LEISURE BOREDOM

AND

RISK BEHAVIOUR IN ADOLESCENCE

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Table of Contents

Chapter Five

Through the lens of a peer: understanding leisure boredom and risk behaviour in free time

List of Tables **Page**

List of Figures **Page**

Abstract

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Leisure boredom and risk behaviour in adolescence

There has been very little research investigating leisure boredom and risk behaviour among adolescents in South Africa. The purpose of the research reported in this thesis was to investigate how adolescents experience leisure and boredom in their free time, and how this is associated with risk behaviour – specifically substance use, sexual risk behaviour and premature school leaving (dropout). The thesis comprises five inter-related studies. Firstly, a systematic review of the literature was conducted to synthesise current knowledge within the field of leisure boredom and risk behaviour among adolescents. A striking finding was how few studies have focussed on leisure boredom and risk behaviour in adolescents, particularly in the developing world where previous research in this regard has been seriously lacking. Secondly, the psychometric properties of the Leisure Boredom Scale for use with adolescents in South Africa were determined. The results provided support for the reliability of the LBS, demonstrating satisfactory test-retest reliability and internal consistency. Thirdly, leisure boredom as a predictor of risk behaviour – specifically school dropout – was investigated. Findings showed that leisure boredom is a predictor of dropout among older learners in the grade 8 cohort that was sampled. Fourthly, adolescents' perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in free time were documented using visual imagery (photographs). The results show that leisure is an occupational concern for adolescents living in socially impoverished environments, due to the occupational deprivation and imbalance occurring within their free time, which results in feelings of boredom. Fifthly, the extent to which a school-based intervention – developed in a Western context and which addressed leisure boredom and risk behaviour – could be adapted for a low socio-economic area in South Africa was determined. This study found that the adaptation process cannot be accomplished in one step by programme developers working alone, and that new school-

based programmes need to be field tested and be open to feedback from educators, administrators, and learners. In conclusion, the thesis focuses attention on leisure boredom as a factor contributing to risk behaviour in adolescents. It shows the importance of promoting positive use of free and leisure time, and enabling adolescents to deal with boredom. Building knowledge in this area is useful for individuals and organisations concerned with adolescent health, education and development. Ultimately this research contributes to the strategic development of health, school and community policies, resources and interventions for adolescent leisure and recreation, as part of the effort to reduce risk behaviour among adolescents.

Keywords: Adolescence, boredom, leisure, risk behaviour, South Africa.

Executive summary

Despite risk behaviour in adolescents being a major concern, prior to the work described in this thesis, very little research has investigated the associations between leisure boredom and risk behaviour among South African adolescents. Therefore, the purpose of the research was to investigate how adolescents experience leisure boredom in their free time, and how this is associated with risk behaviour – specifically substance use, sexual risk behaviour and premature school leaving (dropout). The aims of the research were to:

1. Conduct a systematic review of the literature concerning leisure boredom and risk behaviour in adolescence.
2. Establish the psychometric properties of the Leisure Boredom Scale for use with adolescents in South Africa.
3. Determine whether leisure boredom is a predictor of risk behaviour, specifically school dropout.
4. Understand adolescents' perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in free time.
5. Investigate the process of cultural adaptation of a school-based intervention addressing leisure boredom and risk behaviour, which was developed in a Western context. Also, to determine stakeholders' perceptions of the intervention's usefulness.

In order to investigate the situation in a comprehensive, multi-faceted manner, these aims were addressed individually in five inter-related studies. Firstly, a systematic review of the literature was conducted in the field of leisure boredom and adolescent risk behaviour to conceptualise past and current topics, trends, debates and issues. The review of literature revealed a distinct paucity of research about adolescent leisure boredom and risk behaviour within the developing world, and provided the rationale for conducting the thesis.

Because of the lack of research into leisure boredom in the South African context, there were no existing measurements with established psychometric properties for South African populations. Therefore, in order to measure leisure boredom it was necessary to identify a scale and establish its psychometric properties for use with South African adolescents. The Leisure Boredom Scale (LBS) (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990) was selected as the most appropriate scale to measure leisure boredom. The results of the reliability tests provided support for the reliability of the LBS, and indicated that the scale had satisfactory test-retest reliability and internal consistency when used to document perceptions of leisure boredom among high school learners in Cape Town.

As early-school leaving is such a critical problem in South Africa, a prospective cohort study was conducted to establish whether leisure boredom was a predictor of school dropout. This is the first study in the world to investigate leisure boredom and high school dropout using a longitudinal design. The study showed that leisure boredom was a predictor of dropout among the older cohort of eighth grade students. These students are known be at higher risk for dropout, and the level of boredom in this higher risk group can be used to identify students who are more likely to drop out during the following years of school. In the younger stratum of this cohort, leisure boredom was not a significant predictor of dropout. The study indicates that leisure boredom is a factor contributing to high school dropout.

As shown by the preceding study, leisure boredom is being experienced by young South Africans and can clearly influence aspects of their lives. But once again, no previous research in South Africa had investigated adolescents' perceptions of leisure, their experiences of boredom in free time, and their views about how risk behaviour is associated with leisure and boredom. Hence, a qualitative study was conducted to investigate adolescents' perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour by documenting their experiences during free time. This was done through the use of photographs taken by the participants themselves, as well as focus groups. Part one of this study which entailed the photography was done in 2001 when this method of qualitative data gathering was original and innovative.

In recent years photo-imagery has gained popularity and has begun to be used much more frequently in qualitative research. The study showed that this group of adolescents (which included dropouts) perceived that they were bored in their free time mainly because they had nothing to do. The low socio-economic environment in which they lived contributed to occupational deprivation and imbalance in their free time, maintaining or 'trapping' the adolescents within the situation and contributing to feelings of boredom. The result was that they spent large periods of time hanging out on street corners or in backyards, which provided some form of diversion because it allowed them to socialise, but inevitably this pursuit led to boredom. The young people perceived boredom as being part of life, although it was 'dangerous' because it very often led to risky behaviour (or negative leisure pursuits).

The final study dealt with a school-based intervention that aimed to reduce risk behaviour among adolescents by promoting positive use of free time and leisure. Due to the lack of evaluation research in developing countries, programmers have to rely on model interventions developed and evaluated elsewhere (UNAIDS Best Practice Collection, 1997). The question is, to what extent can programmes developed in a Western context be adapted for a developing world context? This qualitative process evaluation study documented the adaptation of an intervention based on American content, for a low socio-economic context in Cape Town, South Africa, and determined stakeholders' perceptions of the programme's usefulness. Finally, the introduction of a new category of community worker – the youth development specialist – was found to be a useful facilitator of school-community partnerships or relationships through leisure-focused after-school activities and interventions. The conclusion was that programmes can be adapted successfully provided that local culture and context inform the adaptation. A participatory approach involving stakeholders in the adaptation ensured ownership and investment in the programme, which was important for sustainability. Regarding fidelity, educators were committed to implementing the programme as planned. However, in practice this was not always possible and resulted in feelings of stress.

The study concluded that researchers need to find a balance between fidelity of implementation and programme adaptation in order to obtain effective programmes that are culturally acceptable to local consumers.

The following recommendations were made based on the research findings of the five studies:

- Promote adolescent health and development through raising leisure awareness, and by promoting exploration and participation in various leisure pursuits.
- Develop leisure programmes within communities and schools using strategies that facilitate these programmes such as youth-adult partnerships. Principles for the development of leisure programmes include creating and sustaining opportunities; making resources accessible, affordable, available and safe; raising awareness; strengthening existing initiatives, and networking.
- Reorientation of sectors or services, with specific attention to education (through the health promoting schools approach although there are other methods) and health (reorientation of occupational therapy services).
- Promoting leisure at the level of local and national government; policy development regarding leisure; the involvement of media and business in leisure-related issues; and supporting research and development in leisure.
- Recommendations for future research include establishing the reliability for use with South African adolescents of more leisure-related measures; investigating leisure boredom as a predictor of other forms of risk behaviour; investigating associations between leisure boredom and risk behaviour among various groups of adolescents, for example, adolescents who have dropped out of school, those in substance abuse centres, and those confined to delinquency centres; using participatory action research methods with youth as co-researchers to further investigate adolescents' experiences of risk behaviour during leisure and free time; determining the parameters of the role, and the value of a new category of community worker – the youth development specialist with a focus on leisure; conducting cross-cultural comparisons of leisure boredom and other factors of the leisure experience such as motivation; and

investigating the development, implementation and evaluation of leisure promotion and education programmes in schools and communities.

In conclusion, the thesis focuses attention on leisure boredom as a factor contributing to risk behaviour in adolescents. It shows the importance of promoting positive use of free and leisure time, and enabling adolescents to deal with boredom. Building knowledge in this area is useful for individuals and organisations concerned with adolescent health, education and development. Ultimately this research contributes to the strategic development of health, school and community policies, resources and interventions for adolescent leisure and recreation, in the effort to reduce risk behaviour among adolescents.

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Preface

With the guidance of my supervisor Prof. Alan J. Flisher, the thesis reflects my own work in terms of conceptualisation, execution and reporting of the research. This is the culmination of many years of work in the field of leisure and risk behaviour in adolescence. During this time I have been fortunate to work collaboratively with colleagues from a variety of disciplines. I have learned a great deal from all of these people, and my work has been enriched as a result. I would like to acknowledge their involvement and specific input on aspects of the work presented in the thesis, some of which has been published in the following papers:

Wegner, L., Flisher, A.J., Muller, M. & Lombard, C. (2002). Reliability of the Leisure Boredom Scale for use with high school students in Cape Town. *Journal of Leisure Research,* 34, 340-350.

Wegner, L., Flisher, A.J., Chikobvu, P., Lombard, C. & King, G. (2008). Leisure boredom and high school dropout in Cape Town, South Africa. *Journal of Adolescence,* 31, 421-431.

Wegner, L., Flisher, A.J., Caldwell, L., Vergnani, T. & Smith, E. (2007). HealthWise South Africa: Cultural Adaptation of a School-Based Risk Prevention Program. *Health Education Research.* doi: 10.1093/her/cym064.

Dr. Carl Lombard was the statistical consultant for the studies presented in chapters 3 and 4. Martie Muller (chapter 3) and Dr. Perpetual Chikobvu (chapter 4) performed the statistical tests under the supervision of Dr. Lombard. All three statisticians provided invaluable assistance with the interpretation and reporting of the statistical results.

Dr. Gary King advised and commented on the discussion of the study presented in chapter 4.

Dr. Edward Smith and Dr. Linda Caldwell were Principle Investigator and Co-Principal Investigator (respectively) of the HealthWise pilot study referred to in chapter 6. Dr. Smith, Dr. Caldwell and Prof. Tania Vergnani provided guidance with respect to the design of the process evaluation and the methods employed, and commented on the findings of the study presented in chapter 6.

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I dedicate this work to Mom, Dad, Alex and Daniel.

Through you I have discovered the world.

Declaration

Leisure Boredom and Risk Behaviour in Adolescence

I hereby:

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The thesis has been presented by me for examination for the degree of PhD.

Chapter One

Introduction

> The human capacity for being bored, rather than man's social and natural needs, lies at the root of man's cultural advance.
>
> (Ralph Linton)

1.1 Introduction

Adolescence can be a challenging period of life as young people make the transition from childhood to adulthood. Becoming an adult member of society and establishing an identity means internalising roles and values, and adopting behaviours and activities that enable individuals to define who they are in life. Adolescence – which for the purpose of the thesis is defined as the period of human development from 13 to 19 years – is a critical time for the process of identity creation and the assumption of adulthood. This occurs by means of exploration, experimentation and discovery as the adolescent strives to achieve greater awareness and understanding of self, others and society. The process necessitates participation in activities and experiences that enable adolescents to evaluate their decisions, actions and behaviour, and influences how they proceed in life. Many factors affect the process including parents, family, school, peers, and the environment or community in which the adolescent lives and spends time.

Factors that protect adolescents or place them at risk as they negotiate the complex process of forming their identity, are of interest to anyone concerned with adolescent development, health and well-being. One factor – or dimension – of human experience that is receiving greater attention, is leisure. The developmental benefits for adolescents who engage in positive, healthy leisure pursuits have been well-documented (Caldwell, 2005a). Leisure affords adolescents opportunities for emotional expression, social interaction, relationship-building, physical movement and the development of skills such as decision-making, assertiveness, planning, problem-solving and social skills. However, leisure can also provide a context (time, place and space) for negative, unhealthy, or risky experiences, activities and behaviours such as substance use, violent or delinquent activities, isolation, inactivity, depression, stress and boredom.

In the developed world, boredom in leisure time – or leisure boredom – has been associated with risk behaviour in adolescents (Caldwell & Smith, 1994; Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991). However, in developing countries such as South Africa there is a distinct paucity of research in this field, despite the concerning prevalence of risk behaviours among young people. South Africa has a unique historical, political, socio-economic and cultural context. It should not be assumed that research findings from studies carried out in developed countries can be generalised to people living within the context of a developing country. It is vital that research be undertaken to better understand the local situation and establish culturally-relevant programmes, interventions, services and policies to meet the needs of the South African population.

Risk behaviour among young South Africans is a concern that requires the full attention of those involved in adolescent health, education and research. I have both a professional and a personal interest in adolescent health. As an occupational therapist and an educator, I have worked in the field of adolescent and youth mental health and education for the past twenty years. I am also the parent of three teenagers. My experience as such provides me with a solid experiential and knowledge base from which my research, which focuses on leisure boredom and risk behaviour among South African adolescents, has emerged.

Despite the lack of research in this area, it is interesting to note that the media often alludes to the potential association between boredom and risk behaviour. For example, a report in The Star newspaper ("Dead end line", 2007) about 'train-surfing' – or the practice among township youths of standing on roofs of moving commuter trains and ducking overhead cables and bridges – cited having 'nothing to do in the townships' as a reason for this very risky behaviour that occurs predominantly among poor boys from dysfunctional families. Because of the high levels of poverty, social disorganisation and disadvantage in many parts of South African society, I feel that it is relevant and appropriate to be particularly concerned with adolescents living in economically-deprived, urban areas of the country.

The thesis deals with the intersection of three constructs relating to adolescent health and well-being: (1) leisure, (2) risk behaviour, and (3) boredom (Figure 1.1), which are considered within the dynamic context of the environment.

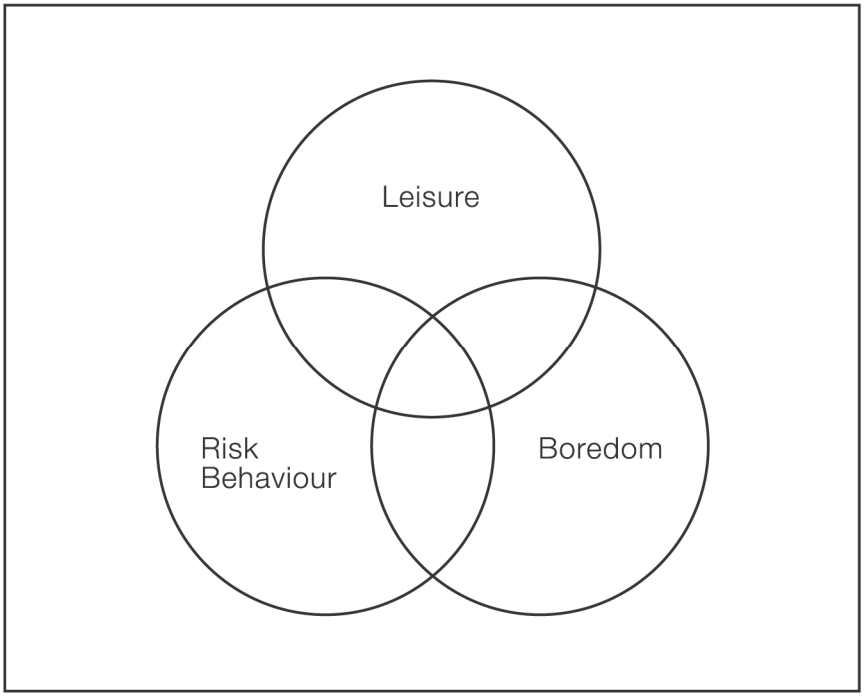


Figure 1.1 Focus of thesis - leisure, risk behaviour and boredom

In this chapter, each construct is discussed separately – leisure (Figure 1.2), risk behaviour (Figure 1.3), boredom (Figure 1.4); and then in relation to the other constructs - leisure and risk behaviour (Figure 1.5), risk behaviour and boredom (Figure 1.6), and leisure and boredom (Figure 1.7). The focus of the thesis is on the intersection of all three constructs – leisure boredom and risk behaviour (Figure 1.8).

1.2 Leisure

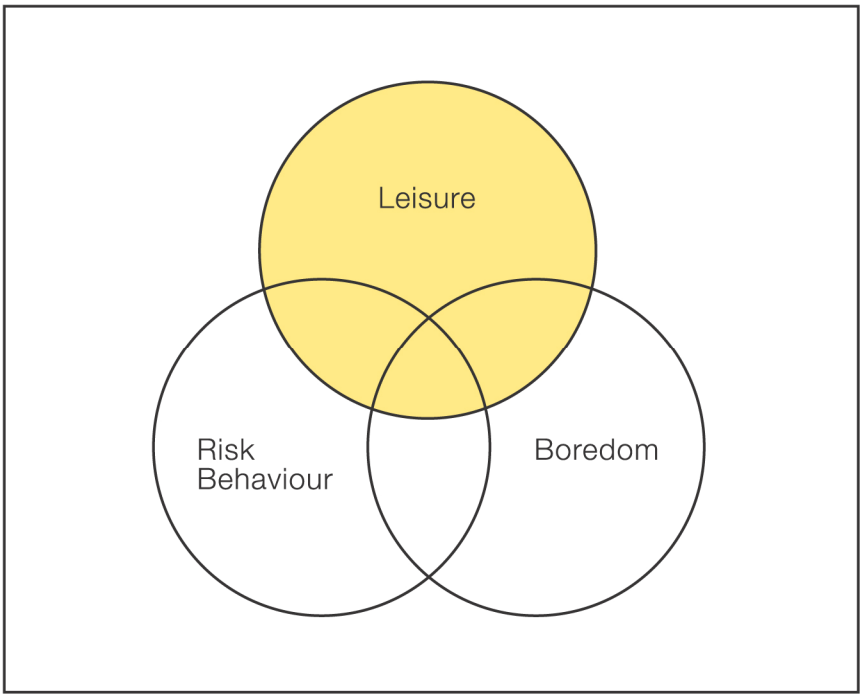


Figure 1.2 The leisure construct

1.2.1 Defining leisure

Leisure is not an easily definable construct. This can, in part, be attributed to the subjective nature of leisure; what one adolescent regards as a leisure pursuit – computer programming for example – may be perceived as school work by another individual.

Leisure is a multi-faceted construct, which is influenced by factors such as culture, society, gender and the environment. Therefore, in order to understand leisure, one should examine the construct from different perspectives. In the section below, I define and discuss leisure as: (1) time, (2) activity, and (3) subjective meaning.

1.2.1.1 Leisure as time

It is important to distinguish between leisure and free time, as often, these concepts are used interchangeably. The concepts are related, yet are quite distinct from one another. Free time occupies a broader domain than leisure, and refers to time that is free of obligatory activities. It is that time when the adolescent is not engaged in schoolwork, homework, remunerated work or chores. Leisure can be regarded as being 'nested' within the domain of free time, and leisure pursuits and activities usually occur within free time. I view leisure as the purposeful and intentional use of free time to engage in meaningful, enjoyable, fun activities or experiences. Although in this thesis I refer specifically to leisure, the implication is that free time is directly connected to leisure as it is the time in which leisure occurs.

Relative to most working adults, adolescents generally have more free time available for leisure, although this varies depending on the socio-cultural context. A review of time-use studies among children and adolescents reported differences in the amount of available free time, which was defined as waking time remaining after labour and schoolwork that was spent in discretionary leisure activities (Larson & Verma, 1999). The review found that in nearly all non-industrial populations (rural Bangladesh, India, Nepal and Kenya) boys have more free time than girls who spend more time in household labour; whereas in literate post-industrial populations (North America, Europe and Asia) the gender differences in free time are less apparent. According to the review, in the United States approximately 50% of adolescents' waking hours are available for discretionary free time pursuits, with European adolescents having similar or slightly less free time; compared with East Asian adolescents who devote most of their time to schoolwork leaving approximately 25% of their waking hours for free time.

There is very little information regarding time-use among adolescents in Africa. The previously mentioned review by Larson and Verma (1999) included only three studies (that are now fairly outdated) that were conducted in Africa – two in Kenya (Ayieko, 1989; Whiting & Edwards, 1988) and one in Botswana (Mueller, 1984). Møller (1991) conducted a nationwide survey in the late 1980's of the leisure prospects of 1200 black South African youths aged 16 to 24 years living in urban township[1] areas. She found that approximately one-third of their time was spent sleeping, one-third was spent working or at school, and one-third was free time (including obligatory domestic duties and leisure). A more recent study revealed that Nigerian adolescents have 20 hours a week available for leisure pursuits (Ayoade, 2006). Apart from the amount of free time available, it is important to look at how this free time is used. Kaufman, Clark, Manzini and May (2002) carried out a time-use study of 3052 adolescents in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. The authors defined hanging out as "… doing nothing, hanging out at the mall or street corner, or going to bars or parties" (Kaufman et al., p. 14) and found that black and Indian boys spent more time hanging out (12% and 9% of daily time respectively) than white boys (5%).

Social control mechanisms influence the utilisation of time. Girls often have less free time than boys, as they spend more time in obligatory activities such as cooking, cleaning and caring for younger children (Larson & Verma, 1999; Møller, 1991; Shaw, Kleiber & Caldwell, 1995), more time at school and doing homework (Shaw, Caldwell & Kleiber, 1996), and performing unpaid work (Kaufman et al., 2002). This means that girls have less free time available for leisure activities than boys and fewer opportunities to socialise with friends. In addition, female students tended to experience more time stress than male students (in other words, girls felt they had too many things to do and not enough time to do them), reported less choice in their discretionary activities and felt pressure from parents, friends and boyfriends to participate in certain activities (Shaw et al., 1996).

