified in this passage are: confidence in himself, conflicting emotions, lack of interest and motivation, a lack of control as well as a sense of belonging.*

Pupil number two's replies: "my friends and teachers probably think of me as a kind guy". When he had trouble in school or at home, he usually turned to the curator or the school nurse. When asked what made him feel well in school, he replied that it was his friends, without the friends school would not be good at all. *Here, one can see a sense of belonging in the pupil, towards his peers.* When asked to describe the atmosphere at school, he stated that it was ok but usually boring, noisy and troublesome. *Here the pupil shows lack of interest.* About how he felt for his school, he stated that he felt that school was quiet good, but he really did not know what he truly felt about it. *He shows a sense of confusion and conflicting emotions in the statements above.* When asked when he felt happiest in school, he replied that he felt happy when the lessons were not so boring and the teachers were nice. When asked how often that was when the lessons were good, he replied "seldom". He went on to answer that he felt sad when there was some kind of a fight and he was involved or after having a row with some of his friend or just other pupils. This made him also very angry and to sort the situation out he usually turned to the teachers. *Above the pupil shows denial in that he say the lessons are almost never good. He also shows frustration, anger and pain.*

When asked what the teachers then do about the situation, he explained that they listened to both sides and then they would tell the one they thought was wrong to stop making trouble. He added that he sometimes turned to his parents if the teachers could not help completely. When asked

if that helped, he replied that it did sometimes but usually not for long but that was what was required of them to do. He added that there was nothing else to do. *In the statements above, the pupil expresses feelings of helplessness and a lack of control.* As mentioned above he added that he felt bad when he had been in a fight and he felt good when he obtained good grades. He said that he felt safe everywhere at school and especially at break-time. When asked why especially at Break-time, he replied that it was then that he was surrounded by his best friends and that made him feel safe. When asked if he had ever felt left out, he replied that he had never been or felt left out. When asked about what he felt would improve his well-being in school, he replied that if everybody worked together and cooperated more, things would get much better and this would make him feel good. And to end the interview, he added that he felt very well in school. *Here the pupil displays a sense of struggle to accept himself and acquiring own identity and dependency. Themes present here are sense of belonging, lack of interest, dependency, denial, anger and pain, helplessness and a lack of control.*

Pupil number three's replies: about questions on her well being, she replied saying that her teachers were really very nice. They did not look down at the pupils. As long as one kept to his corner, everything tended to go well. Although she knew almost everybody at school, keeping to one's corner was the best way to avoid trouble. *In the statements above the pupil shows avoidance of most of what is happening around.* She went on to say that if she had problems at home she would turn to her best friend. She added that she had actually never liked the school even though the teachers are kind. She continued by saying that when she knocked-off from school, she went straight home because there was nothing to do in school. She disliked the school because she had seen and attended a better school than kroksbäck. In describing the school she said that one could look at it from different views. Since she just returned from Dammfri, she did not find the environment especially pleasant. She went on to say that every thing was different if one compared her current school to Dammfri School. At Dammfri, there was much more demand on performance in that what took her three days at Dammfri school now took her only one day to finish because the schools were at different levels when it came to performance. She added that the teachers at Kroksbäck School accepted anything one gives them, but that was not the case at Dammfri School. "The only thing I enjoy at this school is that I do not have to work so hard." *Here she shows lack of interest, bewilderment and resistant towards change.*

She said that she had fun when the teacher was in a good mood and they could joke about something and when she was with her friends. "I am actually never really sad because I have friends but I dislike the grade nines because they can pick on anyone and start to harass that person for no reason". This upset her very much. She refrained from answering questions about when she was sad or disappointed in school, by saying that she was not good at expressing her feelings so that made it

difficult for her to answer. She said that if one had problems, they could turn to the curator, but the curator gave no advice anyway. She added that she came to the realization that it did not help to get angry so, she was always calm now. She concluded the interview by saying that the only place she felt safe was away from school and that it was not possible to make any changes to the way things are run at school, but that the pupils had only two choices, to be good or to be bad. *This pupil displays conflicting sides of herself; she also shows signs of avoidance of facing things as they are. When she refrains from answering simple questions involving emotions, she gives the impression of being depressed also. The most relevant themes that appear here are: lack of interest, bewilderment, avoidance and depression.*

Group 2 – Sorgenfri School

The background of the pupils at Sorgenfri School is somewhat identical to that of Kroksbäck School, in that the variations are geographical and all the pupils interviewed were not born in Sweden. They too were one girl and two boys. One had Arabic descent, two were natives of Eastern European countries and one had South American descent. Below are the results from these pupils.