[1] 'Township' is the term used to indicate areas that were set aside for black and coloured people by the government prior to 1994, as a result of the Group Areas Act.

The environment influences the utilisation of free time and leisure engagement. Young women in rural Australia reported feeling bored during their free time as few community recreation resources catered to their interests, and there was nothing for them to do (Jones, 1992). Many South African schools – particularly those situated in economically deprived areas – do not offer structured after-school programmes and extra-curricular activities. This means that many adolescents have large amounts of unstructured free time with very little to do during the afternoons and over weekends. A media report in the Cape Argus ("Risk to 'bored' children", 2004) described how young people in Mitchells Plain (near Cape Town) became involved in gangs as a means of creating excitement, due to the lack of entertaining, worthwhile things to do in the area.

From the above discussion, it is important to note that although adolescents generally have more free time available for leisure pursuits, there is the potential for problems to arise if this time is not used productively (for whatever reason). Therefore, the manner in which free time is utilised for engagement in leisure activities is important. Furthermore, factors such as gender and the environment influence the utilisation of free time.

1.2.1.2 Leisure as activity

It is difficult to define a particular activity as being 'leisure' due to the subjective meaning that individuals attach to activities. Agnew and Petersen (1989, p. 338) defined leisure as "... any activity so defined by the respondent", and found that some adolescents listed favourite leisure activities not usually thought of as leisure, for example homework and baby-sitting. Thus, the individual's subjective experience of leisure constitutes an acceptable operational measure of leisure. Interestingly, there are definite similarities in popular leisure activities among South African adolescents and their peers from elsewhere in the world. South African youths enjoy social interaction and conversation, watching television, listening to the radio and to music, and sporting activities (Barnard & Alers, 1996; Møller, 1991; South African National Youth Survey, 2000). Studies in the developed world found that favourite adolescent leisure activities included socialising with friends, watching television, sports and physical activities, hobbies, and cultural

activities (Chang et al., 1993; Shaw et al., 1995). Socialising is a favourite adolescent leisure activity worldwide (Barnard & Alers, 1996; Møller, 1991; Shaw et al., 1995; Shaw et al., 1996). Therefore, activities that restrict opportunities to socialise may contribute to a negative experience of leisure.

There are instruments available that measure adolescents' participation and interest in leisure pursuits. Passmore and French (2001) developed a measure to assess adolescents' participation in leisure activities. The authors used focus groups with young people in Australia (n=130, age range 12 – 18 years) to devise a typology of leisure pursuits based on reasons for involvement rather than activity type, which included achievement leisure (demanding, often competitive, providing personal challenge, for example, sports, playing a musical instrument, hobbies), social leisure (being in the company of other people, particularly peers) and time-out leisure (undemanding, relaxing, a way to pass time, for example, listening to music, watching television, lying in bed). The measure was administered to Australian youths aged 12 to 18 years (n=850), and demonstrated construct and content validity, and internal reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .74) (Passmore & French, 2001). The Adolescent Leisure Interest Profile (ALIP) is an 86-item measure of adolescent leisure activity interest, leisure participation, and feelings about leisure, and was reported as having good reliability (Cronbach's alpha = .92) (Henry, 1998).

1.2.1.3 Leisure as subjective meaning

The most useful way to understand leisure is to consider the meaning that the individual attributes to his/her leisure experience. Common characteristics that define leisure in terms of the meaning of the experience are that leisure pursuits are subjectively experienced by the individual as being freely chosen for enjoyment, pleasure and relaxation, are free from external constraints, have low work-relation, and are intrinsically motivating (Bundy, 1993; Cynkin, 1979; Iso-Ahola, 1979; Møller, 1991; Roberts, 1983; Tinsley, Hinson, Tinsley & Holt, 1993). Intrinsic motivation refers to feelings of self-determination and competence achieved when leisure activities are satisfying (Weissinger, Caldwell & Bandalos, 1992).

1.2.1.4 Definition of leisure for thesis

Considering the above discussion, for the purpose of this thesis leisure has been defined as follows:

> *Leisure is the purposeful and intentional use of free time to engage in self-selected and self-directed activities and experiences that are meaningful and intrinsically motivating to the individual in that they are enjoyable, fun, refreshing and pleasurable.*

1.2.2 Leisure outcomes and adolescent development

Leisure is one dimension of human experience that provides adolescents with opportunities for healthy development, occupational enrichment and positive experiences, which may not be afforded through other aspects of their lives. However, the value of leisure may be overlooked as schools and families focus on academic achievement and sporting prowess.

Leisure provides a context for the achievement of positive developmental outcomes, by offering adolescents opportunities to explore new roles and interests, develop positive relationships and social skills, experience autonomy and develop competence. According to Caldwell (2005a, p. 172), "… recreation contributes to youth development when the right elements of context, activity, and experience exist". Factors contributing to positive outcomes include (among others) opportunities to access resources, taking part in high-yield activities (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992) which allow for creative engagement with the environment, are goal-oriented and offer appropriate challenges, and where the experience is positive. Hiking and photography are examples of high-yield activities, as opposed to low-yield activities such as watching television and hanging out. When these elements combine optimally, leisure engagement "… provides for self-determined behaviour, supports intrinsic motivation and interest development,

increases ability to experience positive emotions and self-regulate emotions, facilitates decision-making and planning skills, increases interaction with peers, adults and the community in meaningful ways, and contributes to identity development" (Caldwell, 2005a, p. 189). There is empirical evidence of the developmental benefits for young people of leisure activities which are interesting and satisfying, and which involve challenge, effort and involvement (Carlini-Cotrim & de Carvalho, 1993; Coleman & Iso-Ahola, 1993; Kleiber, Larson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1986; Møller, 1991), and for the role of leisure in perceived physical, mental and social health and life satisfaction (Caldwell, Smith & Weissinger, 1992). Hunter and Csikszentmihalyi (2003) compared adolescents (n=207) who were interested (experienced stimulation, enthusiasm and pleasure) with those who were bored (experienced apathy), and found that interested adolescents were significantly more likely to have higher self-esteem, locus of control, and optimism, and viewed themselves as "… effective agents in the world" (p. 33).

However, leisure can also result in negative outcomes and destructive behaviours. When the elements of context, activity and experience are less than optimal, the likelihood of negative outcomes may be higher and various forms of risk behaviour may occur including substance use, boredom, inactivity, isolation, stress, anxiety and overeating. Barriers or constraints to leisure engagement often contribute to negative leisure experiences by making it difficult, or even preventing adolescents from taking part in desired leisure pursuits.

1.2.3 Barriers to leisure engagement

Ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1992, 1995) proposes four nested systems in which development occurs: (1) the microsystem – the layer closest to the adolescent containing the structures with which the adolescent has direct contact such as family, school and local community, which includes relationships and interactions with immediate surroundings; (2) the mesosystem – this layer includes connections between structures of the microsystem; (3) the exosystem – the larger social system or external

environment which indirectly influences development; and, (4) the macrosystem – the larger socio-cultural context such as culture, politics, values, customs and laws which have a cascading effect on the interactions of the other systems.

From an ecological system perspective, barriers or constraints to leisure engagement may be apparent in all layers of the system. Examples of barriers include a lack of parental awareness about the value of leisure as a means to promote adolescent development (microsystem), schools not offering extra-curricular leisure programmes and operating in isolation from local community leisure resources (mesosystem), unsafe and/or expensive public transportation preventing access to certain leisure pursuits (exosystem), and cultural beliefs effecting leisure engagement (macrosystem).

Caldwell and Baldwin (2005) examined constraints to adolescent leisure from a developmental perspective based on an ecological model. They proposed that personal and environmental factors interact in a reciprocal fashion on the adolescent's selection of leisure activities, perception and negotiation of leisure constraints. Therefore, factors such as age, developmental stage, motivation and environment all play a role in the adolescent's leisure engagement. Early adolescence is not only a time of rapid physical change, but also marks the beginning of high school which requires that adolescents deal with a multitude of new experiences and challenges. The Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development (1992) found that participation in structured activities such as after-school programs and sports tended to drop at about the age of 13 years. Others have noted a general decrease in physical activity after 13 years of age, most notably among girls (Gordon-Larsen, McMurray & Popkin, 2000). Because of their age, younger adolescents might be faced with leisure constraints such as restricted independence due to lack of available transportation (McMeeking & Purkayastha, 1995) and greater parental monitoring (Caldwell & Darling, 1999). Results of an Australian study indicated that in rural areas younger adolescents experienced greater leisure boredom than older adolescents because there was not enough to do (Gordon & Caltabiano, 1996).

In the context of South Africa, barriers and constraints to leisure engagement might be more apparent in lower income or economically deprived parts of the country due to under-resourcing and financial constraints. A needs analysis of recreational and leisure resources for adolescents in Mitchells Plain (a low income suburb near Cape Town) identified barriers such as limited recreation centres and leisure resources in the community, lack of youth awareness about existing resources, safety concerns, prohibitive costs, limited funding for projects, transport difficulties, lack of skilled staff and limited parental and teacher involvement in leisure pursuits (Evans & September, 2004). Furthermore, the authors found that community recreation centres tended to focus more on meeting basic needs such as feeding schemes and homework supervision sessions rather than on establishing leisure programmes – apart from occasional holiday programmes which were mostly sports-oriented, or outings to the beach.

1.3 Risk behaviour

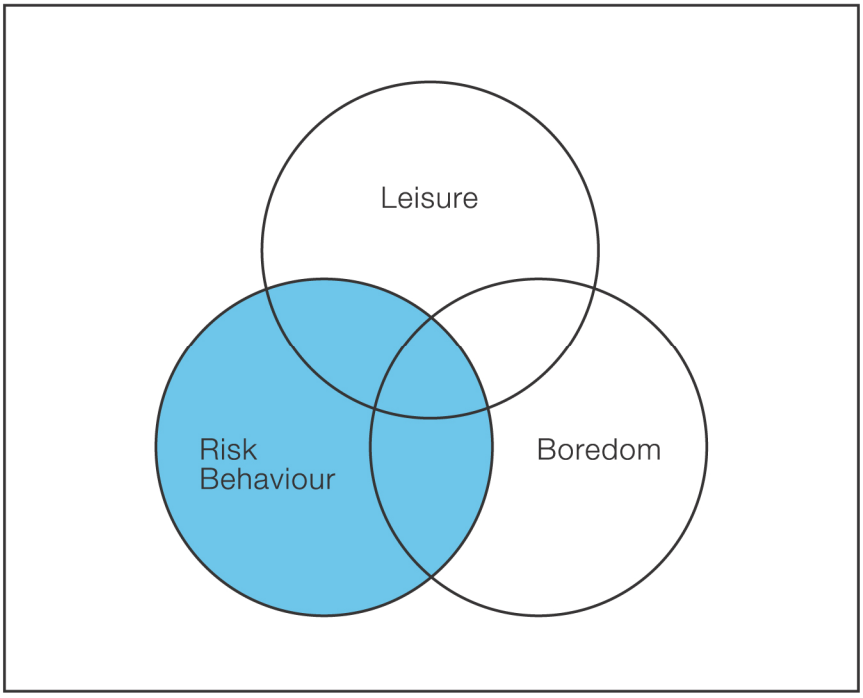


Figure 1.3 The risk behaviour construct

1.3.1 Risk behaviour among adolescents

A major public health concern in South Africa is risk behaviour among adolescents, who make up 21% of the country's total population (Statistics South Africa, 2006). There is a need for more research about adolescent risk behaviour because of the threat to personal health and well being, as well as the demands placed on health, welfare and education systems that have implications for society and the economy in general. Risk behaviour is monitored through various surveys, both national (for example, Reddy et al., 2003; Shisana et al., 2005) and local (for example, Flisher, Mathews, Mukoma & Lombard, 2006). Although there are many forms of risk behaviour, (and it is beyond the scope of this thesis to present the details), I have focused on school dropout (chapters 4 and 5), substance use and sexual risk behaviour (chapters 5 and 6). The prevalence of these risk behaviours is given in the following sections, and reveals the extent of the problem. Arguably, in South Africa these risk behaviours currently pose a great threat to adolescent health, wellness and development.

From an occupational therapy perspective, occupational risk factors such as deprivation and imbalance (Wilcock, 1998) contribute towards placing an adolescent at risk by preventing engagement in healthy and meaningful occupations and activities such as leisure pursuits. In chapter 5, I discuss leisure as an occupation, occupational risk factors, and the influence of the environment. In the thesis, I will argue that boredom in leisure time or leisure boredom should be considered as one of the factors that contribute to adolescent risk behaviour.

1.3.2 Prevalence of substance use

In a national survey of risk behaviour among learners at South African high schools (n=10 699), prevalence rates for ever having used a substance were 49.1% for alcohol, 30.5% for cigarettes, and 12.8% for cannabis (Reddy et al., 2003). A study of public high school learners (n=2930) in Cape Town, South Africa, reported recent (past month)

substance use prevalence rates of 31% for alcohol, 27% for cigarettes, and 7% for cannabis (Flisher, Parry, Evans, Muller & Lombard, 2003). A comparative study of grade 8 learners in Cape Town in 1997 (n=1437) and 2004 (n=6266) revealed significant increases in past month use of cigarettes for males, and marijuana for both males (from 3.1% to 17.2%) and females (from 1.9% to 5.2%) (Flisher et al., 2006). In a study of substance abuse treatment facilities in Cape Town, 81.3% (n=2444) of clients admitted in the previous 20 months were male, and 22.4% (n=670) were less than 20 years old (Myers & Parry, 2003).

1.3.3 Prevalence of sexual risk behaviour and HIV

Regarding sexual risk, 41.1% of learners in a national survey of risk behaviour had ever had sexual intercourse, and 16.4% had been pregnant or made someone pregnant (Reddy et al., 2003). In Cape Town, the proportion of sexually active grade 11 learners was 57.8% for boys and 42.8% for girls (Flisher, Reddy, Muller & Lombard, 2003). Although learners in 2004 reported a significant delay in first sexual intercourse (about a year) compared with learners in 1997, for both genders use of protection in 2004 was significantly less likely than in 1997 (Flisher et al., 2006). This is concerning because of the implication for HIV infection. In 2005 the national HIV prevalence among adolescents aged 15 – 19 years was reported as 9.4% for girls and 3.2% for boys (Shisana et al., 2005). The HIV prevalence among young women aged 20 years and under-attending antenatal clinics was 15.9% (Department of Health, 2006).

1.3.4 School dropout

The Department of Education (2003) reported that 60% of South African children who start school drop out before completing high school. However, few studies of school dropout are available. A Cape Town study of grade 8 learners (n=1470) which aimed to examine the longitudinal associations between several factors (for example, demographic

variables and substance use) and dropout, reported a dropout rate of 54.9% (Flisher, Townsend, Chikobvu, Lombard & King, 2004). Clearly, it is concerning that only four out of every ten children complete their schooling through to grade 12 (the final year of school in South Africa).

1.3.5 Covariation of risk behaviour

Problem behaviour theory (Jessor & Jessor, 1997) asserts that health risk behaviours in adolescents reflect a syndrome of behavioural dysregulation. There is evidence of a covariation – or "… syndrome of health risk behaviour" – in South African adolescents (Flisher, Ziervogel, Chalton, Leger & Robertson, 1996, p. 1090; Mpofu et al., 2006, p. 324). The syndrome includes alcohol and drug use, having experienced sexual intercourse, suicidal behaviour, and behaviour that exposes the adolescent to injury (Flisher et al., 1996). The implication is that adolescents who are engaging in one risk behaviour are at greater risk of becoming involved in other risk behaviours. Using Rasch modelling, Mpofu et al. (2006) found support for their hypothesis of an underlying or latent variable indicating health risk among adolescents in Cape Town.

1.4 Boredom

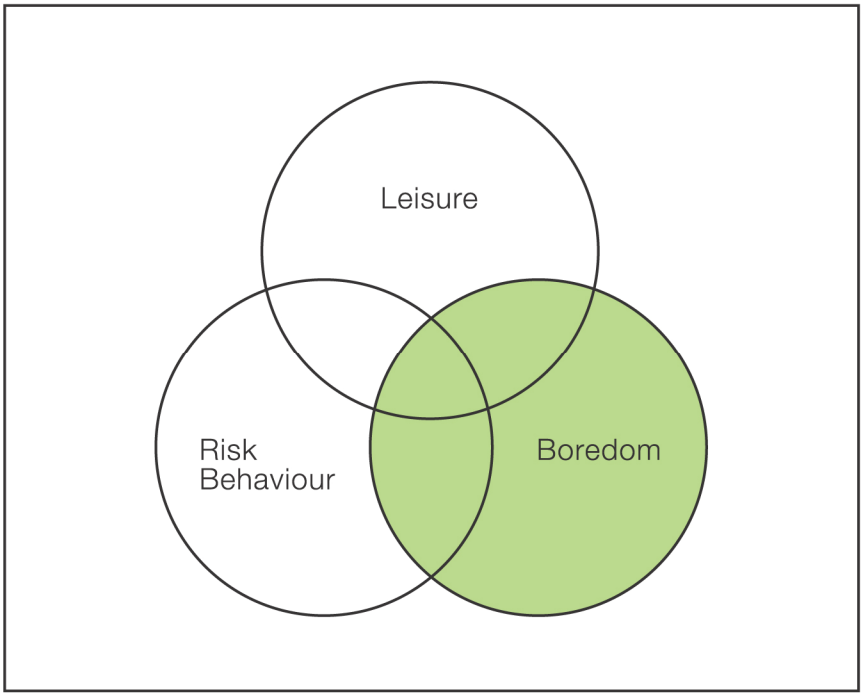


Figure 1.4 The boredom construct

1.4.1 Defining boredom

Boredom is a complex phenomenon that is further complicated by the adolescent stage of development. There is general consensus that boredom is a subjectively experienced negative mood state associated with feelings of frustration, displeasure, monotony, demotivation and lethargy, combined with a sense that time stands still (Hill & Perkins, 1985; Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990; Patrick, 1982). More recent research has described boredom as a form of anxiety about the absence of meaning or loss of purpose in an activity or situation, accompanied by feelings of dissatisfaction, irritability, restlessness and stress about the absence of interest, and a sense of entrapment (Barbalet, 2001; Conrad, 1997; Martin, Sadlo & Stew, 2006). Ragheb and Merydith (2001) developed the Free Time Boredom (FTB) Scale, which contains four subscales: lack of meaningful involvement, lack of mental involvement, slowness of time, and lack of physical involvement. The FTB Scale was tested with American college students and state

employees in three preliminary trials (n=109, n=152, n=163) and one final field test (n=347). Internal consistency coefficients for the subscales ranged from 0.91 to 0.78 (Ragheb & Merydith, 2001).

1.4.2 Causes of boredom

There are various explanations for the causes of boredom; broadly speaking, these fall into two categories: (1) low internal stimulation, where boredom stems from within the individual (personal disposition), and (2) low external stimulation, where the environment is perceived as offering little stimulation (situational). Vodanovich, Wallace and Kass (2005) found evidence for these two factors to be included in a shortened version of the Boredom Proneness Scale, which was tested in two studies of employed adults in America (n=787, n=300). Psychological explanations of boredom (Caldwell, Darling, Payne & Dowdy, 1999) describe boredom as arising due to the individual's lack of awareness of stimulating activities, lack of intrinsic motivation to alleviate boredom (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987; Weissinger, Caldwell & Bandalos, 1992), or a perceived or real mismatch between the individual's skill and the challenge of the situation (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Boredom has been regarded as a state of understimulation (Conrad, 1997; Larson & Richards, 1991) illustrated in the response "there is nothing to do". Others have described boredom proneness as a trait (Larson & Richards; Vodanovich & Rupp, 1999) that is often related to depression (Vodanovich, 2003).

Social control theories describe boredom as resistance to external control; adolescents use boredom as a routine expression of their resistance to adult control (Larson & Richards, 1991). As adolescents strive for autonomy they may react to any form of social control, such as parental monitoring, through resistance that is experienced as boredom. Linked to social control is the forced-effort theory of boredom (Larson & Richards, 1991), which explains boredom as a result of being forced to spend energy and effort on tasks perceived as homogeneous. For example, adolescents who participate in obligatory, routine practice activities may experience boredom, as their participation may be

extrinsically motivated through parents, teachers or other social pressures. Caldwell, Darling, Payne and Dowdy (1999, p. 106) found support for both psychological and social control explanations of boredom, operationalised in their study as reasons for participating in an activity being "I had to", "I wanted to", or "I had nothing else to do".

In a qualitative study of boredom in adults, Martin, Sadlo and Stew (2006) described antecedents of boredom at home and at work that included level of challenge, tiredness, often being alone, loss of purpose, depression and alienation. Boredom has also been described as a sense of disconnection, with students becoming bored and disengaging from situations due to repetition, having nothing to relate to, lack of action, too much or too little familiarity with the task, or simply a bad fit between the individual and the situation (Conrad, 1997).

1.4.3 Function of boredom

The function of boredom is to signal the need for activity (Scitovsky, 1999) and to propel the individual towards finding or constructing meaning in either the activity concerned or in other activities (Barbalet, 1999; Martin, Sadlo & Stew, 2006). By implication, the adolescent who experiences boredom in free time or leisure will attempt to create meaning by engaging in activities that do provide stimulation; potentially, these may be risky activities or behaviours. If adolescents could understand that boredom is not an intrinsic characteristic of an object, event or person, but that boredom arises in the individual's interpretation of his/her experience (Conrad, 1997), they could learn to regard boredom as a constructive signal that they need to find ways of creating meaning within a particular situation or activity. Interventions could provide them with the assistance or guidance needed to achieve this goal.

Nearly all of the studies about boredom have been carried out in the developed world. The paucity of research in South Africa is surprising, as so often in the media boredom

has been associated with, or blamed for, risk behaviour and other problems among youth. Clearly, this is a field that warrants further research in South Africa.

1.5 Leisure and risk behaviour

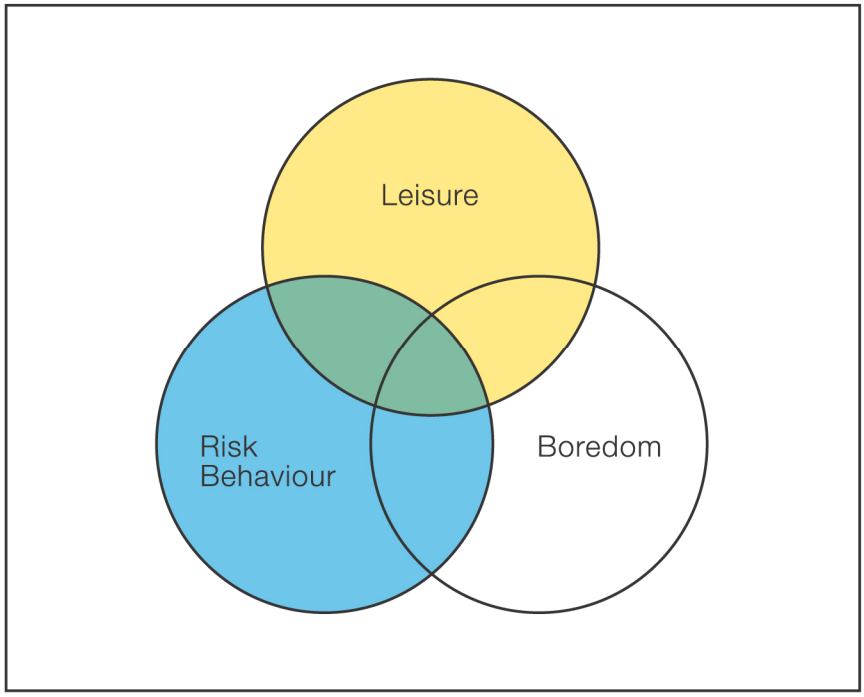


Figure 1.5 The intersection between leisure and risk behaviour

Involvement in leisure pursuits offers adolescents opportunities for healthy development; for example, participation in school-based extracurricular activities was found to be a protective factor in that students reported lower levels of marijuana use, higher grades and aspirations, and more positive academic attitudes (Darling, Caldwell & Smith, 2005). Unfortunately, leisure also affords the adolescent a context – or the time, place and space – to engage in unhealthy or negative leisure pursuits.

Drinking and illegal drug use by college students were regarded as casual leisure pursuits, because they were hedonistic and offered pleasure and fun, usually in the presence of friends (Shinew & Parry, 2005). Parker, Aldridge and Measham (1998) tracked 700 14-year-olds in Britain over a five-year period and found that alcohol was an established part of young people's leisure time. Most young people drank because it was pleasurable and formed part of celebrating with family and socialising with friends. The authors attributed the increase in recreational or party drugs such as ecstasy and amphetamines to the emergence of the 'rave' dance music scene during the 1990s (Measham, Parker & Aldridge, 1998). Alcohol and party drugs have become central components in youth party culture in both Europe and America (Schensul & Carafat, 2004). In situations such as parties or raves where adolescents perceived parental monitoring to be low or where adolescents spent time with peers who used substances, the risk of substance use was increased (Caldwell & Darling, 1999). Young people in Scotland, Norway and Sweden drank alcohol mainly on weekends at parties, dances, street fairs, on beaches and in parks and at friends' houses when parents were away (Kloep, Hendry, Ingebrigsten, Glendinning & Espnes, 2001; Pavis, Cunningham-Burley & Amos, 1997). Children in their pre- and early-teenage years reported using illegal drugs such as cannabis in response to boredom (McIntosh, MacDonald & McKeganey, 2005). These studies support the notion that young people drink and use drugs for excitement and fun because they are bored and have nothing to do, and to be sociable and relax. Delinquency has been found to be positively related to time spent in unsupervised social activities and leisure activities with peers, and negatively related to time spent in organised leisure activities, passive entertainment and non-competitive sports (Agnew & Petersen, 1989).

In contrast to the developed world, very little is known about leisure and its association with risk behaviour in developing countries. The only other study in Africa that could be accessed was with 1141 high school students in Nigeria (Ayoade, 2006); leisure was found to be significantly correlated with, and be predictive of, risk behaviours including substance abuse, sexual activities, violence, crime, cultism and teenage pregnancy.

Previous studies support my view that risk behaviours, such as substance use and sexual risk behaviour can be leisure related because they tend more often than not, to occur during free time in leisure settings, and be engaged in voluntarily for fun, pleasure and relaxation. This is my assumption for the purpose of the thesis. Of course, it is not always the case, as with girls and young women who are coerced or forced into having sex (see for example, Flisher, Myer, Márais, Lombard & Reddy, 2007; Jaspan et al., 2006; Jewkes et al., 2006; Petersen, Bhana & McKay, 2005).

1.6 Risk behaviour and boredom

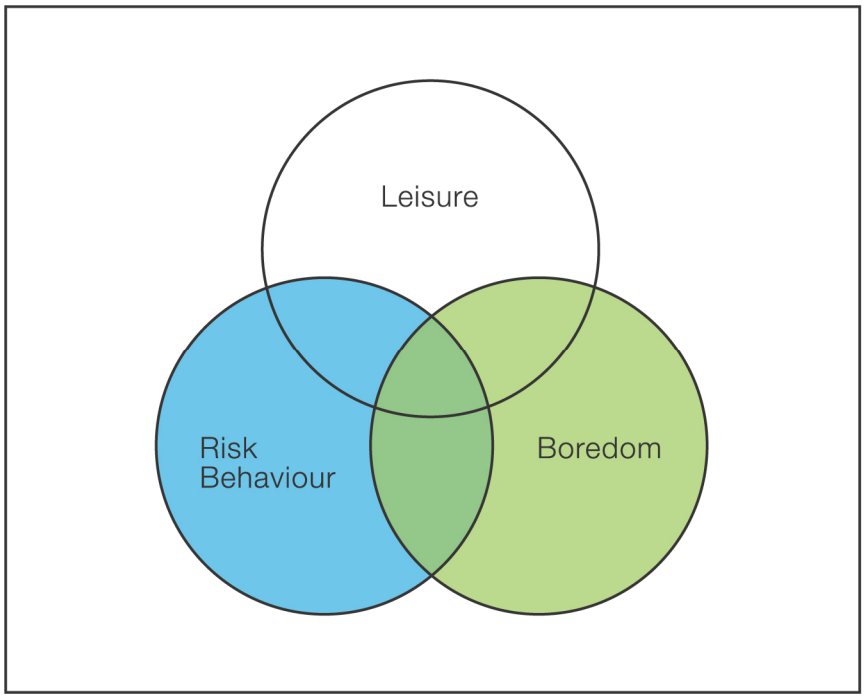


Figure 1.6 The intersection between risk behaviour and boredom

Investigation into boredom and the association with risk appeared to begin with Zuckerman's (1971, 1979) work on the components and correlates of sensation-seeking among college students; boredom susceptibility emerged as one of four dimensions of sensation seeking, and was found to positively correlate with drinking behaviour.

Orcutt (1984) continued this line of research by examining how existential boredom (frequency of boredom and lack of meaning in life) and interpersonal boredom (boredom with small talk and boredom with other people) correlated with drinking behaviour. Existential boredom was found to have a strong, positive relationship to frequency of alcohol use among males; individuals who perceived their daily lives to be boring sought the stimulation afforded by drinking. Interpersonal boredom was inversely related to quantity of alcohol consumed by males and females as individuals who were not bored by small talk and the company of others tended to drink more (Orcutt, 1984).

Since then, numerous studies among young people from different parts of the world indicate that one of the reasons given for their substance use was that it provided a pleasurable, relaxing escape from boredom. Examples of such studies include Cambodian American young adults (Friis, Forouzesh, Chhim, Monga & Sze, 2006), university students in Mexico (Thrasher & Bentley, 2006), rural adolescents in Viet Nam (Kaljee, Genberg, Minh, Tho, Thoa & Stanton, 2005), and Bangladeshi adolescents living in the UK (Markam, Featherstone, Taket, Trenchard-Mabere & Ross, 2001). In a study of poly-substance users in Britain (n=364, mean age 19.3 years), out of the 18 reasons cited by young people for drug use, 'decreasing boredom' scored 7th highest, with 83% giving this as a reason for their drug use (Boys, Marsden & Strang, 2001). In the same study, those who used amphetamines, alcohol and cocaine to decrease boredom were significantly younger than those who did not endorse this reason. Youth who felt bored and used leisure as a means of rejecting adult structure were more likely to engage in undesirable health behaviours such as smoking cigarettes and abusing alcohol (Caldwell & Smith, 1995). Ziervogel, Ahmed, Flisher and Robertson (1998) used qualitative methods to identify and gain insight into the social context of alcohol misuse in South African adolescent male binge drinkers. One of the most significant motives for the boys' use of alcohol was that it alleviated boredom. Boredom arose "… primarily from a lack of participation in other activities and alcohol drinking was therefore perceived as an enjoyable, time-consuming activity to indulge in" (Ziervogel et al., 1998, p. 30). Wasson (1981) found a significant positive correlation between susceptibility to boredom and deviant behaviour (n=483 high school students, modal age was 16 years) with males

engaging in deviant behaviour more frequently than females. From the evidence above, it is clear that boredom is a factor that can be associated with risk behaviour.

1.7 Leisure and boredom

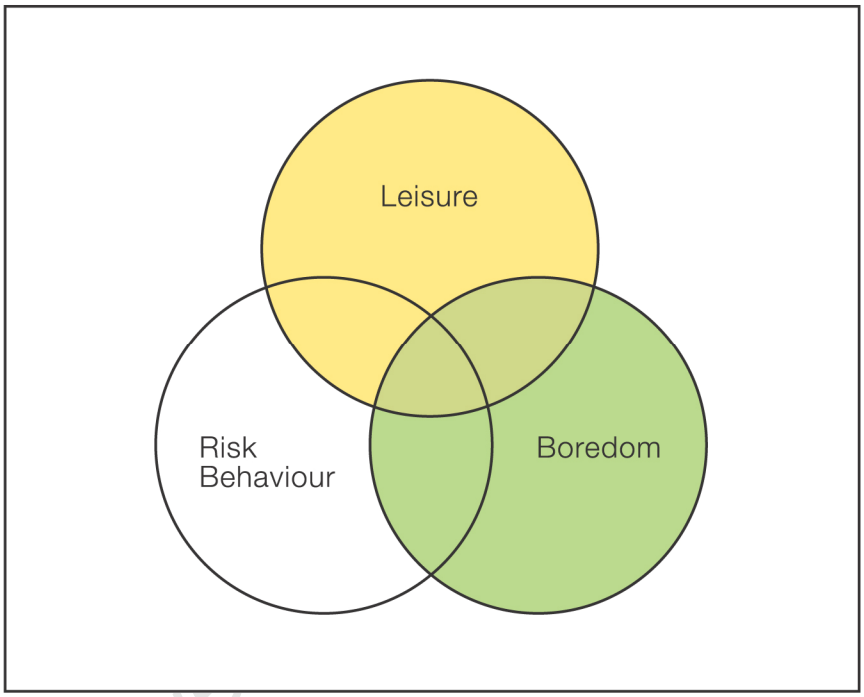


Figure 1.7 The intersection between leisure and boredom

1.7.1 Defining leisure boredom

Iso-Ahola and Weissinger (1990, p. 4) defined leisure boredom as "... the subjective perception that available leisure experiences are not sufficient to instrumentally satisfy needs for optimal arousal". Various factors can contribute to the experience of leisure boredom, such as a lack of awareness of the potential benefits of leisure – in particular the psychological value of leisure, decreased self-motivation, and having constraints or barriers to leisure engagement (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987). Caldwell and Darling (1999) found that boredom was influenced by the reason that adolescents engaged in

leisure activities being that they "want to", "have to", or "have nothing else to do" (p. 111). These categories relate to self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) which explains motivation as being on a continuum of self-regulatory style from amotivation ("nothing to do") to extrinsic motivation ("have to") to intrinsic motivation ("want to") reflecting internalised values that an individual has about participation in an activity (Caldwell & Darling). Research has revealed a link between extrinsic motivation and amotivation, and boredom (eg. Ryan & Deci, 2000). However, further research is needed to investigate how these categories relate to the actual extent or degree of leisure boredom. Many studies of young people's leisure cite 'having nothing to do' as a major reason for experiencing boredom in leisure time (for example, Hendry et al., 2002; Jones, 1992; Patterson, Pegg & Dobson-Patterson, 2000). As many as one-third of black South African youths reported feeling excessively bored, with the greatest leisure constraint for these youths being 'semi-leisure' activities, which were defined as "… time-off from work activities that is consumed by activities one feels obliged to do" (Møller, 1991, p. 9). In other words, youths engaged in semi-leisure activities such as education-related activities and youth groups because they felt they had to, which may have contributed to their experience of boredom in leisure time.

1.7.2 Leisure boredom and race, gender, and age

Social learning theory proposes that behaviour is determined by an interaction between social and environmental influences, and cognitive mediators such as beliefs and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). It is therefore important to consider how factors such as race, gender and age influence leisure boredom. Where these factors act as constraints, less than optimal leisure experiences may contribute to feelings of dissatisfaction and boredom in leisure time. Philipp (1998) urged researchers investigating adolescent leisure not to ignore the influence of both gender and race, since these have been shown to impact young people's leisure preferences (Busser, Hyams & Carruthers, 1996; Shinew, Floyd & Parry, 2004). McMeeking and Purkayastha (1995) studied three groups of adolescents from urban (inner-city), suburban and semi-rural settings and found a

complex interplay between leisure constraints, race/ethnicity, socio-economic status, age and gender. In South Africa, race is a sensitive issue due to the country's history of apartheid and racial discrimination. A legacy of this system is that many adolescents presently living in impoverished social and environmental contexts are black and coloured[2]; thus, race is still a strong indicator for socio-economic status in South Africa.

Gender influences the way that leisure is experienced, and thus, leisure boredom. Culp (1998) found that gender stereotypes, peer relationships, self concept, opportunities, accessibility and safety issues imposed restrictions on adolescent girls' participation in outdoor recreation. Girls use a complex decision-making process to choose their recreational spaces based on situational body image (impact of a particular audience and situation on body image), as well as factors relating to physical context (such as security and safety) and control (such as access, time use, and personal space) (Kandy, 2000, 2001). Raymore, Godbey and Crawford (1994) examined the influence of self-esteem, gender and socio-economic status on perceptions of leisure constraints and found that girls had significantly lower self-esteem than boys, and reported more constraints. Furthermore, adolescents from lower socio-economic backgrounds perceived greater leisure constraints.

Age can also influence the experience of leisure boredom. Younger adolescents are often faced with leisure constraints such as restricted independence due to lack of available transportation (McMeeking & Purkayastha, 1995) and greater parental monitoring (Caldwell & Darling, 1999). In rural parts of Australia, younger adolescents experienced greater leisure boredom than older adolescents because of their perception that there was not enough to do in their free time (Gordon & Caltabiano, 1996).

In summary, leisure boredom is a negative experience that can occur during leisure and free time, particularly when adolescents feel that there is nothing to do or when

[2] The Population Registration Act of 1950, which was repealed in 1991, divided the population of South Africa into black (African), white, Indian, and coloured (derived from Asian, European, Khoisan, and African ancestry).

awareness of the potential of leisure is lacking. Where leisure participation is constrained (for example, by race, gender, age or environment), leisure boredom can occur.

1.8 Leisure boredom and risk behaviour

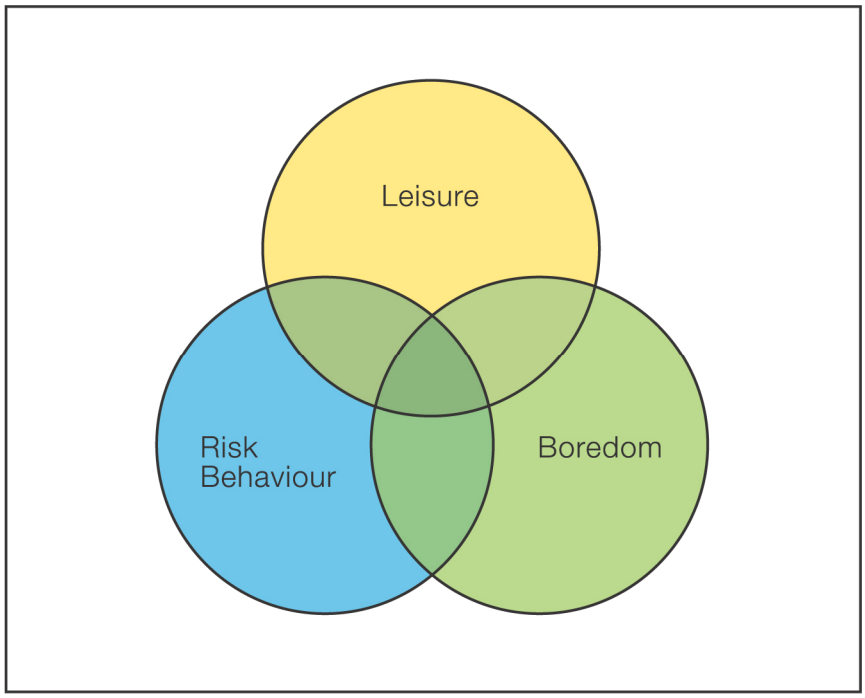


Figure 1.8 The intersection between leisure, boredom and risk behaviour

From the preceding discussion, it can be concluded that many studies cite boredom as being a factor associated with either leisure or risk behaviour. This indicates the importance of boredom as a risk factor in leisure and adolescent risk behaviour. However, none of the studies mentioned thus far have focused specifically on boredom in free or leisure time, and the association with risk behaviour.

In Chapter 2, a systematic review of the literature about the association of leisure boredom and risk behaviour is presented. Predominantly, studies that have investigated this issue have been in the developed world (North America and Australia). Only four

South African studies could be located that related to the topic of leisure boredom and risk behaviour. All four were included in the review (see chapter 2); however, only one study specifically investigated leisure boredom and risk behaviour (specifically, substance use), which was carried out as a component of my master's degree studies (Wegner, 1998; Wegner, Flisher, Muller & Lombard, 2006). Although no significant association between leisure boredom and substance use was found, the study provided evidence that school-going adolescents in South Africa were experiencing leisure boredom. Leisure boredom was relatively higher among younger adolescents compared with those who were older ($p < .055$), girls ($p < .003$), and black and coloured adolescents compared with whites ($p < .000$). The latter finding was partly attributed to socio-economic status, as race is still a strong indicator for socio-economic status in South Africa.

Clearly, there is a definite need for further investigation into leisure boredom, and the association with risk behaviour among adolescents in South Africa.

1.9 Overview of the thesis

1.9.1 Research purpose and aims

The purpose of the research was to investigate how adolescents experience leisure boredom in their free time, and how this is associated with risk behaviour – specifically substance use, sexual risk behaviour and premature school leaving (dropout) among adolescents in Cape Town, South Africa. The research aims (with related dates of data collection and analysis) were to:

1. Conduct a systematic review of the literature concerning leisure boredom and risk behaviour in adolescence (data collection 2002 to 2007; analysis 2007).
2. Establish the psychometric properties of the Leisure Boredom Scale for use with adolescents in South Africa (data collection 1997; analysis 2002).
3. Determine whether leisure boredom is a predictor of risk behaviour, specifically school dropout (data collection 1997, 1999 and 2001; analysis 2004 to 2005).
4. Understand adolescents' perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in free time (data collection 2002 and 2007; analysis 2002 and 2007).
5. Investigate the process of cultural adaptation of a school-based intervention addressing leisure boredom and risk behaviour, which was developed in a Western context. Also, to determine stakeholders' perceptions of the intervention's usefulness (data collection 2003; analysis 2004).

In order to address these aims, five inter-related studies were conducted. These are outlined below and are dealt with in detail in the subsequent chapters.

1.9.2 Chapter Two

In Chapter Two, Study 1 is presented. This is a systematic review of the literature about leisure boredom and risk behaviour among adolescents. The international and local literature was scanned for relevant articles which were included based on a set of criteria. After being summarised, this body of work was analysed and synthesised to provide a conceptualisation of existing knowledge within the field. A critique of the studies previously conducted enabled gaps in the knowledge base to be identified and provided direction for the thesis, and for future research. The systematic literature review was guided by the following research questions:

1. What evidence is there of leisure boredom among adolescents, and its association with risk behaviour?

2. How has leisure boredom been measured?
3. What interventions have addressed leisure boredom among adolescents?

1.9.3 Chapter Three

The systematic literature review revealed that no previous investigation of the psychometric properties of instruments measuring leisure boredom had been conducted among South African adolescents. It was necessary to first do this, before proceeding with studies to investigate leisure boredom with an adolescent population. Chapter Three presents Study 2 – a methodological investigation of the reliability of the Leisure Boredom Scale (LBS). The following research question was addressed:

4. What is the reliability of the Leisure Boredom Scale for use with high school learners in Cape Town?

1.9.4 Chapter Four

No previous studies in the world had examined leisure boredom as a predictor of high school dropout. Dropout is a major problem among South African adolescents; therefore, as reported in Chapter Four, Study 3 is a quantitative investigation of the association between leisure boredom and school dropout in a longitudinal study of a cohort of high school learners in Cape Town, using the LBS. The following research question was addressed:

5. Is leisure boredom a predictor of high school dropout?

1.9.5 Chapter Five

Although leisure boredom was found to be relatively higher among certain groups of adolescents in Cape Town (Wegner, 1998), no previous studies in South Africa had explored the phenomenon further. Understanding leisure boredom and risk behaviour from the perspective of adolescents is important, as this provides a keener insight into the lived experience of the adolescents' world. Chapter Five presents Study 4 - a qualitative exploration of the form, function and meaning of leisure and boredom experienced by adolescents (including a group who had dropped out of school) living in an economically impoverished environment. Visual imagery in the form of photographs taken by the adolescents themselves was the main method of data collection used in this study. The following research questions were addressed:

6. What are adolescents' experiences during their free time?
7. How does the environment influence adolescents' experiences during free time?
8. What is the form (activities, properties and relation to time), function (process and experience), and meaning of boredom in free time?
9. Why does boredom in free time occur?
10. How do adolescents perceive boredom to be related to risk behaviour?