Pupils' performance/learning
Pupil number one's replies: in describing what she thought about the lessons in her school, interview pupil number one explained that they were generally good in the beginning, but tended to get noisy and a bit out of control later. Her favourite subjects were science and language subjects because she felt that her teachers in these subjects did a great job in explaining them to her. She added that the teachers were kind and would try to find out how she was feeling during their lessons. *The pupil shows contentment here.* Her study techniques were basically just asking the teacher what she did not understand during the lessons and she had no problems to turn to her teachers in instances where she had difficulties with a particular subject. Contact between the school and her home was good in that the school sent reports home to her parents about her progress and she felt that that method worked well and helped in improving her grades through encouragement from both sides.

However, she would have liked to work a little harder with her schoolwork in order to improve her grades. The best times in school for her were when they did something interesting like going out for an excursion and everyone was happy and kind to each other. She pointed out that her grades were good although she was not particularly good at home economics, mathematics and English. She stressed out that she never cuts classes and she also added that her parents thought that it was very important to obtain good grades because a good future depended on that. And finally, break-times were good for him and she spent most of the time at the cafeteria. *To a certain extent,*

there is an element of lack of interest and motivation towards her studies. The themes here are contentment and partial lack of interest and motivation.

Pupil number two's replies: "I have a photogenic memory which makes it good for me to learn, and the lessons are very instructive" said pupil number two. He went on to say that his favourite subject was history because he liked to learn more about what happened in the past. His study technique was reading aloud to himself and when he had problems with his learning, he turned to his parents for help. He believed that if he read a little bit more at home, he would be able to improve his grades. *Here the pupil indicates a lack of interest in most subjects except for one.* He said he enjoyed history lessons because the teacher made them more fun in the manner that he taught. He confessed that he cut classes at least once a month when the lessons were boring or he was not in the mood of learning. According to him, his grades were good and his favourite subjects were History, Swedish, English and Religion. On the other hand, he was not good at the science subjects and Mathematics. He believed that his parents thought that education was important and that he should train hard on the subjects that he was not good at. *This pupil displays some sense of responsibility at the same time; there are traces of lack of motivation. Themes appearing with this pupil are: lack of interest, some sense of responsibility and a lack of motivation towards his studies.*

Pupil number three's replies: that almost all the teachers were very good in the way that they taught the subjects, which made the lessons very good. Her favourite subjects were Swedish and English because the teachers were very positive and good to listen to. Her study technique was to make her own notes and then read them over and over until she understood them. *Above, there is a clear show of contentment towards the lessons.* This technique applied to all her subjects. When she had a problem with a particular subject, she turned to the teacher in that subject for help. She also pointed out that communication between her school and her parents was quite good. The school sent reports informing her parents on her progress in school and; her parents felt free to contact the school. She could not think of anything that could improve her learning in school since she felt that things were good as they were. She added that she was happy in school for the most part and she never cut classes ever. She pointed out that her grades tend to go up and down but she thought that if she spent some time at home reading, she could improve the grades. She said her favourite subject was social studies and her worst was Mathematics. *There is predominantly few but positive themes appearing with this pupil. The two themes identified are: contentment with the studies and she also shows some responsibility although there is a touch of lack of motivation.*

Pupil number four's replies: when asked what he thought about the lesson and classes at his school, that it is usually calm during most of the lessons although it happens that some lessons get noisy and troublesome. He went on to say that his favourite subjects were science subject, English, Swedish and History, especially History because the teacher taught the subject very well. For the

language subjects, he said that he tries to master the rules of the language and then for the other subjects, he simply reads through over and over. When he had problems in a certain subject, he turned to respective teachers in those subjects. He added that he has problems in Mathematics and Home economics because he is not good at these subjects and he lacks interest in them. Pupil number four also pointed out that there is relatively good communication between the school and his parents. He stated that when something unpleasant happened with him in school, his parents would be informed by telephone about it. When asked what he felt was important in order to improve his learning, he stated that more good teachers like his History teach would be a good start. *Above, the pupil displays confidence, and responsibility towards learning. There is also a slight trace of lack of interest in some subjects.*

When asked when he has the most fun in school, he answered that he likes the break-time because he can be with his friends and just take it easy, or go out and play football. When asked if he ever cut classes, he replied that he had not done it this term because his mother got him to stop by reasoning with him and punishing him. Finally he mentioned that his parents think that school is important and his mother tried to help him in any way possible. *There is clear contentment with this pupil and the themes appearing here are: confidence, responsibility with a trace of lack of interest. But all-in-all, it is contentment that sums up the themes.*

Pupils' well-being

Pupil number one's replies: "most of my fellow pupils and teachers think that I am a positive and nice girl". When asked where she could turn to in times of trouble, she replied that her school friends were her best source of comfort but added that she also turned to the school curator who was also available if needed. She stated that what made her feel good and well in school was having fun with friends and that there was now rows and confrontations amongst pupils. *Above the pupil displays a sense of responsibility but also shows acceptance of living with things the way they are. This can be interpreted as having a feeling of lack of control.* When asked to describe how she felt for her school, she explained that she was content and felt that everybody was friendly to each other although they were sometimes unruly, noisy and troublesome. She felt that the atmosphere in her school was relatively good, like a big family. She was happiest when her friends were happy and she obtained good grades at her tests. On the contrary, it made her sad when her grades were poor and some of her school friends were being troublesome.

When asked what makes her angry, she pointed out that she dislikes it when some pupils bully others. When she herself is a victim of bullying or a fight, she either dealt with it herself by telling the perpetrators causing her troubles to stop or she turned to her teachers for help. *The pupil indicates some confidence but also a sense of helplessness towards what happens with the troublemakers at her school.* She felt secure everywhere at the school premises and hardly felt left

out. When asked about what she felt as being the most important factor in the improvement of her well-being in school, she said that the over-all well-being of all the pupils would improve the atmosphere at her school and that this would make her feel much better. *The themes appearing here are: some confidence, helplessness, responsibility and lack of control.*

Pupil number two's replies: when asked what he thought his classmates and teachers thought of him, he replied that the teachers like him and think that he is a good boy. On the other hand, he felt that some of his classmates like him while some do not, because he is sometimes troublesome. When he had trouble in school and at home, he said that he turns to the curator at school. *With this pupil, there is conflict in himself in that he believes that some think that he is a good boy while others not.* He added that his friends make it worthwhile at school and he generally liked school very much. He stated that he likes the teachers also and the atmosphere in school is relatively calm. He added "I am most happy when I come to school and I see my friends. I like it a lot". *There is also a trace of denial when it comes to how calm he believes the school is considering that he is sometimes troublesome himself.*

In addition he stated that what makes him upset is when he gets into a row with other schoolmates. He went on to say that, "I run out of the class and out of the school premises when I am angry and I don't usually talk to some one, I just wait till I cool down". *Above, he displays frustration and being unsociable at times.* He added that, if the problem did not go away, he turned to his teachers. He stated that he got bad feelings when he had had an argument with his schoolmates; the teachers were being unjust about something or when he gets bad grades. *Here one can detect some aggression too.* He also added that he is a pupil who got relatively very good grades in almost all the subjects. He felt most secure in the school yard at break-time, because he is usually surrounded by his friends. *There is also a hint of dependency in the statements above.* When asked if he sometimes felt left-out, he replied that he had never felt that way and he could not think of anything that would improve his well-being as everything was perfect as it was and he felt very good and well. *The themes appearing here are: aggression, dependency frustration, unsociable, denial and conflict with self.*

Pupil number three's replies: she stated that her friends and teachers thought that she was a nice and happy girl. When she had problems in school, she turned to the curator. However, the teachers and the pupils were also very nice and positive which in-turn made her like her school very much. She went on to say that the atmosphere at her school was not the best because, it was quite noisy sometimes but that was OK. *In the statements above there is a suggestion of hopelessness, a feeling of lack of control and despair.* When asked when she particularly felt good and happy in school, she replied that she felt that way almost all the time. It was when her friends were sad that she felt sad and down too. She disliked it when her friends were being dishonest and when she got

into a ruffle with other pupils and she turned to the teachers for help. She could not think of what gave her bad feelings except when she did not pass all her tests. She felt secure everywhere at school, in class as well as outside the classroom. She had also never felt left out by other pupils, and when asked what she believed would improve her well-being at school she replied "things are good the way they are now". Generally speaking, she felt good in school. *There is an indication of dependency on friends in school a bit also a tinge of denial as to how good things really are at school. The themes here are: hopelessness, lack of control, dependency and denial.*