1.9.6 Chapter Six

Study 5 which is presented in Chapter Six, was a process evaluation of a school-based intervention that aimed to promote healthy use of leisure time, prevent boredom and reduce risk behaviour. The aim of the study was to investigate the process of cultural adaptation of the intervention, as well as to establish its usefulness. The following research questions were addressed:

11. How useful was the intervention from the perspective of educators, learners and principals?
12. What elements or aspects of the local culture and context informed the adaptation of the HealthWise programme?
13. What elements of the programme were considered difficult or inappropriate?
14. How did educators deviate from the programme and why?

1.9.7 Chapter Seven

In the final chapter, a summary of the studies, followed by overall recommendations arising from the findings of the five studies together, and a conclusion are presented.

Chapter Two

Leisure boredom and adolescent risk behaviour: a systematic review of the literature

> Knowledge is like a baobab tree and no one person can embrace it with both arms.
>
> (African proverb)

2.1 Introduction

As discussed in chapter 1, the prevalence of risk behaviour among adolescents in South Africa has been well-documented. Knowing the extent of the problem is important, but it seems equally necessary to understand the factors that are associated with, and predict, risk behaviour. One such factor is leisure boredom; however, nearly all of the studies investigating leisure boredom and risk behaviour have been conducted in the developed world. Consequently, in developing countries, very little is known about the experience of leisure boredom and how this is associated with risk behaviour in young people. Although many of the developmental tasks of adolescence are similar for adolescents all over the world, there are differences, not least of which arise due to the influences of different contexts, such as socio-economic environments and living conditions.

Many studies cite boredom – either generally, or during leisure or free time – as a factor in adolescent risk behaviour (discussed in chapter 1). Despite this, there are remarkably few studies that have focused specifically on leisure boredom as a construct, and its association with risk behaviour among adolescents. To the best of our knowledge, prior to 1987 no research anywhere in the world had investigated the relationship between leisure and boredom. It appears that Iso-Ahola and Weissinger (1987) were the first scientists to conduct research in this field by examining factors that contributed to a sense of leisure boredom among adults (n=134). The authors found that a lack of awareness of the psychological value of leisure, having a negative attitude towards leisure, being less self-motivated, and constraints to leisure contributed significantly to the perception of boredom in leisure. With the development of the Leisure Boredom Scale (LBS) that measured "… individual differences in perceptions of boredom in leisure" (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990, p. 264), research investigating leisure boredom and the association with risk behaviour started to emerge.

Only one review of literature about leisure boredom, alcohol and drug abuse among young people could be located; however, this review focussed specifically on young people living in rural Australia. The review provided evidence that youth (especially young males) in this area experienced high levels of leisure boredom and tended to drink large quantities of alcohol, which resulted in feelings of alienation and marginalisation that put them at greater risk of depression and suicide (Patterson & Pegg, 1999).

2.2 Research questions and aim

As no previous systematic and comprehensive review of the literature on leisure boredom and risk behaviour among adolescents was available, the study addressed the following research questions: (1) What evidence is there of leisure boredom among adolescents, and its association with risk behaviour? (2) How has leisure boredom been measured? (3) What interventions have addressed leisure boredom among adolescents?

The aim of the study was to summarise, synthesise and critically evaluate empirical research on this topic by describing findings from cross-sectional and longitudinal studies of leisure boredom among adolescents, and identify areas that warranted further research.

2.3 Methods

A database search for relevant articles was conducted on Medline, Psychinfo, Cochrane library, African Health Anthology, Pubmed, Healthstar, Ovid, Psychlit, Sociofile, Social Sciences Index, Index to South African Periodicals, Sportdiscus, Academic Search Premier, Eric, Health Source, Psycarticles, Socindex and Biblioline (Africa-wide which includes South African and African studies). An online search was conducted and details of published work were obtained using combinations of the following keywords: leisure, free time, boredom, leisure boredom, free time boredom, adolescence, adolescents, teenagers, youth, risk behaviour, race, gender, age, school grade, substance use/abuse/dependence, alcohol use/abuse/dependence, sexual

behaviour, violent behaviour, school dropout. The reference lists of retrieved articles were scanned to identify further relevant publications. A hand search was done by scanning contents tables of relevant journals. Where possible, prominent scholars and researchers were contacted to request articles and ensure that all relevant publications had been accessed.

Studies were included in the review based on the criteria listed below. No time frame applied – all studies that could be located regardless of when they were published, were included. Studies were included if they:

- Addressed the investigation of, or the measurement of, or intervention for leisure or free time boredom, and risk behaviour;
- Had population samples that included primarily adolescents and young adults;
- Were English language articles;
- Were published in peer reviewed journals or books;
- Made use of quantitative methods of enquiry.

An effort to reduce potential researcher bias involved consultation with my supervisor (Prof. Alan Flisher, South Africa) and an expert in the field of leisure research (Dr. Linda Caldwell, USA) to ensure that all relevant and available studies were included. Studies meeting the inclusion criteria were analysed through a process of extracting relevant data and summarising this in tables under the headings: authors, journal, title, risk behaviours, sample, age, gender, ethnicity, school grade, rural/urban, location, design, sampling strategy, methods of data collection, measures, validity and reliability, analysis, theoretical framework and/or hypothesis, findings, and limitations.

2.4 Results and discussion

2.4.1 Sample

2.4.1.1 Study locations

The search resulted in the retrieval of 25 articles that met the inclusion criteria. A description of the study samples, measurements and variables is given in Table 2.1. The majority of the studies were conducted in the developed world, with 16 studies from the United States of America (Barnett, 2005; Barnett & Klitzing, 2006; Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith, 2004; Caldwell, Darling, Payne & Dowdy, 1999; Caldwell & Kivel, 1998; Caldwell & Smith, 1994; Caldwell & Smith, 1995; Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991; Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990; Larson & Richards, 1991; Newberry & Duncan, 2001; Sharp, Caldwell, Graham & Ridenour, 2006; Weissinger, Caldwell & Bandolas, 1992; Widmer, Ellis & Munson, 2003; Widmer, Ellis & Trunnell, 1996; Yang & Yoh, 2005). Two studies were from Canada (Caldwell, Smith & Weissinger, 1992; Shaw, Caldwell & Kleiber, 1996) and three studies were from Australia (Farnworth, 1998; Gordon & Caltabiano, 1996; Patterson, Pegg & Dobson-Patterson, 2000). Only four studies were conducted in the developing world, all of them in South Africa (Caldwell et al., 2004; Kaufman, Clark, Manzini & May, 2002; Møller, 1991; Wegner, Flisher, Muller & Lombard, 2006).

Of the South African studies, one specifically investigated leisure boredom and risk behaviour (substance use) (Wegner et al., 2006) and formed part of research undertaken for my Master's degree (Wegner, 1998) as mentioned previously.

The second study investigated the leisure prospects of black urban township youth between 1988 and 1991 (Møller, 1991); however, the study took place during the latter years of the apartheid system and the results should be considered within this context. The third South African study is a description of a pilot study for an intervention that addresses leisure boredom (and other risk behaviour) by means of a comprehensive school-based life skills curriculum called HealthWise (Caldwell et al., 2004). The fourth study was included because it considered how adolescents' use of time influenced sexual risk behaviour (Kaufman et al., 2002).

Whether studies were conducted in an urban versus a rural context was not considered as a factor for comparison of studies (although this is indicated on Table 2.1), as the definition of these constructs varies widely depending on the location of the study. For example, in South Africa rural areas are typically remote parts of the country where people often live in very traditional ways and where there are few amenities such as electricity, tap water and shops. In the United States of America, rural areas usually refer to towns with relatively small populations that often have an agricultural focus.

2.4.1.2 Study sampling procedures

Eleven of the studies made use of random sampling (Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith, 2004; Caldwell & Kivel, 1998; Caldwell et al., 2004; Caldwell & Smith, 1995; Caldwell et al., 1992; Kaufman et al., 2002; Larson & Richards, 1991; Møller, 1991; Sharp et al., 2004; Wegner et al., 2006; Widmer et al., 2003). Six studies included students who were enrolled in specific classes (Gordon & Caltabiano, 1996; Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990; Patterson et al., 2000; Shaw et al., 1996; Weissinger et al., 1992; Widmer et al., 1996); thus, providing samples that were not strictly random in nature. Four studies made use of voluntary sampling (Barnett, 2005; Barnett & Klitzing, 2006; Caldwell et al., 1999; Newberry & Duncan, 2001) which may have introduced a degree of bias into the studies. Four studies used non-probability

sampling based on the availability of respondents (Caldwell & Smith, 1994; Farnworth, 1998; Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991; Yang & Yoh, 2005). Thus, there exists a degree of heterogeneity within the sampling procedures of the studies, which might account for any variations in findings across studies and make direct comparisons of findings difficult.

Twelve study samples involved school students (Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith, 2004; Caldwell et al., 1999; Caldwell & Kivel, 1998; Caldwell et al., 2004; Caldwell & Smith, 1995; Caldwell et al., 1992; Gordon & Caltabiano, 1996; Larson & Richards, 1991; Newberry & Duncan, 2001; Sharp et al., 2004; Shaw et al., 1996, Wegner et al., 2006). Six study samples involved college or university students (Barnett, 2005; Barnett & Klitzing, 2006; Patterson et al., 2000; Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990; Weissinger et al., 1992; Yang & Yoh, 2005). Five studies included special groups of youth such as those identified as high-risk (Caldwell & Smith, 1994) and criminal offenders on probation (Farnworth, 1998), and those attending substance use centres (Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991), detention centres (Widmer et al., 1996) and psychiatric treatment centres (Widmer et al., 2003). Two studies involved a mix of youths who were at school, or working or unemployed (Kaufman et al., 2002; Møller, 1991).

The majority of the studies involved mainstream school-going or college students indicating a degree of homogeneity in these eighteen samples. Only one study involved disabled youth (Yang & Yoh, 2005), and no study focused specifically on adolescent dropouts, thus reflecting extremely limited research among these marginalised groups and indicating scope for future research.

2.4.1.3 Study designs

The majority of the studies were cross-sectional in design (n=22), with only three of the studies being longitudinal (Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith, 2004; Caldwell et al., 1999; Sharp et al., 2006). The relatively low number of longitudinal studies reflects the lack of maturity in the field. Also, longitudinal studies are more costly and time-consuming than cross-sectional studies; however, they provide a far more comprehensive investigation of a situation over time and allow for causal predictions to be made about variables.

The majority of studies (n=22) involved the use of self-report questionnaires or surveys. The advantage of self-report questionnaires is that large numbers of respondents can be surveyed more economically and in a shorter time, the anonymity and privacy encourage more candid responses, and reliability can be established (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). However, they do require respondents to be literate (which may be problematic especially when surveying young adolescents where literacy is a definite problem – as in many parts of South Africa). Thus, face-to-face interviews mean fewer incomplete questionnaires and misunderstood questions. Five studies examined use of time by means of interviews, and either experience sampling methods (Farnworth, 1998; Larson & Richards, 1991), or time-use diaries (Caldwell et al., 1999; Kaufman et al., 2002; Møller, 1991; Shaw et al., 1996). Experience sampling methods (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987) entail the use of electronic pagers which bleep respondents who then need to complete a report. This method can be costly and requires a certain level of commitment from the respondent, although the method seems to have been used successfully in the studies.

2.4.2 Evidence of leisure boredom

The findings of the studies were examined for evidence of the experience of leisure boredom, which was then categorised into three broad themes according to the causes of boredom: (1) social control, (2) psychological disposition, and, (3) the influence of context. Of interest, although not surprising, was that the first two themes are theories relating to boredom (explained in chapter 1) but these were equally well-suited to explain leisure boredom. A summary of findings about evidence of leisure boredom, and the association with risk behaviours is presented in Table 2.2.

2.4.2.1 Social control and leisure boredom

Social control theory refers to the social mechanisms that regulate the choices individuals make about engaging in activities and behaviour, which lead to conformity and compliance with the rules of society (Hirschi, 1969). Thus, parents, teachers, schools and societal laws constitute examples of social mechanisms that may directly or indirectly exert control over adolescents in an effort to avoid deviant or negative behaviour. Hirschi (1969) suggested that involvement in activities such as structured recreation strengthens social bonds by promoting attachment, commitment, involvement and belief in a common value, and reduces delinquent behaviour. However, as adolescents are striving for autonomy, any mechanism that constrains this drive may be met with resistance, which can be expressed as boredom. Shaw, Caldwell and Kleiber (1996) found support for the notion that social control mechanisms lead to a lack of choice in free time activities and feelings of boredom in adolescents, in response to adult restrictions, structures and expectations. As discussed in the next section, parental monitoring, gender and developmental age are factors that can be linked with social control mechanisms, and thus influence the experience of leisure boredom.

Parental monitoring

Parents influence their children's experience of leisure boredom through the extent to which they monitor their children's activities. Not unsurprisingly, younger adolescents and girls were monitored by parents to a greater extent (Møller, 1991; Sharp et al., 2006). Adolescents who perceived lower levels of parental monitoring were more likely to be bored (Caldwell et al., 1999), however, these were 13-year olds, and this developmental age-group would expect their parents to have greater knowledge of their whereabouts and activities. Sharp et al., (2006) referred to this as parental knowledge and found that this had a positive effect on adolescent interest, motivation and self-regulation in free time. On the other hand, parental control occurs when parental monitoring is regarded as restricting autonomy in leisure. This had a negative effect on interest, and was associated with amotivation (Sharp et al., 2006).

Gender and identity

The literature is divided as to the likelihood of experiencing boredom as a function of gender. The lives of adolescent girls appear to be subject to more restrictions as a result of social control mechanisms than boys, and girls spend more time in obligatory activities than boys (Shaw et al., 1996). Accordingly, it may be expected that girls might experience greater leisure boredom than boys. Several studies found evidence supporting this notion. Females in South Africa (Wegner et al., 2006) and in rural areas of Australia (Patterson et al., 2000) experienced higher levels of boredom than boys. Gender significantly moderated relationships between individual characteristics and boredom in free time (Barnett & Klitzing, 2006). Other studies found that males reported higher boredom (Shaw et al., 1996) and were more prone to boredom (Newberry & Duncan, 2001) than females.

Gay youth, and youth questioning their sexual identity, experienced leisure differently and more negatively than their non-gay peers (Caldwell & Kivel, 1998). Gay males were more bored in their leisure time, tended to use free time to rebel, and reported that their parents had too much control over their free time. They were less likely to do healthy pursuits in their free time, go out for fun in the evening and engage in aerobic activity. They were more likely to engage in binge drinking, feel sad, depressed, under pressure and stressed, and attempt suicide (Caldwell & Kivel, 1998).

Other studies have found that gender was not a significant predictor of boredom (Caldwell et al., 1999; Weissinger et al., 1992). However, that studies differ with regard to gender findings may be attributed to the heterogeneity within the methodologies employed in the various studies, as mentioned previously. Caldwell et al. (1999) conducted their study with a small sample (n=82) of high school students who volunteered to participate in the in-depth interviews and activity diary portion of the project; thus, this may have introduced bias into the study. Weissinger et al. (1992) used convenience sampling to recruit their sample (n=525) whose age range was 18-40 years (mean 20.9 years). The fact that this study also involved adults may have resulted in the finding that gender did not significantly predict boredom in this study.

Age

Age plays a role in the experience of leisure boredom. Boredom was higher among younger adolescents than older adolescents during school time (Larson & Richards, 1991) and leisure time (Wegner et al., 2006). It is likely that social control mechanisms are responsible for this finding; younger adolescents might be restricted from leisure engagement due to parental control, and other constraints such as lack of transport and money. However, there is not enough evidence to support this; future research could examine this further.

2.4.2.2 Psychological disposition and leisure boredom

Motivation

Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) posits that the individual's need for intrinsic rewards – self-determination and competence – lies at the core of intrinsic motivation. The individual becomes aware of the need and that it can potentially be satisfied, and selects and enacts goal-oriented behaviour to meet the need. Individual differences in the desire for intrinsic rewards mediate this process. Weissinger, Caldwell and Bandalos (1992) suggested that boredom was the result of a disruption in this process. The authors found that higher levels of desire for intrinsic rewards were negatively associated with leisure boredom. Intrinsic motivation to seek enjoyment was negatively related to leisure boredom (Barnett & Klitzing, 2006). Adolescents with lower intrinsic motivation were more likely to be bored (Caldwell et al., 1999). Amotivation was negatively related to adolescents' experiences of interest and positively associated with parental control (Sharp et al., 2006). Adolescents who were more motivated and self-regulated had parents who were more knowledgeable about their free time (Sharp et al., 2006). Thus, individual motivation is clearly a factor influencing leisure boredom.

Personality and affect

The literature provided support for the idea that individual disposition effects the experience of leisure boredom. The Aristotelian Ethical Behaviour in Leisure Scale (AEBL), and the shortened version – the AEBL-S, were used to measure intellectual and creative activity, meaningful relationships and moral behaviour among youth in the USA (n=346, n=2948 respectively), and were shown to have a Cronbach's alpha score of .90 (Widmer et al., 1996; Widmer et al., 2003). The authors found that students who scored low on these scales also experienced higher levels of leisure boredom. Individuals who had difficulty entertaining themselves, who preferred fantasy and imagination, who were introverts, and who preferred novelty and variety in their free time were most likely to be bored (Barnett & Klitzing, 2006).

Those who had a generally negative affect (Barnett & Klitzing, 2006) or who were depressed and had low self-esteem (Larson & Richards, 1991) tended to be more bored.

2.4.2.3 The influence of context on leisure boredom

Having nothing to do

Context influences how adolescents choose to engage in activities and spend their free time. Situational differences (or the reasons for engaging in activities) accounted for 77% of variance in adolescents' reported boredom (Caldwell et al., 1999). When adolescents 'wanted to' take part in a leisure activity, the experience of leisure boredom was lower and intrinsic motivation was higher, compared to adolescents who were participating because they 'had to' or 'had nothing else to do' (Caldwell et al., 1999). Adolescents experienced boredom during school because they disliked certain classes, and thus felt forced to take part; however, outside of school, the most frequent explanation for boredom was that there was nothing to do (Larson & Richards, 1991). Clearly, the evidence showed this to be the most common reason for leisure boredom, as 41% of the time adolescents felt there was nothing to do (Caldwell et al., 1999) and felt bored 42% of the time (Farnworth, 1998).

Limited leisure resources

Contexts where there is a lack of awareness of the benefits of leisure, and environments that offer limited leisure resources contribute to the perception of having nothing to do, and thus, result in higher levels of leisure boredom. Students who reported being aware of leisure resources were significantly less bored in their free time than those who were less aware, and individuals who liked to experience a challenge in their leisure were usually less bored with their free time (Barnett, 2005).

Leisure boredom was found to be higher among black and coloured adolescents in Cape Town, South Africa (Wegner et al., 2006). The authors suggested that this may have been due to the poor living conditions and lack of leisure resources for the majority of these adolescents; however, this was an area that required further research.

Youth who were not attending school and unemployed or who were housewives, had more free time available yet were unable to fill this time, and more than half complained of feeling bored (Møller, 1991). Evidence shows that adolescents, especially girls, living in rural parts of Australia experienced relatively higher leisure boredom than their urban counterparts (Patterson et al., 2000). Participation rates in passive leisure activities were highest for rural adolescents, and highest for social leisure in urban adolescents, resulting in rural adolescents experiencing higher levels of leisure boredom than urban adolescents (Gordon & Caltabiano, 1996).

Lack of challenge

In line with the theory of boredom as lack of challenge (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988) and underarousal (Zuckerman, 1990, 1991), when activities are perceived to be underchallenging and provide insufficient stimulation, adolescents feel bored. Generally, engaging in passive leisure activities such as watching television and hanging out occurs as a result of having nothing else to do, and the outcome is a feeling of boredom. This is a common experience for adolescents; juvenile offenders reported that 62% of their time was spent in underchallenging activities in relation to their perceived skills, and that they experienced boredom with passive leisure activities more than active activities (Farnworth, 1998).

Time use

Comparing the amount of time spent in leisure activities was difficult due to the different ways in which time use was measured. As a guide, I estimated adolescents to be asleep for approximately 8 hours a day, leaving 16 hours for obligatory activities

(such as schoolwork and chores) and non-obligatory activities (free time and leisure). In Australia, adolescents spent on average 54.7 hours per week on leisure (Gordon & Caltabiano, 1996), which is approximately 8 hours a day. For young offenders in Australia, 57% (or about 9 hours) of their wakeful time was spent in leisure occupations, predominantly passive leisure such as listening to music or watching TV (Farnworth, 1998). Canadian adolescents spent half their waking time in non-obligatory activities (about 8 hours a day), the most common non-obligatory activity being social activities with friends including hanging out, talking on the phone and going to parties (Shaw et al., 1996). Thus, it appears that Australian and Canadian adolescents have an average of 8 to 9 hours of free time daily.