Pupil number four's replies: "I have been a little troublesome in the past but since the beginning of this year, things have gotten much better. I do not make trouble during the lessons". This was the statement made by pupil number four. He went on to say that things had gotten better with his friends as well. When he had problems both at home and in school, he turned to the curator at school. He said his friends made him feel good and well at school but he added that sometimes it was actually better at home. He went on to say that it was quite calm at school, but not all the time. Break-time was quite noisy and bothersome. "I don't know how I can describe the atmosphere at school but it is much better now. Other pupils do not make so much trouble with me now". He said. *There is a hint of conflict in him as to how changed he really is now. He shows a feeling of dependency on his friends*

He continued by saying "I am most happy in school when everything is going fine. My grades are good and I have my friends". He added that he usually got sad when he obtained bad grades and then he tended to walk home feeling sad. When asked what made him upset, he stated that when some pupils bothered him and the teachers were being troublesome, he did not appreciate that. When that happened, he tried to calm himself down by being alone keeping to himself, but if that did not help, he would shout back at the person who was troubling him. And after a fight or a row, he usually turned to a teacher that was assigned to him as his mentor for help. *In the statements above the pupil displays a feeling of aggression and a struggle with self against being a bad pupil and friend.*

When asked when it was that he got bad feelings in school, he replied that sometimes he felt that way because it did not always go so well when he played football because, he was not very good at it although he loves the sport. He said it made him sad when his friends criticized him, but it was always over and fine the next day. "Everybody forgets about the game and we become friends again" he said. He also pointed out that he felt safe almost everywhere in the school premises because there was always a teacher and guards around watching that everything went well. When asked when it was that he felt left out, he explained that he usually felt left out during the physical education (sports) lessons because he was not sporty at all. To improve his well-being in school he believed that everyone should try and be friendly and not bother and push others. Finally, he

mentioned that he felt much better now compared to last term when he felt left out almost all the time. *There is a clear display of denial and dependency here too. One can also read a feeling of rejection between the lines from this pupil. The themes here are: conflict within self, dependency, aggression, denial and rejection.*

DISCUSSION

Limitations and Objectivity

It is important as a researcher to be critical to the method used and also to how the analysis has been planned and conducted. Therefore, this study having been researched and analysed by a single researcher, it should be pointed out that the interpretation of the *result analysis* cannot and shall not be regarded as the only possible or correct explanation for the outcome. According to Robson (2004), objectivity is undermined when a single individual carries out a research. Therefore, due to the unavailability of a supporting researcher to re-analyse the work and confirm or provide an alternative *result analysis* and *discussion*, these results should be regarded as being only one of the many possible interpretations.

Result discussion

In the study findings, it can be perceived such that there is an element of the "we" in behaviour of the pupils. This can perhaps be attributed to the fact that these pupils come from a background, which comes natively from collectivistic cultures. The pupils clearly indicate friendship and a close relationship with their teachers to be one of the significant contributing factors to their happiness and well-being in school. Collectivistic societies can be characterized by that the interests of the group outweighs the individual's interests. In his journal, Hernandez states that people give priority to the goals of their in-groups, shape their behaviour primarily on the basis of in-group norms, and behave in a communal way. Individuals define themselves as part of a group more than as unique individuals (Hernandez, 1999). This is the tendency of almost if not all of the pupils that are presented in this study. In her book, Hundeide explains that people who are collectivistic oriented tend to put more weight on the groups goals and needs as being more important than their own needs. Upholding the social norms and duties is seen as being more important than the pleasure and rights of an individual. Opinions and values which are shared by the group are more important than those that try to define and differentiate individuals and finally, one is more predetermined at co-operating with the group's members than to compete with them (Hundeide. 2006). It should be pointed out that this behaviour of peer bonding might occur irrespective of ethnic background.

Although the most of the pupils state that they feel good and appreciate their situations, as they are, the different literature on research findings strongly suggest otherwise. Research findings

point out the different factors such as cultural differences and lack of emotional stability due to the different changes in the child's life as being some but a few of the causes for the negative development of the child (Aronowitz, 1984) The responses that the pupils gave in this study appear somewhat as a façade to show that everything is OK while it may not be the case. For example, the pupils all talk about how good it is at school and how close-knit friends they are but the actual picture they paint reveals that while one feels good someone else is feeling bad. In his book, Ingvar Roth declares that a

> Pupil's self-esteem may become fragile and hollow if he or she clings too tightly to the feats of various illustrious forebears from the ethnic group in question; pupils start to see themselves as charged with acting as kind of guardians of the history of their group. They feel they must guard and protect their ethnic culture's history at all costs, and any attack against the group's 'official' history is thus interpreted as an attack against their individual, personal identity and self-respect (Roth. 1999. p 93)

However, it should be stressed that generally speaking, there is nothing wrong with pupils identifying themselves in a multicultural context in the manner that the pupils in this study are doing. According to Blackwell (2002), investigations into children's understanding of ethnic groups, such as in the case of the pupils in this study, tend to focus on three aspects of children's natural developmental process and these are ethnic awareness, a process in which children tend to familiarize themselves to the ethnic groups of the people they are surrounded by. The next process is ethnic self-identification, which entails a child being comfortable and able to identify itself as belonging to one ethnic group. The third process is the development of ethnic attitudes. In this process, the child learns the norms and attitudes of their ethnic identity group. These stages of development are a natural process (Smith. 2002).

In another study, it is pointed out that the process that teenagers tend to find friendship very important in school can be associated to that they at this stage trying to separate themselves from the control of their parents (Naeslund. 1982)

According to E.H. Erikson, an American psychoanalyst, teenagers are in constant search of their own identity therefore; school friends tend to be the most important support (Naeslund.1982). This process can also be recognized as socialising. Berger states that there has to be a balance in socialising. He points out that "Socialization not only ensures that the individual is 'real' to himself in a certain way, but that he will ongoingly respond to his experiences of the world with the cognitive and emotive patterns appropriate to this reality". He goes on to say that "Self and society are extricably interwoven entities. Their relationship is dialectical because the self, once formed, may act back in its turn upon the society that shaped it" (Cosin. 1997). Consequently, Hernandez asserts, "Immigrant and minority youth may also be prone to low self-esteem as they come to terms

with issues of self-identification" (Hernandez. 1999). However, children spend a lot of time with their friends as some researchers suggest, that this time that they share is very important for establishing and identifying friendships (Smith. 2002).

Hitherto, the result discussion has focused on the pupils' ability to socialize. Hence, following is a look at how the pupils feature in self-esteem and self-efficacy. It is quite obvious that some of the responses from the pupils were mechanical responses meaning that although they could point out what it was that made them feel good or bad, they could not elaborate in which manner these factors or friends influenced them. When some of the pupils were asked to elaborate why it was important for them that their friends get good grades and why their friends' grades affected them one way or another, they failed to do so, admitting that they did not really know why. Mechanical learning is for example, when a pupil masters a word and its meaning, but can not put the word into context, because they do not know how to use the word (Malmberg. 2000). Similarly, these pupils master the concept of friendship, but never really learn the implications of it. It is as if the pupils know the definition of friendship, but lack the understanding of the emotional implications that support friendship.

Finally, with help of the *well-being in school model* factors concerning aspects such as self-esteem and self-efficacy can be analysed by checking and identifying which aspects lack and which ones are present to help determine the pupils 'actual status. From the *school well-being model,* aspects such as *school conditions*, *social relationships* and *means of self-fulfillment* are looked at from the responses of the pupils. The aspect on *health status* is left out because it requires investigations in areas pertaining to health such as psychosomatic symptoms, chronic and other diseases that the pupils might display. This area of study was restricted for this particular study as permission to probe into the pupils' medical history is required at different levels of authority.