Obtaining an accurate picture of South African adolescents' use of time is difficult as few studies have investigated this construct. Møller (1991) found that young black people have on average 5 hours free on weekdays, and 7 ½ hours free on weekend days, with dominant free time activities including conversations with friends, watching TV, listening to music, relaxing (which included doing nothing and thinking), reading, playing sports and other physical activities. A more recent time-use study showed that boys spend 1 to 3 hours a day time hanging out (defined as doing nothing, spending time at the mall or on street corners, going to bars or parties - generally unsupervised and unstructured activities) compared to girls who spend 1 hour or less hanging out (Kaufman et al., 2002). However, both of these studies have limitations; Møller's study (1991) was conducted nearly two decades ago with black youth during the apartheid era; and Kaufman et al. (2002) conducted their study in and around Durban, South Africa. Thus, the findings of these two studies cannot be considered applicable or representative to other groups of adolescents in South Africa.

2.4.3 Leisure boredom and risk behaviour

The next phase of the literature review was to examine the studies for evidence of an association between leisure boredom and risk behaviour. The findings are presented in Table 2.2.

2.4.3.1 Substance use

Studies in the developed world provided evidence that adolescent substance abusers were significantly more bored during their leisure time than non-substance users (Caldwell & Smith, 1994; Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991). Significant negative correlations were found between scores on the AEBL and the AEBL-S, and leisure boredom and substance use (Widmer et al., 1996; Widmer et al., 2003). In other words, students with less intellectual and creative activity, who lacked meaningful relationships and had lower moral standards and behaviour, experienced higher leisure boredom and used substances more than those who scored high on these variables. It is important to note that all of these studies included high-risk youth in special programmes.

In contrast to this, no significant association between leisure boredom and substance use was found among adolescents in Cape Town, South Africa (Wegner et al., 2006). However, this study did not include high-risk adolescents (in special programmes) and was conducted among students attending mainstream, public high schools. Finally, this was the only study in the developing world to have examined leisure boredom and risk behaviour. Clearly, more research needs to be done in the developing world to investigate this topic further.

2.4.3.2 Sexual risk

No studies examined sexual risk behaviour and leisure boredom specifically. However, a study of time use conducted in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa found that the number of hours spent hanging out was positively associated with having had sex in the last year (significant in African boys p = .000, African girls p = .000 and Indian boys p = .031) (Kaufman et al., 2002). Furthermore, the number of hours spent hanging out was negatively associated with condom use, although this was not significant for any group.

2.4.3.3 Dropout

No studies were located that examined dropout and leisure boredom.

2.4.3.4 Negative affect and delinquency

The review provided evidence for a link between leisure boredom, negative affect, delinquency and risk behaviour. Leisure alienated youth – or those who felt bored in leisure time and used leisure to reject adult structure – engaged in higher risk behaviour (cigarette and alcohol use, vomiting on purpose, attempting suicide and being depressed) than their peers (Caldwell & Smith, 1995). Boredom co-occurred with tiredness and drowsiness (under-stimulation) indicating a state of lower arousal, with frustration (forced-effort), and anger (resistance) (Larson & Richards, 1991). This study also found that free time boredom was significantly correlated with socially disruptive behaviour. Adolescents involved in delinquent activities were prone to experience boredom, and the tendency to experience boredom was significantly related to the number of arrestable behaviours reported (Newberry &

Duncan, 2001). Finally, among disabled college students, there was a positive correlation between aggressive behavioural tendency and free-time boredom, especially when respondents felt that time was standing still (Yang & Yoh, 2005).

2.4.3.5 Sensation seeking

Some studies have investigated the relationship between leisure boredom, risk behaviour and sensation seeking. Significant two-way interaction effects between sensation-seeking, leisure boredom and self esteem were found for substance use in both rural and urban adolescents in Australia (Gordon & Caltabiano, 1996). In this study, urban adolescents who engaged most heavily in substance use had low self-esteem and high leisure boredom. Urban adolescents who scored high on both sensation-seeking and leisure boredom, engaged most heavily in substance use. Substance-abusing adolescents reported higher leisure boredom and participated in leisure significantly more often than non-substance users (Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991). The authors offered the explanation that substance-users tended to differ from non-substance users in that they were more likely to be sensation seekers with a low tolerance for repetitious activities (Zuckerman, 1979) and became bored more easily, particularly if activities did not meet their need for optimal arousal and challenge (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988). This was supported by Caldwell and Smith (1994), who found that students who went out for fun five or more times a week were more bored and consumed higher levels of alcohol than their peers who went out less than five times a week. However, contrary to the findings of the above studies, Caldwell and Smith (1995) found that females who were bored engaged less in leisure activities than their peers, and bored males were less likely to go out in the evenings for fun.

An examination of the samples in these studies reveals certain differences that may explain the differences in the findings. Gordon and Caltabiano (1996) conducted their study with high-school students (n=145, mean age 14.3 years) in rural and urban Australia. The other three studies were all done in urban parts of the USA. Caldwell and Smith (1994) conducted their study with high-risk adolescents in a specialised programme (n=129, age range 12-16 years), and Iso-Ahola and Crowley (1991) conducted their study with adolescents diagnosed with substance use who were admitted to a treatment centre (n=39, mean age 16.6 years) and a control group of non-substance users from a private high school (n=81, mean age 16.1 years). All of these studies had relatively small sample sizes thus potentially lacking the necessary statistical power, in comparison to the study by Caldwell and Smith (1995) who conducted their study with 2756 high-school students in grades 9-12.

There is clearly a need for further research about the role of sensation seeking in leisure boredom and risk behaviour.

2.4.4 Measurement of leisure boredom

Only three studies could be located that measured leisure boredom specifically. These are presented in Table 2.3. The Leisure Boredom Scale (LBS) (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987, 1990) focussed specifically on leisure boredom, while the Leisure Experience Battery (Caldwell et al., 1992; Barnett, 2005) incorporated leisure boredom as one of four dimensions in the leisure experience.

Iso-Ahola and Weissinger (1987) devised the LBS based on literature regarding leisure and boredom constructs (Appendix 2.1). The 16-item instrument is scored on a 1-5 scale, with higher scores indicating higher leisure boredom. Secondary analysis of three studies of American college students (n=175, n=174, n=344, mean age 21 years) provided support for the reliability and validity of the LBS, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients of .85, .88 and .86 for the respective studies. No test-retest reliability was carried out in any of these studies. In further support of the validity and usability of the LBS, all constructs significantly correlated in the predicted manner; leisure boredom was negatively related to social competence, self-esteem, self-as-entertainment, social desirability, intrinsic leisure motivation, social desirability, leisure satisfaction, leisure ethic, frequency of participation in leisure activities, and perceived satisfaction with mental and physical health (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger). The authors suggested that further research was necessary to determine the applicability of the LBS with non-college student populations.

Caldwell et al., (1992) developed the Leisure Experience Battery for Adolescents (LEBA). This instrument includes four dimensions of leisure: (1) boredom (adapted from Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987); (2) awareness (adapted from Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987; Weissinger, Caldwell & Mobily, 1987); (3) challenge (adapted from Weissinger, 1985); and, (4) anxiety (developed for the study based on literature). The study was conducted with grade 10 students (n=1407, mean age not given) in Ontario, Canada. Test-retest reliability was calculated by following up these students in grade 11. Results from the internal consistency reliability analyses and the factor analysis indicated that the LEBA had promising reliability for use with adolescents, with Cronbach's alpha scores of .70 for boredom .70 for challenge .55 for awareness and .63 for anxiety. The authors felt that although these internal consistency scores were somewhat low, this was due to the low number of items in each scale rather than systematic error. The measures appeared to be consistent and stable over time, thus indicating that the LEBA could be used to evaluate the efficacy of leisure interventions where changes in scores could be interpreted as being due to the intervention rather than as a result of systematic error variance (Caldwell et al., 1992).

Barnett (2005) conducted a study to establish the psychometric properties of the LEBA with American college students (n=657, mean age 21 years). Results provided further support for the validity of the LEBA, with Cronbach's alpha scores of .73 for boredom, .72 for challenge, .67 for awareness, and .67 for anxiety (alpha increased to .74 when 1 item was deleted). Furthermore, the study provided support for the inclusion of boredom, challenge, awareness, and anxiety as aspects of research about leisure among young people; however, there could be other factors that could also form part of a battery to measure leisure experiences.

It is important to note that all of these studies were conducted in North America. In order to use the LBS and the LEBA with different populations, the psychometric properties of these measurements would first need to be established. This is particularly so in the developing world, where social, cultural and economic differences may be more evident.

2.4.5 Interventions for leisure boredom

Only two studies reported on interventions that addressed leisure boredom. These are presented in Table 2.4. Both interventions were school-based interventions that aimed to reduce risk behaviour through positive use of free time. TimeWise (Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith, 2004) was implemented with mainly white grade 7 students in rural Pennsylvania, USA. HealthWise (Caldwell et al., 2004) was implemented with coloured and black grade 8 students in a low socio-economic part of Cape Town, South Africa. TimeWise was a longitudinal study which followed one cohort of grade 7 students through three years of schooling. The 7-lesson TimeWise curriculum focused specifically on leisure awareness and motivation, and developing leisure interests in an effort to reduce substance use risk behaviour.

The HealthWise curriculum was designed as a 17-lesson curriculum that incorporated components of the TimeWise intervention, but also included life skills such as anger management and conflict resolution, in an effort to address both substance use and sexual risk behaviour. Students who participated in the TimeWise curriculum showed improvements in motivation, an increase in participation in new leisure activities, and a reduction in boredom (Caldwell et al., 2004). The HealthWise study was a description of the pilot study in preparation for a large randomized control trial; thus, outcomes were not available. However, the authors reported a positive response to the curriculum from participating educators and students. Once the outcomes are available it will be interesting to compare these two studies that had fairly similar goals and curricula, yet were conducted with totally different populations of students and settings.

2.4.6 Limitations

Certain limitations in this systematic review of the literature require consideration. Firstly, it is possible that there was a selection bias as only one researcher (as opposed to a team) conducted the search and decided which studies to include, although an effort was made to restrict this bias (see Methods). Secondly, the review did not include a meta-analysis as the studies did not all lend themselves to statistical comparison. Finally, only studies published in English were included. The implication of not including studies published in other languages is that important and relevant insights and knowledge may have been missed in this review. Spanish or Portuguese studies conducted in South America (as part of the developing world) may have provided useful comparisons for the present research.

2.4.7 Further research

A useful outcome of a systematic review of literature is that gaps in the knowledge base are revealed; thus, areas for further research can be identified. The most striking finding of this review was that from the perspective of the developing world, there has been very little research in the field of leisure boredom and risk behaviour among young people. In fact, the phenomenon of leisure boredom has received relatively little attention right throughout the world.

There have been no investigations into the psychometric properties of measurements of leisure boredom among adolescent populations in the developing world. It is important that the reliability and validity of measurements is established before research about leisure boredom can be done in these contexts. For this reason, we conducted a study to establish the psychometric properties of the Leisure Boredom Scale (LBS) (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990) for use with South African adolescents (chapter 3).

No studies anywhere have investigated the association between leisure boredom and dropout (early school leaving), and sexual risk. In South Africa, where problems such as dropout, substance use and sexual risk behaviour (leading to teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections including HIV) are concerning, it is vital that research be conducted to investigate the factors that are associated with these risk behaviours. Furthermore, most studies in this field are cross-sectional studies and very few longitudinal studies of leisure boredom exist. There is a need for more longitudinal studies of leisure boredom and risk behaviour as these would reveal whether leisure boredom is a predictor of risk behaviour, and how this changes over time. This provided the rationale for a study of leisure boredom and dropout to be conducted (chapter 4).

Despite leisure boredom being identified as a factor associated with risk behaviour in the developed world, there is a paucity of research that has determined the efficacy of interventions that address leisure boredom among young people. There is a need for such interventions to be developed, implemented, adapted and evaluated for their efficacy and effectiveness, in both the developed and the developing world. To address this issue, a study was conducted that investigated the process of cultural adaptation of a school-based intervention that aimed to promote healthy use of leisure time, prevent boredom and reduce risk behaviour (chapter 6). Cross-cultural comparisons of interventions and young people's responses to the interventions would further enhance this process of investigation. Building on this concept, another potential area of research is to conduct cross-cultural comparisons between different groups of adolescents regarding leisure boredom, related factors such as motivation and self-determination, and risk behaviour. This would give insight as to how the leisure experience differs or is similar in different contexts and environments.

Finally, only studies that employed quantitative methods of enquiry were included in this systematic review of the literature. However, the value and usefulness of using qualitative research to understand the phenomenon of leisure boredom and risk behaviour should not be underestimated. The study presented in chapter 5 makes use of qualitative methods to understand adolescents' perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in free time.

2.5 Conclusion

This systematic review has summarised and synthesised empirical research about leisure boredom among adolescents. Specifically, the review examined the evidence of leisure boredom among adolescents and the association with risk behaviour, measurement of leisure boredom, and interventions that have addressed leisure boredom among adolescents. Due to a degree of heterogeneity in the methodologies employed in the various studies, comparisons of findings were complicated. Gaps in the knowledge basis were identified, thus providing the rationale for the studies presented in chapters 3, 4, 5 and 6 of the thesis.

In conclusion, leisure boredom is a multifaceted, complex phenomenon that warrants more attention from both researchers and programme developers. The most striking observation from this review was how few studies have actually focussed on leisure boredom and risk behaviour in adolescents, despite the multitude of studies that have cited boredom in relation to risk behaviour. Furthermore, the experience of leisure boredom is influenced by a variety of different factors, not least of which is the environment or context within which adolescents are situated. It follows that leisure boredom is a phenomenon that requires further ongoing investigation in relation to adolescent risk behaviour. This is particularly vital in the developing world, where previous research in this regard has been seriously lacking.

Table 2.1 Description of study samples, measurements and variables

Authors (year) Study Location	Sample	Measurements	Variables
Cross-sectional studies			
Barnett (2005) Midwest USA	Undergraduate students N=657 Mean age 20.8 years Age range 18-30 years 48% males 39% European-American 33% African -American 17% Asian-American 11% Hispanic-American	Leisure Experience Battery (Caldwell, Smith & Weissinger, 1992) measures dimensions of leisure experience: Boredom: $\alpha = .69$ Challenge: $\alpha = .70$ Awareness: $\alpha = .55$ Anxiety: $\alpha = .63$	Not applicable.
Barnett & Klitzing (2006) Midwestern USA (rural)	Undergraduate students N=999 Mean age 20.8 years Age range 18-30 years 57% males 53% European-American 28% African-American 10% Asian-American 9% Hispanic-American	Leisure Experience Battery for Young Adults (Barnett, 2005) (boredom, awareness, challenge and anxiety) $\alpha = .61$ to $.89$ Revised NEO Personality inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1992) (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism & openness to experience), reliable and valid. Self-as-Entertainment (Mannell, 1984) (self, mind-play & environment), reliable and valid. Positive and Negative Affect Scales (Watson, Clark & Tellegen, 1998), internal consistency and valid. Work Preference Inventory (Amabile, Hill, Hennessey & Tighe, 1994) to measure motivation. $\alpha = .76$ to $.82$ Demographic information.	Boredom in free time.

Caldwell & Kivel (1998) County in south-eastern USA	Grades 9-12 N=2756 n=111 (4%) identified as gay or questioning sexual identity 46% males 14% minority groups	Sexual attraction used as surrogate for sexual identity. Leisure experience (free time as context for rebellion, leisure identity, boredom in free time using index from Leisure Experience Battery for Adolescents (Caldwell, Smith & Weissinger, 1992), parental control over leisure, loneliness), α = .66 to .74. Leisure behaviour (leisure participation, time spent in leisure), α = "… low but acceptable to continue exploratory analysis" (Caldwell & Kivel, 1998, p. 344). Health behaviour (binge drinking, suicide attempts, degree of strain, stress or pressure, feelings of sadness or depression), standardised items takes from Youth Risk Behavior Survey (Kolbe, Kahn & Collins, 1993). Item on fear of attending school due to being threatened by other students.	Binge drinking, suicide attempts, degree of strain, stress or pressure, feelings of sadness or depression.
Caldwell & Smith (1994) North Carolina USA (urban)	High-risk youth in Teen-Up Programme N=129 Age range 12-16 years 32% males 31% African-America 69% Anglo-American	Selected items from various scales.	Stress, general anxiety and worry, school anxiety and worry, school boredom, leisure boredom.
Caldwell & Smith (1995) County in south-eastern USA	N=2756 Grades 9-12 from 4 high schools	Closed-ended questionnaire including items from Youth Risk Behaviour Survey (smoking, drinking, suicide, vomiting on purpose, depression) Profiles of student life Leisure Experience Battery for Adolescents, α = .75 Questions for measuring adolescents' use of leisure as a reaction to or rejection of adult structures, α = .70 leisure participation (4 behaviours) leisure alienation (2 aspects -boredom & reject adult structure).	Smoking, drinking, suicide, vomiting on purpose, depression.

Caldwell, Smith & Weissinger (1992) Ontario, Canada	Grade 10 students followed up in Grade 11 N=1407 47% males	Leisure Experience Battery for Adolescents includes four dimensions: Boredom in leisure (adapted from Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987) Leisure awareness (adapted from Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987; Weissinger, Caldwell & Mobily, 1987) Leisure challenge (adapted from Weissinger, 1985) Leisure anxiety (developed for study based on literature).	Not applicable.
Caldwell, Smith, Flisher, Wegner, Vergnani, Mathews & Mpofu (2004) Cape Town, South Africa (urban)	Grade 8 students attending high schools in a low socio-economic status area N=345 Mean age 14 years 86% coloured 9% black 4% white	Not applicable.	Risk behaviour.
Farnworth (1998) Australia	Criminal offenders on probation N=36 Mean age 16 years Age range 13-18 years	Experience Sampling Method (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1984) Questions about current situation, occupation, skills for situation, challenges, motivation and moods Personal interviews before and after time of call.	Not applicable.
Gordon & Caltabiano (1996) Australia (urban and rural)	Grade 8, 10, 12 N=145 n=75 from Cairns (urban) n=65 from Atherton (rural) Mean age 14.3 years Age range 12-19 years	Self-Rating Scale (Fleming & Courtney, 1984) measures individuals' self-esteem. Validity with high-school students not established. Sensation-Seeking Scale Form II (Zuckerman et al., 1964) measures the sensation-seeking motive, α = .68 to .74. Leisure Boredom Scale (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990) Adolescent Leisure-Time Use Inventory: quantitative and qualitative items regarding time use, activity choices, reasons for involvement, overall satisfaction or dissatisfaction with leisure-time use. Passive and active leisure, social leisure, work-related activities, clubs, hobbies, substance use, crime. Pearson r. = .76 and .84.	Leisure satisfaction, leisure boredom, self esteem, sensation seeking, substance use, crime.

Iso-Ahola & Crowley (1991) USA (urban)	N=39 substance users Mean age 16.6 years Age range 15-18 years 54% male 87% white N=81 (control group of non-substance users) Mean age 16.1 years Age range 15-18 years 56% male 77% white	Leisure Boredom Scale (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987), α = .85 to .88.	Substance abuse.
Iso-Ahola & Weissinger (1990) USA	College students Study 1: n=175 Age – not given 57% males 88% white Study 2: n=174 Mean age 21.3 years (range 17-64) 48% males Study 3: n=344 Mean age 20.6 years (range 18-40) 47% males	Leisure Boredom Scale (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987), α = .85 to .88 Perceived Social Competence (Oppenheim, 1984), α = .85 Single-item indicators of boredom to test for construct validity Self-as-Entertainment (Mannell, 1984), α = .73 Intrinsic Leisure Motivation (Weissinger, 1985), α = .86 Self Esteem Scale (Rosenberg, 1965) Social Desirability Scale (Crowne & Marlow, 1964) Leisure participation Mental and physical health - perceived satisfaction with… Leisure Satisfaction (Pierce, 1980), α = .88 Leisure Ethic (Crandall & Slivken, 1980), α = .74.	Not applicable.
Kaufman, Clark, Manzini & May (2002) Durban and Mtunzini, South Africa (urban and rural respectively)	Youths N=2992 Age range 14-22 years 14-15y = 25% 16-19y = 50% 20-22y = 25% 45% males 80% black 14% Indian 6% white	Individual interviews included questions on sexual health and behaviours as well as on the context of adolescents' lives including schooling, work and other activities. Educational history and current enrolment status. Work experiences, participation in organisations. Time-use data - a 24 hr time-use schedule, recording hourly the activities engaged in.	Risky sexual behaviour: specifically having had sex in last 12 months and condom use at last sexual intercourse.

Larson & Richards (1991) Chicago, USA (urban)	Grades 5 to 9 N=392	Experience-Sampling Method (ESM) (Csikszentmihalyi & Larson, 1987) including contextual variables "what were you doing?" and "where were you going?", boredom and other subjective explanations for boredom. Measures of individual difference included socio-economic status, school ability and achievement, oppositional behaviour mental health variables (depression and self-esteem.	Boredom.
Møller (1991) Johannesburg, Cape Town, Durban, South Africa (urban and rural)	Youths were either at school, employed, unemployed or housewives N=1200 Age range 16-24 years 100% black	Contact interview about respondent's background and spare time behaviour and attitudes. Two diaries - one weekday and one weekend - where respondents recorded their daily activities Recall interview where fieldworker went through diaries with respondents and recorded further information onto standard time budget schedules. Included duration in activity, secondary activities, who was present, where activity took place, degree of liking and perceived freedom of choice.	General – not specified.
Newberry & Duncan (2001) Mid-southern USA	High school students Mean grade = 10.4 Grade range 9-12 N=418 Mean age 15.6 years Age range 14-18 years 44% males 96.5% white 1.5% black 2% Other	Boredom Proneness Scale (Farmer & Sundberg, 1986), internal reliability .79, $\alpha = .72$ overall. Possible Selves Questionnaire (Porter, Markus & Nurius, 1984), $\alpha = .88$ to .91 Self-Reported Delinquency Scale (Ross, 1995), $\alpha = .91$.	Delinquency defined in study as participation in various delinquent activities including but not limited to cursing, lying, truancy, theft, illegal substance use, cheating, vandalism, rape and gang activity.
Patterson, Pegg & Dobson-Patterson (2000) Brisbane and Rockhampton, Australia (urban and rural respectively)	First year university students N=271 48% males Mean age 20 years Majority Caucasian with small proportion of minority ethnic groups	Leisure Boredom Scale (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987) Leisure Self-Determination Scale, $\alpha = .84$, measures the extent to which peoples' leisure is perceived to have been self-determined. Survey also included questions about current consumption of alcohol, cigarettes and other drugs, and how much they spent per week on these substances.	Alcohol use, cigarette use, illicit drug use, cost of use per week.