Under *school conditions*, the pupils appear indifferent to their surroundings and school environment. There is a clear preference of some subjects but not all. Lessons are appreciated when they are short but sometimes considered boring with the exception of very few subjects. One can also see that the pupils lack self-dependency as well as self-esteem. This allegation can be made from the statements where the pupils say that things would be better for them in school if everybody gets good grades and is happy. Or when they state that they feel happy, well and secure when they are surrounded by their friends. This may be an indication of lack of self-efficacy as well as self-esteem. Hernandez states that in their study of immigrant youth, Padilla and Durán concluded, "immigrant students have very low self-images in general and low appraisals of their intellectual, physical, or social attributes" (Hernandez. 1999)

For *social relationships*, the pupils state that they have friends that they get along with and that although there maybe some trouble between the friends, they are quickly resolved and things

get back to normal. There is a sense of gang building going on in both schools. The pupils identify their groups of friends and tend to stay away from other groups, which are perceived as making trouble. The teacher student relationship is declared as being good. And bullying is almost looked at as being trivial or non-existent, while every pupil interviewed repeats that there is a tendency by some pupils to make trouble with other pupils. And as positive as communication between the School and the parents appears, this might strain the pupils' well-being. In Hernandez' journal, Kao points out that while these kinds of communications or situations may bring about a sense of empowerment, it can also cause children to feel embarrassed by their parents that may be unable to function in that particular society or adult world (Hernandez, 1999).

Furthermore, socialization, development and assimilation generally tend to overlap each other. This happens to all immigrant children in any situation. This makes the rocky road to adolescence even rockier for immigrant children. This is the case as their development is more different than that of the native-born children. This causes an inherent tension in the adjustment process of the immigrant adolescents as they strive to be accepted by the majority of population and at the same time coping with socializing factors in their families and neighbourhoods, who either wish to dissuade the assimilation process, which is accentuate by adolescent rebellion and acting out, or it is facilitated through the neighbourhood influence of peers. The result of this tension varies depending on the ethnic background of the immigrant adolescent.

Looking at *means for self-fulfillment*, there is the presence of guidance and encouragement from the parents. The pupils do not feel that they have any sort of influence in the schools decision-making. This can be assumed because the pupils state that they hope things would change in one way or the other for their own good yet fail to describe the changes they hope to come. There is a clear lack of individual happiness where they can feel that it is OK to get good grades even when the friends get bad grades. And motivation is very minimal, for example when they mention that they know that is they just studied a bit more, their grades would improve in all the subjects. In offering an explanation, Padilla and Durán write that immigrant youth may have a lessened feeling of self-efficacy because adapting to a new culture and customs can produce the feeling of helplessness. Furthermore, they may also feel that immigrant or minority status lowers the discernment of control over the direction of ones own life.

Methodological discussion

Like all interviews, they have theirs good sides and their bad sides too. The good sides being when the interviewee replies without much prompting, and the bad side being when they are reluctant to answer questions believing that they have already answered a similar question, thereby referring back to an answer which they gave earlier. During interviews for this study, on more than one

occasion, the pupils did try to meander and contradicted themselves in their responses giving one opinion such as, "our school is very nice, everybody knows everybody and everybody is friendly to each other", and then later stating that they dislike it at school when the situation is troublesome and they are upset by some pupils that bully and mistreat other pupils. Under such circumstances one tries to point out the contradiction in order to understand what the respondent really means. This situation of the respondent contradicting him or herself and meandering about the point is not easy to deal with for the interviewer, without embarrassing or annoying the respondent. Therefore, it helped to be prepared for such occurrences and have stand-by questions or statements that could be used without putting the respondent in the spotlight.

The biggest set back for this study was a technical one by nature in that, due to the many school holidays in the Spring-term, pupils in the eighth grade going away from school for their career-practice and also that only a limited number of schools as well as pupils were willing to participate in this study, there was a shortage of time to carry out the interviews. Therefore, for further studies my suggestion would be to carry out the study during the autumn school-term. In future studies, it would also be worthwhile to conduct the interviews over a period of few days rather than just an hour or minutes. If this is possible, then only a few semi-structured thematic questions would be sufficient to explore the feelings of the pupils. At the same time, the researcher would get the opportunity to develop a trusting relationship between him or her and the pupils, enabling them to open up their inner true feelings to the researcher.

Although the aim was to be objective when analysing the interview transcriptions, and avoid relating the pupils' answers in a stereotypical context, it can not be excluded that there might be an essence of stereotyping or biasness when researching issues or phenomena which the researcher can directly relate to. It is an unavoidable act that the application of stereotypes often is an implicit and automatic process (Kunda, 1999) by which one is not always aware of; it is most likely that one applies stereotypes to assist one's reasoning without conscious intentions of doing so.