Shaw, Caldwell & Kleiber (1996) Canada (urban)	Grade 10 N=73 Age range 15-16 years 52% males Interviews n=20 40% males	Time use survey: questions on time use patterns, time spent on different activities, obligatory and non-obligatory attitudes towards time, work and leisure, time stress, boredom, choice/lack of choice in activities in-school and out-of-school. Interview: semi-structured, one hour, kinds of free time activities participated in, experiences of time stress, boredom and choice - school, work and leisure situations.	Boredom, time-stress, lack of choice, lack of control.
Wegner, Flisher, Muller & Lombard (2006) Cape Town, South Africa (urban)	High school students Grades 8 & 11 40% males N=610 26.6% black 24.2% white 47.4% coloured	Leisure Boredom Scale (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987) Risk Behaviour survey.	Substance use - cigarettes, alcohol, drugs.
Weissinger, Caldwell & Bandolas (1992) USA (urban)	College undergraduates N=525 Mean age 20.9 years Age range 18-40 years 58% males	Leisure Boredom Scale (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987) Intrinsic Leisure Motivation scale (Weissinger, 1985, 1986), α = .87 to .91, includes Self Determination and Competence sub-scales. Leisure Ethic Scale (Crandall & Slivken 1980), test-retest reliability .59 to .87. Leisure repertoire - average frequency of participation in leisure activities. Age, gender.	Not applicable.
Widmer, Ellis & Munson (2003) USA (urban and rural)	Students from preparatory schools, high schools, youth correction / detention centres, and adolescent psychiatric treatment centres. N= 2498 Mean age 15.7 years Age range 12-19 years 54% males 25% minority groups	Aristotelian Ethical Behavior in Leisure Scale short form (AEBLS-S) Leisure Boredom Scale (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990) Children's Social Desirability Scale (Crandall, Crandall & Katkovsky, 1965), split-half reliability .82 to .95. Measures of education involvement, substance abuse and legal involvement.	Not applicable.

Widmer, Ellis & Trunnell (1996) Utah, USA (urban)	High risk group (from a detention centre and a long-term treatment centre) Low risk group (from a high school) N=346 Mean age 16.1 years Age range 12-19 years 15% low-risk and 33% high-risk were from minority ethnic groups	Adolescent Ethical Behaviour in Leisure Scale (AEBLS), $\alpha = .90$. Leisure Boredom Scale (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987).	High risk vs. low risk behaviour, substance use, school bonding, leisure boredom.
Yang & Yoh (2005) Midwestern USA	College students with various disabilities (N=101) including: 24% learning disabilities 21% attention deficit/hyperactivity 16% physical disabilities 7% hearing impairment 6% brain injury 2% visual impairment 1% mobility impairment 23% unspecified disability Mean age 25.4 years 33% males 88% white 10% African-American 1% Hispanic 1% Asian	Free-Time Boredom Scale (Ragheb, Merydith & Burlingame, 1995), $\alpha = .92$ Physical involvement, $\alpha = .78$ to $.92$ Mental involvement Meaningfulness - focus or purpose during free time Speed of time - enough purposeful activity to fill time Aggression inventory (Gladue, 1991), $\alpha = .70$ to $.82$ Physical aggression Verbal aggression Demographics.	Verbal and physical aggression, boredom in free time.

Longitudinal Studies

Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith (2004) Pennsylvania, USA (rural)	Grade 7 students N=634 49% male 95% European-American	Free Time Motivation Scale for Adolescents (Baldwin & Caldwell, 2003), α = .68 to .78, measures amotivation, extrinsic, introjected, identified and intrinsic motivation. Affective response to leisure, α = .75, – degree of boredom and degree to which free time contributes to wellbeing. Leisure skills, α = .64 to .84, - initiative, peer influence, planning and decision-making skills, ability to restructure boring situation. Awareness of, and participation in, leisure activities in Communities, α = .50 to .72.	Distal outcome – substance use.
Caldwell, Darling, Payne & Dowdy (1999) Pennsylvania, USA (urban)	Grade 8 students N=82 Mean age 13.2 years 49% male 92% white	In-school questionnaire included questions about parents, friends, leisure, school achievement, intrinsic motivation, boredom in free time and problem behaviours, for example vandalism, substance use etc. Follow-up questionnaire at home and interview - parental monitoring, information disclosure to parents, conflict over rules, adolescent autonomy, self-esteem and dating. Activity diary - assessed daily free time behaviours and experiences. Situation Level variables – reason for participation in activity, and specific activity. Individual Difference Level variables – Parental monitoring (Patterson & Stouthamer-Loeber, 1984), α = .80; and Intrinsic motivation (Harter, 1981), α = .86.	Boredom.
Sharp, Caldwell, Graham & Ridenour (2006) Appalachia, USA (rural)	Middle school students from nine schools N=354 53% males 96% white	Free Time Motivation Scale for Adolescents (Baldwin & Caldwell, 2003) – Amotivation, α = .77; Self-regulation, α = .83. Parental control (extent to which adolescents feel their parents interfere with, or control, free time), α = .68. Parental knowledge (adolescents' perceptions about parents' knowledge of how they spend their time), α = .88. Boredom sub-scale of Leisure Experience Battery (Caldwell et al., 1992), α = .75.	Boredom in free time, amotivation.

Table 2.2 Evidence of leisure boredom, and the association with risk behaviour

Authors	Hypothesis/ Theoretical Framework	Main Findings
Barnett & Klitzing (2006)	The study examines the extent to which individuals are predisposed to experience boredom regardless of environment features. Individuals' experiences of boredom in free time are examined, as well as relationships with personality, affect, motivation, and demographics.	Free Time Boredom (FTB) scale possessed satisfactory reliability for all student groups (range .61 to .89) indicating that the FTB scale could be used to explore relationships with personality, motivation, and affect. Most significant predictor of differences in propensity to experience boredom was the self sub-scale of Self-As-Entertainment - individuals who were poor at entertaining themselves were most likely to report being bored with unfilled free time. The mind-play Self-As-Entertainment sub-scale was also predictive - individuals who turned inward towards fantasy and imagination were most likely to be bored in their free time. Two personality traits - extraversion and openness to experiences - also predicted boredom, in that individuals who were introverted and preferred novelty and variety in their free time activities were most likely to feel bored with unfilled free time. Students who were generally negative in affect also tended to be more bored. Intrinsic motivation to seek enjoyment was strongly and inversely related to the propensity to experience boredom in free time. Therefore, study provided evidence that internal characteristics significantly predicted free time boredom. In addition, race and ethnicity, and gender were significant predictors of boredom.
Caldwell, Darling, Payne & Dowdy (1999)	When adolescents feel controlled, they experience boredom. When adolescents feel autonomous and self-determined, they are less bored. Situational level: the 'want to' situation would produce the lowest levels of boredom. Individual difference level: high levels of perceived parental monitoring would be predictive of higher levels of leisure boredom. Low levels of intrinsic motivation would predict higher levels of leisure boredom.	Predicting boredom: 23% of variance in adolescents' reported boredom can be explained by individual differences while the remaining 77% is attributed to situational differences plus error. At the individual difference level, adolescents with lower intrinsic motivation and lower levels of perceived parental monitoring were more likely to be bored ($p < .05$). Gender did not predict individual differences in boredom. Situational level: adolescents participating in an activity because they 'wanted to' were less bored than when they participated because they 'had to' ($p = .000$). 'Having no choice' or 'having nothing else to do' were predictive of boredom. Influence of context on reason and boredom - the reason adolescents participate in leisure activities varies by activity type. About 41% of the time adolescents had 'nothing else to do'. The effect of reason on boredom by activity - when the reason adolescents participate in an activity is because they 'want to', they experience the lowest level of boredom.

Caldwell & Kivel (1998)	Ecological Systems Theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1992, 1995).	Gay youth and those questioning their sexual identity experienced leisure differently and more negatively than their non-gay peers ($p < .000$). Gay males were more bored in their leisure time than their non-gay peers. Gay males tended to use free time to rebel ($p < .062$) and reported that their parents had too much control over their free time. Gay youth were less likely to report doing things in their free time that were healthy ($p < .008$), were less likely to go out for fun in the evening ($p < . 011$) and were less likely to engage in aerobic activity ($p < 001$). Gay youth more likely to engage in binge drinking ($p < .052$), feel depressed ($p < .000$), under stress ($p < .017$), and have attempted suicide ($p < .022$).
Caldwell & Smith (1994)	Youth risk behaviour Problem Behaviour Theory (Jessor & Jessor, 1977).	Students more bored in school than leisure. Male drinkers indicated a higher level of boredom in leisure ($p < . 019$). Students who went out for fun 5 or more times a week were more bored than their peers who went out less than 5 times a week ($p < .0173$). Proposed that the Model of Problem Behaviour (Jessor & Jessor, 1977) be expanded and modified to include a leisure context. Thus the model posits a relationship among a psychological system, a perceived environmental system, a community system, a leisure behaviour system, and an outcomes-of-behaviour system.
Caldwell & Smith (1995)	Models of boredom: Cognitive Psychological Social construction.	Found a relationship between alienated leisure and high risk health behaviours with approx 9% males and 8% females feeling that leisure time was boring, and approx 17% females and 19% males using leisure time to get back at parents and society. Both males and females who fell into this alienated leisure category engaged in higher levels of at-risk health behaviours than their peers. Females who were bored engaged less in leisure activities than their peers. Bored males were less likely to go out in the evenings for fun. Study questions the positive benefits of leisure for leisure-alienated youth.
Farnworth (1998)	Boredom as lack of challenge (Csikszentmihalyi & Csikszentmihalyi, 1988) Boredom is a state where person perceives challenge of task to be less than their skills Boredom as underarousal (boredom susceptibility, thrill seeking indicate underarousal as basis for boredom) eg. Zuckerman (1990, 1991) Boredom as information overload (Klapp, 1986) Overload of information experienced as noise, the more noise in the environment, the less meaning we can receive.	57% of wakeful hours of young offenders was spent in leisure occupations, predominantly passive leisure such as listening to music or watching TV. Participants reported feeling bored 42% of the times they were beeped. 62% of their reported time was spent in occupations that they experienced as under-challenging in relationship to their perceived skills. Boredom was experienced significantly more in passive than active leisure occupations.

Gordon & Caltabiano (1996)	A relationship exists between leisure opportunities and leisure satisfaction. The total leisure participation hours and types of leisure activities adolescents choose will be a function of interactive effects between self-esteem and sensation-seeking, self-esteem and leisure boredom, and sensation-seeking and leisure boredom. A positive relationship exists between self-esteem, leisure control, and leisure satisfaction.	Mean number of hours spent per week on leisure was 54.7 (SD 26.9). Reported participation rates were highest for passive leisure and lowest for active leisure. Urban adolescents spent highest number of hours in social leisure and rural adolescents in passive leisure. Rural adolescents scored higher on LBS (M=36, range 16-59) than urban adolescents (M=34, range 14-59). Significant two-way interaction effects between sensation-seeking, leisure boredom, and self esteem were found for substance use for each location. Urban adolescents who engaged most heavily in substance use had low self-esteem and high leisure boredom ($p < .05$). Urban adolescents who scored high on both sensation-seeking and leisure boredom, engaged most heavily in substance use ($p < .05$). Among rural adolescents, self-esteem interacted with leisure boredom, indicating that the heaviest substance users had low self-esteem and scored low on leisure boredom ($p < .05$). Thus for rural adolescents, low self-esteem had a greater effect than sensation seeking, whereas high sensation seeking had more of an effect on urban adolescents' substance use than did self-esteem. Low leisure boredom was related to crime involvement among those who scored high on self-esteem in rural adolescents.
Iso-Ahola and Crowley (1991)	There is a relationship between substance use, leisure boredom and leisure participation. Adolescent substance users are more likely to experience leisure boredom than non-substance users.	Substance abusers were significantly more bored with leisure than non-substance users ($p < .001$). Substance abusers' frequency of participation in leisure was significantly higher than non-substance users ($p < .032$). Explanation: adolescent substance users tended to differ from non-substance users in that they were more likely to be sensation seekers with a low tolerance for repetitious activities (Zuckerman, 1978). Substance users engaged more often in leisure activities but become bored easily especially if the activity did not meet their need for optimal arousal (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). May potentially lead to substance use and other anti-social activities.

Kaufman, Clark, Manzini & May (2002)	The importance of contextual factors on adolescent behaviour in South Africa. Theories of community effects on adolescents' behaviour. The extent to which adolescents perceive community opportunities and then take advantage of them will shape their sexual risk-taking behaviour.	47% adolescents had sex in last 12 months. Of these, 47% used condom at last sex. 9% had 2 or more partners. Time-use differences for race and gender: African and Indian females spent twice as much time as their male counterparts in unpaid work. African (12%) and Indian (9%) boys spent the most time hanging out (defined as doing nothing, hanging out at the mall or street corner, going to bars or parties - generally unsupervised and unstructured activities). African and Indian males reported the highest proportion of time in organised activities (6%) (sports, music, church groups, other programs and clubs). In contrast, girls reported little hanging out time (7% or less), and relatively low levels of participation in organised activities (4% or less). Association of time-use and risky behaviour: Number of hours spent hanging out is positively associated with having had sex in last year, (significant in African boys $p = .000$, African girls $p = .000$ and Indian boys $p = .031$). Number of hours spent hanging out is negatively associated with condom use, but not significant for any group. Girls participating in sports were significantly less likely to report having sex in past year ($p < .024$). Whereas boys who participated in sports were significantly more likely not to use condoms ($p < .005$). May be because participation in sport increases opportunities for sex and enhances perception that 'real men' don't use condoms. Results suggest that opportunities – or the lack of them - are likely to influence adolescents' sexual behaviour. Programmes/policies will influence behaviour only to the extent that they make sense in the context of the person's life.
Larson & Richards (1991)	Do students define boredom in association with understimulation, forced effort or resistance? Do they experience boredom primarily in school, or also outside of school? Is boredom uniform across school (resistance) or does it vary by type of school activity (reflecting more immediate conditions)? Does boredom increase as children move into the more oppositional stage of adolescence? Does the frequency of boredom vary by individual, and if so, is it related to ability level, psychological dispositions such as depression, or indicators of opposition to school and authority?	Boredom co-occurred with tiredness and drowsiness ($p < .001$) (under-stimulation) indicating a state of lower arousal, with frustration ($p < .01$) (forced-effort), and anger ($p < .001$) (resistance). Boredom was not confined to school work but occurred across all domains of adolescents' lives. The same youths who reported higher boredom during school work also experienced high rates of boredom outside school. Boredom outside school was most frequently attributed to having nothing to do (understimulation). Rates of boredom during class are not constant but vary according to task context - boredom highest in academic subjects such as science and lowest in applied subjects such as art and gym. Boredom higher in passive activities such as listening to teacher and lower in social, interactive activities such as discussions. Boredom during non-schoolwork time is higher in seventh and eighth graders but falls to below elementary school levels in the ninth grade (attributed this to entry into senior high school) ($p < .009$). Rates of boredom during school and after school were highly correlated ($r = .68$) indicating strong contribution of individual differences, and that boredom is not wholly a product of context. Boredom outside of schoolwork was not related to SES. Free time boredom was significantly correlated with socially disruptive behaviour and marginally correlated with mental health (depression and self-esteem).

Møller (1991)	Not stated.	On weekdays, respondents had on average 5 hours free. On weekends they had 7-71/2 hours free. Dominant free time activities included conversations, watching TV, listening to music, relaxing (which includes doing nothing and thinking), reading, sports and physical activities. Watching TV and hanging out with friends in the case of men were typically daily events. Young men had more opportunities than young women to socialise and go on social outings. Men were also more likely to undertake serious leisure (which had limited appeal) such as adult education and community service and meetings. Young women spent on average two and a half times more time on domestic duties than men. Relative to other young people, the unemployed and housewives had the most free time, yet were most at risk of leisure deprivation as they were unable to utilise this time. Over half of these respondents complained of boredom in their lives. Thus is it the quality of spare time and not the quantity which influences well-being. Major perceived constraints to leisure were money, lack of facilities and few opportunities to access facilities. Lack of permission from home constrained younger adolescents and women. Approx. one-third reported that their friends smoked cigarettes and hung around in groups. 30% reported that their friends drank alcohol and 6% used dagga. The reported incidence of problem behaviour (substance use and pick-pocketing) was lowest for young women and highest for unemployed youth (significance not stated).
Newberry and Duncan (2001)	Concept of possible selves (Oyserman & Markus, 1990): the representation of the self that each person would like to become, could become, and is afraid of becoming.	Significant gender difference in boredom proneness: males reported higher boredom proneness than females ($p = .001$). Boredom proneness related to delinquency ($p = .0001$). Tendency to experience boredom related to arrestable behaviours ($p = .0001$). Tendency to experience boredom related to number of non-arrestable delinquent behaviours reported ($p = .0001$). Adolescents involved in delinquent activities are prone to experience boredom.

Patterson, Pegg & Dobson-Patterson (2000)	Leisure as free time is not always positive, and may result in leisure boredom. Boredom is related to detrimental behaviour such as delinquency, extreme sensation-seeking activity and substance use. Substance users more likely to experience leisure boredom. Substance users more likely to be sensation-seekers and have lower tolerance for repetitious activities (Zuckerman, 1978). Important for adolescents with substance use problems to participate in positive leisure activities.	No significant difference in LBS scores in urban (mean score 32.50) vs. rural (mean score 33.32). Therefore, no significant relationship between geographical area and leisure boredom. There was a significant interaction between gender and geographical area in terms of LBS scores. Rural females experienced higher LB than rural males, compared to urban males and females, who did not differ significantly. Therefore, the rural female group experienced highest levels of leisure boredom. This supports findings of Jones (1992) who concluded that for young girls growing up in rural areas of Australia, there was nothing to do in comparison with young boys. In addition, rural communities offered few recreation facilities to cater for the interests of young women, especially those who were not sports-minded.
Sharp, Caldwell, Graham & Ridenour (2006)	Study examined whether adolescents' motivational styles (self-regulation and amotivation) mediated the role of parental knowledge and control on the development and sustenance of interest in free time. It was expected that experiences of interest and self-regulation would decrease, while amotivation would increase across the middle school years. Parental knowledge and parental control of adolescent free time would decrease across 7th, 8th and 9th grades. It was expected that adolescents' motivational styles would mediate the impact that parental practices had on adolescent experiences of interest.	Youth reported higher levels of amotivation in 9th grade compared to 7th and 8th grades. Youth reported lower levels of self-regulated motivation in 9th grade compared to 7th grade. Youth reported higher levels of interest during free time in 7th and 8th grades compared to 9th grade. Compared to males, females reported higher levels of parental knowledge of their free time use. Males reported greater interest in free time than females. There were no significant grade level differences in parental knowledge or parental control. Parental knowledge had a direct positive impact on adolescent interest. Parental knowledge was associated with adolescents having more motivation and being more self-regulated in their free time. Parental control had a direct negative impact on adolescents' interest. Parental control had a significant positive association with amotivation. For both males and females, amotivation was significantly negatively related to experiences of interest, stronger for females.

Shaw, Caldwell & Kleiber (1996)	Social control theory – adolescent time use is structured largely by adults. Adolescent experiences and behaviours can be regarded as a response to, reaction to, or alienation of adult structures.	Students spent half their waking time in non-obligatory activities. Females spent more time in obligatory activities than males. Most common non-obligatory activity was social activities with friends including hanging out, talking on phone and parties. Approximately half students reported that they often felt rushed (time stress) both in and out of school. Female students experienced greater time stress out of school than males. Time stress was related to the demands and expectations of adult-structured activities. Tendency for male students to report boredom more often than female students both in and out of school, although not statistically significant. Some of the boredom and stress experienced was related to adolescent responses to adult structures, including adult expectations (school, home and recreation), and family free time activities. Some adolescents felt a degree of lack of choice in discretionary activities because of pressure from adults and friends. Thus evidence that social control mechanisms affect free time and leisure experiences of adolescents. Study suggests that social control mechanisms are gendered - females affected more by social control mechanisms.
Wegner, Flisher, Muller & Lombard (2006)	Leisure boredom would be related to substance use, age, gender and race.	Younger students reported higher leisure boredom than older students ($p < .055$). Female students reported higher leisure boredom than male students ($p < .003$). Black students reported relatively higher leisure boredom than coloured students, with white students reporting relatively lowest leisure boredom ($p < .000$). No significant association between leisure boredom and substance use. However for all three substances, students who scored 41-50 on LBS were at lowest risk of using substances. This was significant for recent alcohol use ($p = .003$).
Weissinger, Caldwell & Bandolas (1992)	Higher levels of desire for intrinsic rewards (self-determination and competence) would be strong and negative predictors of boredom in leisure time.	The self-determination sub-scale of the Leisure Motivation Scale explained the greatest amount of variance in boredom. The competence sub-scale explained the next greatest amount of variance, followed by leisure ethic, and leisure repertoire. Higher levels of self-determination, competence, leisure ethic, age and leisure repertoire were associated with lower levels of leisure boredom . Gender was not a significant predictor of leisure boredom.

Widmer, Ellis & Munson (2003)	Reducing number of items in an instrument may have a negative impact on reliability and validity. The AEBLS-S should be able to differentiate between adolescents who are living an ethical leisure lifestyle and those who are not. High scores on the AEBLS-S should be associated with high educational performance and aspirations, and low dispositional boredom. High scores on the AEBLS-S should predict low levels of substance use and low levels of criminal involvement.	Reliability - the alpha reliability estimates of the AEBLS-S were .88 and deemed appropriate. Internal consistency estimates for LBS were .83 Validity - results support criterion-related evidence of validity of inferences that may be made from AEBLS-S. Significant, moderate correlation between AEBLS-S and educational performance ($p < .0001$). Weak but significant negative correlation between AEBLS-S and substance abuse ($p < .001$). Significant negative correlation between AEBLS-S and dispositional leisure boredom ($p < .001$). AEBLS-S scores between risk groups were significantly different.
Widmer, Ellis & Trunnell (1996)	Aristotelian ethical life perspective: characterised by a curious, inquisitive approach to life that leads to learning beyond that needed for survival, meaningful relationships and moral behaviour. Aristotelian ethical leisure behaviour: intellectual activity, creative activity, meaningful relationships, moral behaviour.	Low risk group scored higher on AEBLS than high risk group ($p < .05$) Significant positive correlation between AEBLS scores and school bonding ($p < .001$) Significant negative correlation between AEBLS scores and leisure boredom ($p < .001$) Significant negative correlation between AEBLS scores and substance use ($p < .001$).
Yang & Yoh (2005)	There would be a positive relationship between aggressive behavioural tendency and perceived free-time boredom among college students with disabilities.	Participants had a relatively low level of free-time boredom and perceived their free time as being relatively free from boredom. Respondents wanted their free time activities to last longer and to feel comfortable with their speed. There was a positive correlation between aggressive behavioural tendency and free-time boredom ($p < .05$). Suggests that college students with disabilities are more likely to become aggressive when they feel bored. There was a significant correlation between aggressive behavioural tendency and speed of time, in other words, respondents tended to become more aggressive when they felt like time was standing still.

Table 2.3 Measurement of leisure boredom

Authors	Hypothesis/ Theoretical Framework	Main Findings
Barnett (2005)	Based on the Leisure Experience Battery (LEB) for adolescents (Caldwell et al., 1992), the aim was to establish the psychometric properties of the LEB for use with college students.	Data indicated internal consistency in items and that LEB could be used with college students (with minor modifications). Internal consistency (alpha) scores for sub-scales were: .73 for Boredom, .72 for Challenge, .67 for Awareness, .67 for Anxiety (alpha increased to .74 when 1 item was deleted). Results of principal components analysis on reduced sub-scale items were similar to those obtained with adolescents (Caldwell et al., 1992) with few exceptions; one item from each of the Awareness, Boredom and Anxiety sub-scales was removed to improve alpha for that sub-scale. Students who reported being aware of leisure resources were significantly less bored in their free time than those who were less aware. Most students who found their free time boring were more likely to become distressed about not having things to do or planned in advance. Individuals who liked to experience a challenge in their leisure were usually less bored with their free time.
Caldwell, Smith & Weissinger (1992)	Goal was to produce parsimonious, yet internally consistent measures of selected dimensions of the adolescent leisure experience. The Leisure Experience Battery for Adolescents (LEBA) was developed based on four dimensions of the leisure experience: Boredom Challenge Awareness Anxiety.	The LEB scale showed promising reliability for use with adolescents. Internal consistency (alpha) scores were: .70 for Boredom, .70 for Challenge, .55 for Awareness, .63 for Anxiety (grade 11). Although somewhat low, this may be due to relatively low number of items in each scale (4, 3, 4, 3 respectively). Pattern of factor structure remained almost identical over time (grades 10 and 11). Correlations of scales and factors over time indicated stability of measurement.
Iso-Ahola & Weissinger (1990)	Leisure boredom expected to be negatively related to social competence, self-esteem, self-as-entertainment, social desirability, intrinsic leisure motivation, social desirability, leisure satisfaction, leisure ethic, frequency of participation in leisure activities, perceived satisfaction with mental and physical health.	Results of the three separate studies reported in this article provided support for the reliability and validity of the LBS with alphas = .85, .88, and .86 respectively. The data demonstrated that the scale was internally consistent. All constructs were significantly correlated in the predicted manner further supporting validity and usability of the LBS.

Table 2.4 Interventions addressing leisure boredom

Authors	Hypothesis/ Theoretical Framework	Main Findings
Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith (2004)	Time Wise is a school-based curriculum which aims to increase positive use of free time and prevent initiation of risk behaviour. Theoretical basis: Selective optimisation with compensation (SOC) theory (Lerner, Freund, De Stefanis & Habermas, 2001) - goal selection, goal pursuit, goal maintenance, and goal reformulation gives framework for activity engagement. Self-determination theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Deci, 2000) - provides framework for assessing underlying motivational states associated with variation in activity engagement.	External motivation decreased over time (p = .009). Males had higher levels of external motivation than females (p =.002). Intervention had desired effect on motivation by increasing students' internalised behaviour (identified p =. 000, introjected motivation p = .045) and decreasing levels of amotivation (p = .010). Intervention students reported increased interest and participation in new activities (p = .011) and lower levels of boredom (p = . 010), higher initiative (p = .038) and ability to restructure boring situations into more interesting ones (p = .005). Suggested that youth who received the intervention may be more protected against initiation of risk behaviours, and became more engaged with their environments. Intervention showed that youth can learn to become more responsible for their leisure by thinking about their levels of motivation and finding out about interesting, fulfilling leisure activities.
Caldwell, Smith, Flisher, Mathews, Wegner, Vergnani & Mpofu (2004)	HealthWise hypothesised programme effects included: Lower use of substances Delayed onset of sexual intercourse Greater use of condoms Higher levels of participation in leisure activities Less boredom during free time and greater ability to develop interests Greater ability to plan and make decisions about free time activities, and greater initiative.	Curriculum was well-received, and perceived to be useful. However, process evaluation data enabled some important revisions to be made. One major revision was the recruitment of two recreation specialists to work with students in the classroom and the community, to facilitate leisure participation. Outcomes: not yet available.

Chapter Three

Reliability of the Leisure Boredom Scale for use with high school learners

Teenagers complain there's nothing to do, then stay out all night doing it.
(Bob Phillips)

3.1 Introduction

To improve measurement quality in research, consideration should be given to the reliability and validity of the measurements that are used. Reliability refers to "… the degree to which a measurement produces systematic or reproducible variation" (Shrout, 1995, p. 213). Measurement quality can be improved by critically examining factors that may affect reliability, such as the variability of the trait being studied and respondents' understanding of questions. There are four general methods of determining reliability: (1) inter-rater reliability; (2) parallel-forms reliability or split-half reliability; (3) test-retest reliability; and (4) internal consistency reliability. Using several methods to determine reliability provides a more comprehensive picture of the measurement's reliability than using one method alone. The methods employed in this study were test-retest reliability and internal consistency (described below). Inter-rater reliability is used to assess the degree to which two or more raters give consistent estimates of the same item, scale or instrument (Garson, 2008; Trochim, 2006). This method was not used in the present study as the survey was self-administered. Parallel-forms reliability or split-half reliability assesses the consistency of the results of two equivalent forms of a scale

(Garson, 2008; Trochim, 2006). As the Leisure Boredom Scale (LBS) has relatively few items (16), this method was not applied in the present study.

Test-retest reliability can be defined as the likelihood that a given measurement will yield the same data if the measurement is repeated (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). Thus, the measurement is administered to the same respondents on two separate occasions. A limitation of this method is that the second measurement is often affected by systematic changes in the respondents that have occurred during the interval between measurements. Internal consistency is another method of establishing reliability in questionnaires, by determining the degree to which patterns of responses to items are empirically related.
It measures the extent to which items relating to the same underlying construct correlate – or in other words, can be considered as replications of one another. Internal consistency is usually measured with Cronbach's alpha α (Cronbach, 1951), a statistic calculated from the pairwise correlations between items. Cronbach's alpha generally increases when the correlations between the items increase, and can take values between negative infinity and 1, although only positive values make sense. A commonly-accepted rule of thumb is that an α of 0.6-0.7 indicates acceptable reliability, and 0.8 or higher indicates good reliability. Extremely high reliabilities (0.95 or higher) are not necessarily desirable, as this indicates that the items may be not just consistent, but redundant. Where questionnaires include items relating to different constructs, reliability may be underestimated (Shrout, 1995).

Validity refers to the accuracy with which a measure reflects the concept it is intended to measure. There are different methods of determining validity including face validity (when a measure conforms to commonly agreed or understood images of a concept), criterion-related validity (based on some external criterion), content validity (when a measure covers the range of meanings included within the concept), and construct validity (based on the logical relationships among variables) (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

The Leisure Boredom Scale (LBS) (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987) measures "… individual differences in perceptions of boredom in leisure" (Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991, p. 264). The LBS has previously been shown to be a reliable and valid method of determining subjective perceptions of leisure boredom. However, the study was conducted in the developed world. Iso-Ahola and Weissinger (1990) used the LBS to investigate leisure boredom among college students in America, in three studies (n=171, n=164, n=344). Cronbach's alpha was used to determine reliability and was found to be 0.85, 0.88 and 0.86 for the three studies respectively, indicating high internal consistency. To determine construct validity, theoretically meaningful constructs that included factors relevant to leisure behaviour such as "depth of leisure boredom", "leisure satisfaction" and "frequency of leisure participation", were correlated with the LBS (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990, p. 11). The results showed evidence of significant correlation between the constructs and the LBS as predicted ($p < 0.01$), providing strong support for construct validity of the LBS.

3.2 Research question and aim

The systematic review of the literature (chapter 2) revealed that the LBS had not been used previously in South Africa. Therefore, the psychometric properties of the scale for use with South African populations had not been established. Furthermore, no previous studies had determined the test-retest reliability of the LBS. In order to address this situation, the following research question was posed: What is the reliability of the Leisure Boredom Scale for use with high school learners in Cape Town?

The aim of the study was to document the test-retest reliability and internal consistency of the LBS with high school learners (students) in Cape Town, South Africa.[3]

[3] Wegner, L., Flisher, A.J., Muller, M. & Lombard, C. (2002). Reliability of the Leisure Boredom Scale for use with high school students in Cape Town. *Journal of Leisure Research,* 34, 340-350.

3.3 Methods

3.3.1 Sample

The studies discussed in this chapter (and in chapter 4) formed part of the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU): School Study, which was a prospective cohort study of risk behaviour in learners from 39 high schools in Cape Town, South Africa (Flisher, Parry, Evans, Muller & Lombard, 2003). The data were provided by the SACENDU pilot study (Study 1) and main study (Study 2). The SACENDU study included a component about the degree of leisure boredom experienced by high school learners, and the extent to which leisure boredom was associated with use of selected substances and demographic variables (Wegner, Flisher, Muller & Lombard, 2006; Wegner, Flisher & Watson, 1999).

In Study 1, respondents were randomly drawn from all learners in the grade 8 and 11 classes at four independent (private) high schools, producing a sample of 117 learners. All of these schools were situated in urban parts of Cape Town. One school was for boys only, one for girls only and two were for boys and girls. As the schools were private, the majority of learners were from middle to upper class families of all ethnic backgrounds.

In Study 2, the study population was defined as all learners in grades 8 and 11 attending public (non-private) high schools in Cape Town. These schools were situated in urban areas, and admitted boys and girls from all socio-economic and racially classified social groups (RCSG)[4]. Postal (zip) codes were used to stratify schools as there is a high degree of homogeneity in terms of race/ethnicity and social class within each postal code area; thus producing a representative sample. Thirty-nine schools were randomly selected, such that the proportion of selected schools within a stratum was proportional to the total

[4] RCSG derives from the classification system used by the apartheid government – described in the Population Registration Act of 1950 and repealed in 1991 – that divided the population of South Africa into black, white, Asian, and coloured (mixed Asian, European, or African ancestry). The social effects of this Act are still present; therefore, statistics in this thesis are presented according to RCSG where appropriate.

number of learners in that stratum. Within each stratum, the probability of selection of a school was proportional to the number of learners in the school. Forty learners were randomly selected from the combined class lists of two randomly selected classes from each participating grade. An additional five learners were selected to replace absentees. This multistage sampling procedure produced a sample of 2946 learners. This sample was divided into smaller subgroups that completed questionnaires pertaining to different research questions. Randomly selecting seven to eight learners from every group of forty learners produced a sample of 621 learners for Study 2, who completed the Leisure Boredom Scale.

3.3.2 Measurements

The LBS is a self-report questionnaire that consists of 16 items (see Table 3.1 and Appendix 2.1) about the quality of leisure experiences (e.g., *"For me, leisure time just drags on and on",* and *"Leisure time is boring"*), leisure activities (e.g., *"I do not have many leisure activities available to me"*), and skills (e.g., *"In my leisure time, I usually don't like what I'm doing, but I don't know what else to do"*). Subjects respond on a 1 - 5 Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Total scores can range from 16 (lowest boredom) to 80 (highest boredom) giving a range of 64 points.

The LBS was administered as a pre-test to two small groups of high school learners (who were not part of the study). This was followed by a discussion that facilitated the adaptation of the LBS by making it more understandable for South African adolescents. The wording in three items was changed, for example, the phrase "… *spinning my wheels*" was changed to "… *bored and hanging around*". This process of refining and editing promoted the face validity of the LBS. Finally, the LBS was translated from English into the other main languages spoken in Cape Town (Afrikaans and Xhosa).
To ensure accuracy in translation, the LBS was back-translated into English by different people who had Afrikaans or Xhosa as their home language.

3.3.3 Procedure

Permission to carry out the studies was obtained from the Western Cape Education Department and principals of the selected schools. The learners were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and for this reason only members of the research team (and no educators) were present during administrations. It was hypothesised that this would promote more accurate completion of the LBS. Learners received explicit written and oral instructions and were able to complete the LBS in their home language.

In order to determine test-retest reliability in Study 1, the LBS was administered to the same learners on two occasions. The interval between administrations was between 10 and 14 days. During the first administration, learners were asked to write the number of their questionnaire on a piece of paper and insert this into an envelope, which they then sealed and signed over the seal. On the outside of the envelope they wrote their name and grade. At the second administration the envelopes were handed back and learners were asked to copy the number from the paper inside the envelope, onto their new questionnaire.

3.3.4 Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to obtain demographic profiles of the two samples, and LBS scores (means and standard deviations for items and total scale) for Study 1 (Time 1 and 2) and Study 2. Three measures of agreement were used to calculate test-retest reliability - the observed agreement, Cohen's kappa (κ) (Fleiss, 1981) and the concordance correlation coefficient (Lin, 1989). Observed agreement is the percentage of cases where there is agreement between the two administrations in relation to the total number of administrations. Kappa is the indication of the agreement between the two administrations beyond that which would be expected by chance (Cohen, 1960). If $\kappa = 1.00$ there is perfect agreement. Weighted kappa was reported as the LBS has ordered response categories (1 – 5), which were collapsed into three categories: 1 and 2 (strongly

disagree and disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 and 5 (agree and strongly agree). Confidence intervals (95%) were calculated for kappa. If the 95% confidence interval did not include 0, this indicated that kappa was significantly different from 0. The descriptive terms of Landis and Koch (1977) were used to describe the kappa values: <0 ~ poor; 0 – 0.20 ~ slight; 0.21 – 0.40 ~ fair; 0.41 – 0.60 ~ moderate; 0.61 – 0.80 ~ substantial; and 0.81 – 1.0 ~ almost perfect.

Kappa is adversely affected by inconsistencies between the two administrations where the proportions are low (< 5%) (Maclure & Willett, 1987). Thus, the observed agreement was used as the preferred measure of agreement where any of the marginal and/or row totals were less than 5%. Bowker's test of symmetry was used to check whether the marginal proportions were homogeneous. Where Bowker's test of symmetry was significant ($p < 0.05$), meaning that on a 95% significance level there was a difference between the proportions at Time 1 and Time 2, the observed agreement was the preferred measure of agreement.

The concordance correlation coefficient was used to calculate test-retest reliability of the LBS as a whole (Lin, 1989). This evaluated the degree to which measurement pairs fell on the 45-degree line, and was constructed from two components – accuracy and precision. The accuracy component measured how far the best-fit line deviated from the 45-degree line whereas the precision component (the Pearson correlation coefficient) measured how far each point (before, after) deviated from the best-fit line. The concordance correlation coefficient was interpreted on the same scale as the Kappa statistic.

Internal consistency of the LBS was determined by calculating Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) for each item and for the total scale, as well as the item-total correlation for each item. Optimal item-total correlation was considered to be between 0.2 and 0.5 (Jessor & Jessor, 1977). Items with scores falling out of this range were examined for possible exclusion from the LBS.

3.4 Results

3.4.1 Demographic profile

Descriptive statistics of the demographic profile of the samples showed that in Study 1, 59% of the sample was in grade 8 and 61.5% were boys. The median age of grade 8 learners was 13 years, and 16 years in grade 11. In Study 2, 51% of the sample was in grade 11 and 60% were girls. The median age of grade 8 learners was 14 years, and 17 years in grade 11.

3.4.2 Test-retest reliability

Using Landis and Koch's descriptive terms (1977), Cohen's Kappa fell into the moderate range for 7 items (range: 0.41 to 0.52) and the fair range for 2 items (range: 0.32 to 0.38) (Table 3.1). The observed agreement was preferred for 7 items (range: 38.8% to 66.6%). The concordance correlation on the LBS was 0.73 using a 95% confidence interval (0.64 to 0.82) which showed substantial reliability (Study 1). The accuracy component was 0.96, which indicated very little deviance of the best-fit line from the 45-degree line. The precision component was 0.76, which indicated some scatter around the best-fit line.

Table 3.1 Test-retest reliability of the Leisure Boredom Scale (Study 1, N=117)

The Leisure Boredom Scale	Missing n	Proportion at Time 1 (%)			Proportion at Time 2 (%)			Bowker's test of symmetry	Observed agreement	Weighted kappa
		1-2*	3**	4-5***	1-2*	3**	4-5***	(*p*)	%	(95% CI)
1. For me, leisure time just drags on and on.	3	72.81	22.81	4.39	71.05	22.81	6.14	0.14	57.2	-
2. During my leisure time, I become highly involved in what I do.	3	12.28	35.96	51.76	6.14	35.96	57.89	0.20	43.7	0.45 (0.30 – 0.6)
3. Leisure time is boring.	3	78.07	17.54	4.38	81.58	15.79	2.63	0.64	66.6	-
4. If I could leave school now and have enough money, I would have plenty of exciting things to do for the rest of my life.	6	28.83	20.72	50.45	24.33	20.72	54.95	0.74	39.0	0.41 (0.26 – 0.56)
5. During my leisure time, I feel like I'm just bored and hanging around.	6	20.72	42.34	36.94	16.21	45.95	38.84	0.42	36.8	0.52 (0.38 – 0.67)
6. In my leisure time, I usually don't like what I'm doing, but I don't know what else to do.	5	63.40	21.43	15.18	68.75	25.89	5.36	0.03 †	50.0	-
7. Leisure time gets me aroused and going.	4	11.50	50.44	38.05	15.92	39.82	44.24	0.04 †	38.8	-
8. Leisure experiences are an important part of my quality of life.	3	7.02	17.54	75.44	2.63	24.56	72.81	0.11	59.4	-
9. I am excited about leisure time.	3	3.51	28.95	67.54	2.63	33.33	64.03	0.79	53.0	-
10. In my leisure time, I want to do something, but I don't know what to do.	8	34.87	35.78	29.36	42.20	38.53	19.27	0.09	34.2	0.52 (0.39 – 0.65)

The Leisure Boredom Scale	Missing n	Proportion at Time 1 (%)			Proportion at Time 2 (%)			Bowker's test of symmetry (*p*)	Observed agreement %	Weighted kappa (95% CI)
		1-2*	3**	4-5***	1-2*	3**	4-5***			
11. I waste too much of my leisure time sleeping.	8	61.46	24.77	13.76	59.63	25.69	14.68	0.97	45.0	0.50 (0.36 – 0.64)
12. I like to try new leisure activities that I have never tried before.	6	11.71	23.42	64.86	6.31	32.43	61.26	0.12	48.1	0.38 (0.21 – 0.54)
13. I am very active during my leisure time.	5	12.50	41.96	45.53	8.04	41.96	50.00	0.58	50.2	0.32 (0.18 – 0.46)
14. Leisure time activities do not excite me.	5	68.75	26.79	4.46	78.57	17.86	3.57	0.09	59.0	-
15. I do not have many leisure activities available to me.	5	67.86	21.43	10.71	68.75	23.21	8.03	0.57	53.0	0.48 (0.31 – 0.64)
16. During my leisure time, I almost always have something to do.	11	17.92	22.64	59.44	15.10	19.81	65.09	0.12	46.0	0.47 (0.30 – 0.63)

Notes:
Leisure Boredom Scale scores:
* 1-2 = Strongly disagree / Disagree
** 3 = Neutral
*** 4-5 = Agree / Strongly agree

† $p < 0.05$

Table 3.2 Internal consistency of the Leisure Boredom Scale

Item number	Study 1, Time 1 (N=107)* Item Mean (Std. Dev.)	Item-total correlation	Alpha if item deleted	Study 1, Time 2 (N=107)* Item Mean (Std. Dev.)	Item-total correlation	Alpha if item deleted	Study 2 (N=621) Item Mean (Std. Dev.)	Item-total correlation	Alpha if item del.
1.	2.1 (0.9)	.44	.74	2.0 (1.0)	.50	.86	2.5 (1.2)	.15	.76
2.	2.6 (1.0)	.41	.74	2.4 (0.8)	.60	.85	2.8 (1.2)	.41	.74
3.	1.9 (1.0)	.52	.73	1.8 (0.8)	.63	.85	2.3 (1.2)	.43	.74
4.	2.8 (1.2)	.10	.77	2.6 (1.2)	.27	.87	3.4 (1.4)	.04	.78
5.	3.2 (0.9)	.04	.77	3.3 (0.9)	.01	.88	2.5 (1.2)	.52	.73
6.	2.3 (1.0)	.40	.74	2.1 (0.8)	.63	.85	2.5 (1.2)	.45	.74
7.	2.8 (0.9)	.32	.75	2.7 (1.0)	.43	.86	2.8 (1.2)	.53	.73
8.	2.1 (0.9)	.49	.73	2.0 (0.8)	.67	.85	2.5 (1.1)	.42	.74
9.	2.2 (0.9)	.55	.73	2.2 (0.8)	.71	.85	2.5 (1.1)	.44	.74
10.	3.0 (1.0)	.51	.73	2.7 (0.9)	.51	.86	3.1 (1.2)	.35	.75
11.	2.4 (1.0)	.15	.76	2.4 (1.0)	.37	.87	2.3 (1.2)	.28	.75
12.	2.4 (0.9)	-0.02	.77	2.3 (0.8)	.48	.86	2.5 (1.2)	.18	.76
13.	2.6 (0.8)	.53	.73	2.5 (0.8)	.64	.85	2.7 (1.2)	.43	.74
14.	2.2 (0.8)	.43	.74	2.0 (0.8)	.64	.85	2.5 (1.1)	.33	.75
15.	2.3 (0.9)	.44	.74	2.2 (0.9)	.64	.85	2.8 (1.2)	.32	.75
16.	2.5 (1.0)	.44	.74	2.4 (0.9)	.49	.86	2.8 (1.2)	.47	.74
Scale Totals	39.1 (6.9)		.76	37.5 (8.3)		.87	42.6 (9.0)		.76

Note: * Incomplete questionnaires = 10

3.4.3 Internal consistency

The mean and standard deviation for individual items, and internal consistency of the LBS (item-total correlation and alpha) are reported in Table 3.2. Examination of the items showing suboptimal item-total correlation of either below 0.2 or above 0.5 revealed that in each case the alpha coefficient did not show a relative increase if the item was deleted; therefore removing the item did not improve internal consistency. The alpha coefficient ranged from 0.73 to 0.77 (Study 1, Time 1), 0.84 to 0.88 (Study 1, Time 2) and 0.73 to 0.78 (Study 2). Overall, Cronbach's alpha was 0.76, 0.87, and 0.76 for the respective studies. For the translated questionnaires, Cronbach's alpha was 0.78 for the English version, 0.81 for the Afrikaans version, and 0.57 for the Xhosa version.