Therefore, pairing of the researchers in that one may be directly related to the phenomena while another researcher not at all related to the phenomenon being studied would bring to light another angle that might be overlooked by someone related to the phenomenon. Another suggestion is that it would actually be worth while to include the *health status* for the pupils if one is really to find out the well-being of the pupil because it is obvious that it would be easy to analyse and determine the true feelings of the pupils by combining the three aspects looked at in this study as well as the health status part. And finally, another area that would have gained from the researchers working in a pair is the aspect of language. According to Robinson, shortcomings and barriers in carrying out this research for a novice may be the specialized vocabulary that is required in expressing oneself (Robson, 2004). For that reason, two heads are better than one.

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Till …………………………………………….Målsman.   Klass………………….

Skola………………………………………………………………..

Mitt namn är Bessie Regenhardt, jag studerar på Lunds Universitet och ska skriva en uppsats på kandidatexamens nivå i forskningsmetodik. Det är av stort värde för studien, i fall ni ger ert barn tillåtelse att medverka i min undersökning, om elevernas välmående och lärande i skolan. Undersökningen kommer att inne/omfatta en intervju på ca 15 minuter i vilken ert barn kommer att svåra på korta öppna frågor om hur hon/han mår i skolan och om sitt lärande. Med en sådan undersökning får eleverna tillfälle att uttrycka sina åsikter och känslor om sin skola.

Skolans rektor har gett mig tillstånd att göra undersökningen, och informationen som eleverna kommer att lämna är sekretessbelagd. Detta betyder att elevernas namn eller personliga uppgifter inte får tas med i uppsatsen eller någon annanstans. Allt som kommer att nämnas är vad eleverna tycker angående sitt välmående och lärande på skolan.

Min handledare är Ingegerd Carlsson, professor, Lunds Universitet.

Underskrift…………………………….. Ort………………. Datum……………

Tfn: 040-84687   mobil: 0704-300056.

Vi tackar er för ert samarbete.

_____

Jag tillåter att mitt barn deltar i undersökning. Kryssa här………

Jag tillåter inte att mitt barn deltar i undersökning. Kryssa här……….

Målmans underskrift…………………………………………… 2006/………/…….

Intervju frågor

Välmående:

1. Vad tror du att dina lärare och skolkamrater tycker om dig i skolan?

2. Om du hade problem hemma eller i skolan finns det någon som du kan vända dig till i skolan?

3. Vad får dig att mår bra i skolan?

4. Beskriv hur du känner för din skola.

5. Hur skulle du beskriva stämningen i din skola?

6. När känner du dig glad i skolan?

7. Vad får dig att vara ledsen i skolan?

8. Vad får dig att vara arg i skolan?

9. Vad gör du när du känner dig arg, ledsen, rädd eller besviken?

10. Vem vänder du dig till efter bråk eller slagsmål?

11. Berätta lite om när du har dåliga känslor om skolan och när du har bra känslor.

12. Var i skolan känner du dig trygg?

13. När känner du dig utanför?

14. Ange någonting som du tror är viktigt för att kunna förbättra hur du mår i skolan?

15. Hur mår du i skolan?

16. Beskriv hur det är på rasterna och vad ni brukar göra.

Om lärande:

1. Beskriv vad du tycker om lektionerna i din skola.

2. Vad är ditt favoritämne och varför?

3. Beskriv din inlärnings/studieteknik, (hur du lär dig) i språkämnena resp. de övriga ämnena.

4. Om du skulle få problem med ditt lärande, vem skulle du vända dig till?

5. Berätta lite om samarbete eller kontakt mellan skolan och dina föräldrar.

6. Ange någonting som du tror är viktigt för att kunna förbättra ditt lärande i skolan.

7. När är det roligt i skolan?

8. Förekommer det att du skolkar, om ja varför?

9. Hur går det för dig i de olika ämnena om man jämför dem?

10. Vilka ämnen tycker du att du är bäst i?

11. Vilka ämnen är du inte lika bra i?

12. Berätta lite om vad dina föräldrar tycker i fall det är viktigt att får bra betyg.