3.5 Discussion

3.5.1 Test-retest reliability

The highest observed agreement (66.6%) was for the item *"Leisure time is boring"*. This is the most direct, straightforward item in the LBS, and could be expected to show the least variation in responses over the two administrations. Nine of the items showed fair to moderate test-retest reliability as indicated by Cohen's kappa. A limitation of the test-retest design is that the second measurement may be affected by changes (psychological, physical, systematic and social) in the respondent (Shrout, 1995). Boredom may be regarded as an attitude, and as such could be described as a variable trait due to fluctuations that might occur depending on the respondent's mood state, temporal changes, current situation and reason for participating in activities. Caldwell, Darling, Payne & Dowdy (1999) found that boredom is influenced by the reason that adolescents engage in leisure activities being that they "want to", "have to" or "have nothing else to do". Therefore, test-retest reliability gives a conservative assessment of reliability as

some of the differences between the two administrations could be ascribed to actual changes in leisure boredom that occurred between the two administrations.

The concordance correlation coefficient showed that the reliability of the LBS was substantial. The median difference between the two repeated evaluations of the scale for the Study 1 sample was one unit and this was consistent over the whole range of the scale showing good accuracy. The precision was the component that contributed to the scale falling into the substantial reliability category rather than almost perfect.

3.5.2 Internal consistency

Close examination of the 16 items of the LBS revealed that each item related to the same underlying construct – leisure boredom. Thus the items were considered close replications of one another, excluding the bias which may result when items do not all relate to the same construct (Shrout, 1995).

Nunnally (1978) suggested a reliability coefficient of 0.70 to be acceptable. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the LBS in the three samples (0.76, 0.87 and 0.76) fell comfortably above this, and were found to be similar to other studies (0.85, 0.88 and 0.86) (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990). Although some of the items showed suboptimal item-total correlation, alpha would not improve sufficiently to justify the omission of these items from the scale. Also, items that showed suboptimal correlation with the total in one sample did not show the same result in the other samples. A final reason for not excluding any items was the small sample size (n=117) in Study 1. Therefore the 16 items of the LBS should all remain part of the instrument.

3.6 Conclusion

The results of the reliability tests provided support for the reliability of the LBS, demonstrating satisfactory test-retest reliability and internal consistency when used to document perceptions of leisure boredom among high school learners in Cape Town. These are the first studies in South Africa to use the LBS as a subjective measurement of leisure boredom in adolescents. Documenting the reliability of the LBS with this population provides a baseline for further studies. These should be done to establish the reliability of the LBS with groups of adolescents in other parts of South Africa as well as with different populations.

Chapter Four

Leisure boredom and high school dropout

> The life of the creative man is led, directed and controlled by boredom. Avoiding boredom is one of our most important purposes.
>
> (Susan Sontag)

4.1 Introduction

School dropout is defined as leaving school before completing a given grade in a given school year (Department of Education, 2006). Although as many as 60% of South African children who start school drop out before completing high school (Department of Education, 2003), very little is known about the complexities surrounding the problem.

Research regarding school dropout has been conducted primarily within the developed world. Apart from being faced with the threat of economic and social difficulties, adolescents who drop out of school prematurely are at greater risk of behavioural, mental and social disorders, sexual and physical abuse (Franklin, 1992), substance use (Aloise-Young & Chavez, 2002; Aloise-Young, Cruikshank & Chavez, 2002; Fuller et al., 2002; Krohn, Lizotte & Perez, 1997; Zimmerman & Maton, 1992) and involvement in crime (Beauvais, Chavez, Oetting, Deffenbacher & Cornell, 1996). In an integrative review of literature, Rosenthal (1998) grouped non-school correlates of dropout into of socio-economic status, minority group status, gender, community characteristics, household status, taking adult roles, social support for school staying, family process, student involvement in education, autonomy needs versus social conforming, deviance and personality traits.

Despite the severity of the problem and the resulting burden on society, there has been scant research in developing countries to investigate the dynamics contributing to early school leaving. In the first-known study of school dropout in Cape Town, South Africa, Flisher and Chalton (1995) investigated the characteristics and risk-taking behaviour of high-school dropouts living in a working-class community in Cape Town, South Africa. They found that adolescents who dropped out of school had higher rates of cigarette and alcohol use compared with those still in school, and that girl dropouts were more likely to engage in sexual intercourse. Of the dropouts, 62.1% left school after less than 9 years of schooling. However, this study was limited by a small sample size, a cross-sectional design, and different methods of data collection for the dropouts and those in school.

A longitudinal study that investigated predictors of dropout among high school learners (n=1470) in Cape Town reported that 54.9% learners dropped out of school between grades 8 and 12 (Flisher, Townsend, Chikobvu, Lombard & King, 2004). Learners who were significantly at more risk of dropping out of school were older than 14 years (OR = 2.78, 95% CI = 1.64 – 4.70), of lower socio-economic status (OR = 2.86, 95% CI = 1.54 – 5.55), or regularly absent from school (OR = 5.11, CI = 1.95 – 13.41). Grade 8 learners who had experienced sexual intercourse (OR = 1.80, 95% CI = 1.19 – 2.74) or who had engaged in unsafe sexual behaviour (OR = 1.64, 95% CI = 1.06 – 2.56) were more likely to drop out of school before grade 12 (Flisher, Townsend, Chikobvu, Lombard & King, 2005). After adjusting for past month cigarette and alcohol use, lifetime illicit drug use and potential confounders, only past month cigarette use significantly predicted dropout (RR = 1.75, 95% CI = 1.10 – 2.79) (Flisher et al., 2004).

Although these studies provide some insight into the situation, there is still a need for further research in order to promote understanding and better prediction of school dropout in South Africa.

4.2 Research question

As was established from the systematic review of literature presented in chapter 2, leisure boredom has not previously been investigated in relation to high school dropout. Therefore, the study addresses the following research question: Is leisure boredom a predictor of high school dropout?[5]

4.3 Background

4.3.1 Schooling in South Africa

South Africa has 12.3-million learners (students) attending 26 292 schools (SouthAfrica.Info). This figure includes 1098 (4.2%) registered independent or private schools catering for 340 000 learners (2.8% of the total schooling population). There are about 6000 high schools (grades 7 to 12) and the rest are primary schools (grades 0 to 6). Learners start school in grade 0 and proceed through 13 years of school until grade 12 – the final year of schooling. There are three recognised levels of education: General Education and Training (GET), Further Education and Training (FET), and Higher Education and Training (HET). GET runs from grades 0 to 9. Under the South African Schools Act of 1996, education is compulsory for all South Africans from age 7 (grade 1) to age 15, or the completion of grade 9. FET takes place from grades 10 to 12, and also includes career-oriented education and training offered in other FET institutions, such as technical, community and private colleges. HET includes programmes offered by universities, colleges and technikons that require a minimum certification of grade 12.

[5] Wegner, L., Flisher, A.J., Chikobvu, P., Lombard, C. & King, G. (2008). Leisure boredom and high school dropout in Cape Town, South Africa. *Journal of Adolescence.*

4.4 Methods

4.4.1 Sample

The present study formed part of the South African Community Epidemiology Network on Drug Use (SACENDU): School Study (mentioned in chapter 3), which was a prospective cohort study of risk behaviour in learners from 39 high schools in Cape Town, South Africa (Flisher, Parry, Evans, Muller & Lombard, 2003). The original cohort of grade 8 learners was first tested in 1997 (Time 1), followed up in 1999 (Time 2), and again in 2001 (Time 3) (Flisher, Evans, Muller & Lombard, 2004).

The study population was defined as all learners in grade 8 attending public high schools in Cape Town. Using a multistage clustering strategy, schools were stratified according to postal (zip) code areas, which allowed for relatively homogeneous groupings "… of factors such as social class, racially classified social groups (RCSG), language and culture" (Flisher, Mathews, Mukoma & Lombard, 2006, p. 982). Schools were selected such that the proportion of selected schools within a stratum was proportional to the total number of learners in that stratum. Within each stratum, the probability of selection of a school was proportional to the number of learners in the school. This strategy resulted in the selection of 39 urban schools comprising learners from diverse socio-economic (working, middle and upper class) and RCSG. At each school, forty learners were randomly selected from two randomly selected grade 8 classes producing a representative sample of 1470 grade 8 learners for the main SACENDU school study.

By randomly selecting seven to eight learners from every group of forty learners, a sub-sample of 303 grade 8 learners was obtained who participated in the present study. Learners in the sample had a mean age of 14.1 years (SD = 1.2 years); 59.2% (n=171) were female; 49.5% (n=143) were coloured, 25.6% (n= 74) were white, and 24.9% (n=72) were black. These figures exclude 14 missing responses for gender and RCSG.

In terms of RCSG, the figures were similar to the main SACENDU school study where the sample of 1437 learners comprised 52.6% (n=737) coloured, 18.3% (n=256) white, and 28.5% (n=399) black learners, with 0.6% (n=9) Asian learners being excluded as the number was too small for any significant analysis to be conducted (Flisher et al., 2006). An examination of the RCSG distribution of the population of 10-19 year-olds in the Western Cape (n=868 197) shows 59% (n=513 362) coloured, 14% (n=120 572) white, 26% (n=225 600) black and 1% (n=8663) Asian individuals (Statistics South Africa, 2001). The general similarity between these statistics and the sample means that the sampling strategy produced a sample that was considered to be representative.

4.4.2 Measurements

A self-report questionnaire consisting of two parts was used, which learners could complete in their preferred language (English, Xhosa and Afrikaans). Participants completed Parts One and Two of the questionnaire at Time 1, and only Part One at Times 2 and 3 of the data collection phases.

Part One contained items about demographic characteristics (age, gender, RCSG), as well as items about the use of various substances (e.g. tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, mandrax, ecstasy, crack). The substance use variables were not relevant to the present study and have been reported elsewhere (Flisher, Parry, Evans, Muller & Lombard, 2003). Part One of the questionnaire was used previously in a study of 7340 high school learners in Cape Town and subjected to extensive pilot studies in small groups and classrooms (Flisher, Ziervogel, Chalton, Leger & Robertson, 1993). The test-retest reliability using Cohen's kappa was found to be 0.85 for cigarettes, 0.78 for alcohol and 0.80 for cannabis, while the observed agreement was 0.97 for mandrax, 0.97 for ecstasy and 0.98 for crack (Flisher, Evans, Muller & Lombard, 2004).

Part Two of the questionnaire comprised the Leisure Boredom Scale (LBS) (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990) (Appendix 2.1). Details about the content, scoring and psychometric properties of the LBS are discussed in chapter 3.

4.4.3 Procedure

The Research Ethics Committee, Faculty of Health Sciences, University of Cape Town approved the study. Permission to carry out the study was obtained from the district Education Department and the principals of the selected schools. Learners gave their consent to participate and were informed that they had the right to decline to answer any of the questions. The questionnaires were administered during a normal school period, and took approximately 45 minutes to complete. Seating was arranged such that confidentiality was ensured. Members of the research team administered the questionnaires with no school staff present. Learners were not required to write their names or any other identification details on the questionnaires, thus remaining anonymous. Once they had completed the questionnaire, learners copied the unique identifying number of their questionnaire onto a piece of paper which they put into an envelope, sealed, signed across the seal, and wrote their name on the front of the envelope. On follow up at Times 2 and 3, the envelopes were handed back to the learners who transferred their identification number onto their new questionnaire. In this way, data were linked while preserving anonymity.

4.4.4 Analysis

The analysis for this study was done using STATA data analysis and statistical software. Descriptive statistics for school dropout according to LBS score categories (<40, 40 to <50, 50+), gender, RCSG and age were obtained. Learners who had missing answers for two or less items on the LBS (n=95) were assigned a score of 1 (being the most conservative score) for the missing items in order to calculate an overall leisure boredom

score for them. The outcome (dependent) variable was coded as one of two outcomes: in-school or dropped out. The in-school group included learners who completed questionnaires at Times 1 and 3; learners who were absent at Time 3 but still attending school; those who had moved to another city or transferred to another school; and those who graduated in 2001 or 2002. Learners for whom there was any doubt about their school status were included in the in-school group. The dropout group included those learners who were known to have left school after the administration of the questionnaire at Time 1 and before Time 3; those not completing the questionnaire at Time 2 who could not be traced, who remained absent at Time 3, and who did not graduate in the Western Cape in 2001 or 2002; and learners who were untraceable at Time 3 who did not graduate in the Western Cape in 2001 or 2002.

The effect of leisure boredom on dropout was modelled using logistic regression taking into account the cluster effect of the schools in the sampling strategy, and adjusting for gender, RCSG, and student age at recruitment (coded as younger than 14 years or, 14 years or older). Specifically, we used the Lowess or Loess method of logistic regression (Cleveland, 1981). Loess, or locally weighted scatterplot smoothing, is a modern regression model that builds on classical methods, such as linear and nonlinear least squares regression. Loess combines the simplicity of linear least squares regression with the flexibility of nonlinear regression. It does this by fitting simple models to localised subsets of the data to build up a function that describes the deterministic part of the variation in the data, point by point. The advantage of this method is that the data analyst is not required to specify a global function of any form to fit a model to the data, only to fit segments of the data. Plotting a smooth curve through a set of data points using this statistical technique is called a Loess Curve, particularly when each smoothed value is given by a weighted quadratic least squares regression over the span of values of the y-axis scattergram criterion variable. The Lowess is a special case of Loess when the local point estimated in the window is estimated by linear least squares regression.

4.5 Results

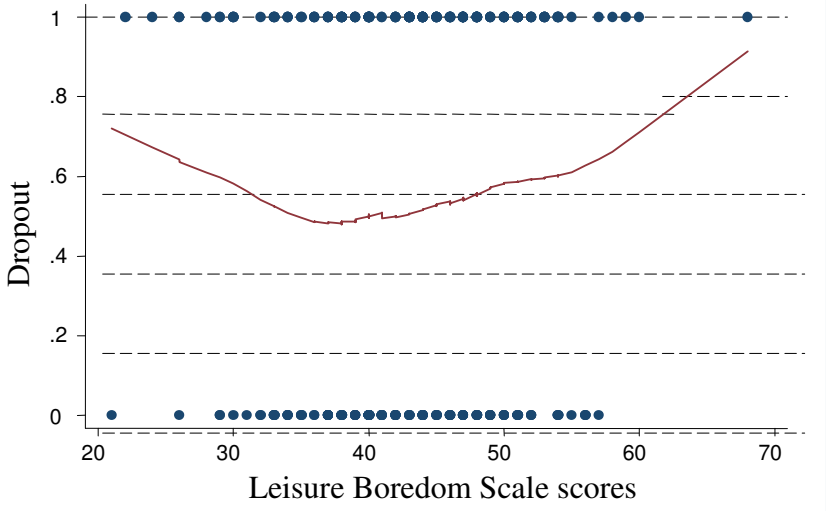
A total of 303 grade 8 learners completed the questionnaire at Time 1. Of the 281 learners whose dropout status could be ascertained at Time 3, 149 (53.0%) were regarded as having dropped out of school and the remaining 132 (47.0%) were regarded as being in-school. Descriptive statistics for school dropout stratified by LBS score categories, gender, RCSG and age are indicated in Table 4.1. Overall dropout rates were similar for lower LBS scores (<40) and moderate LBS scores (40 to <50) being 50.6% and 51.4% respectively, and increased to 61.1% for higher LBS scores (50+). In other words, there was a relatively higher dropout rate among learners who reported greater boredom with leisure time. Dropout rates were higher among boys (61.1%), black learners (60.6%) and learners aged 14 years or older (64.9%).

Table 4.1 School dropout rates stratified by Leisure Boredom Scale score categories, gender, RCSG and age (n=281)

	In-school n (%)	Dropout n (%)	Totals n (%)
[a]*LBS score categories*			
<40	42 (49.4)	43 (50.6)	85 (100)
40 to <50	69 (48.6)	73 (51.4)	142 (100)
50+	21 (38.9)	33 (61.1)	54 (100)
[b]*Gender*			
Male	42 (38.9)	66 (61.1)	108 (100)
Female	89 (52.7)	80 (47.3)	169 (100)
[c]*RCSG*			
Black	26 (39.4)	40 (60.6)	66 (100)
Coloured	73 (54.1)	62 (45.9)	135 (100)
White	33 (45.2)	40 (54.8)	73 (100)
Age			
<14 years	71 (66.4)	36 (33.6)	107 (100)
≥14 years	61 (35.1)	113(64.9)	174 (100)

[a]LBS score categories:
<40 indicates lower leisure boredom
40 to <50 indicates moderate leisure boredom
50+ indicates higher leisure boredom
[b]Missing responses for gender = 4
[c]Missing responses for RCSG = 7

Figures 4.1 and 4.2 are scatterplots of dropout (coded 0=in-school and 1=dropout), and the range of LBS scores. The dots indicate the individual learners observed. On the dropout scale they can have only two values. There are some 1's at the upper and lower ends of the LBS where there are not that many 0's. This results in the non-linear smooth curve observed in Figures 4.1 and 4.2. When the J-shaped curve (Figure 4.1) was investigated, evidence of a modification effect of age emerged (Figure 4.2) where the cohort is split by age group and gender. This was formally investigated and the odds ratios estimated from the logistic regression model are given in Table 4.2. There was a significant interaction between age group of the student and leisure boredom (p = 0.03). Leisure boredom was a significant predictor of dropout (OR=1.08; 95% CI: 1.01 to 1.15 for a unit change on the scale) in learners 14 years and older, but not so in younger learners (OR=1.0; 95% CI: 0.95 to 1.05) (p=0.85), when adjusting for RCSG and gender, and taking into account the clustering effect of the schools (which STATA does automatically). As predicted from the model, the probability of dropout for learners aged 14 years and older for LBS scores of 30, 40, 50 and 60 was respectively 0.73, 0.66, 0.75 and 0.90 (boys) and 0.63, 0.55, 0.65, 0.84 (girls).



Note: Dots indicate the individual learners observed. On the dropout scale, 0=in-school and 1=dropout.

Figure 4.1 Dropout prevalence for Leisure Boredom Scale scores

Note: Dots indicate the individual learners observed. On the dropout scale, 0=in-school and 1=dropout.

Figure 4.2 Dropout prevalence for Leisure Boredom Scale scores by age group and gender

The age specific models for dropout on leisure boredom are also given in Table 4.2. In the overall model with the age-leisure boredom interaction term there was a significant gender effect, with female learners having a smaller odds for dropout (OR=0.55; 95% CI: 0.33 to 0.91) (p = 0.02). Examination of the age specific models showed that the gender effect in the younger group was not that marked and also not significant. However, in the older student group gender was a significant factor and also more marked than in the overall model. A model (results not shown) with a gender and age interaction term added, strengthened the association between dropout and leisure boredom in the older group of learners (OR=1.09; 95% CI: 1.02 to 1.17).

Table 4.2 Scale parameters from cluster adjusted models (overall and age specific)

Variable	Odds Ratio	p-value	[95% Conf. Intervals]	
Overall				
Leisure boredom (<14 years)	1.00	0.85	0.95	1.05
Leisure boredom (≥ 14 years)	1.08	0.03	1.01	1.15
RCSG black	2.10	0.09	0.90	4.88
RCSG white	1.12	0.77	0.54	2.32
Gender female	0.55	0.02	0.33	0.91
Age ≥14	0.10	0.11	0.01	1.70
Age < 14 years				
Leisure boredom	0.99	0.58	0.94	1.04
RCSG black	2.75	0.15	0.69	11.06
RCSG white	1.18	0.75	0.42	3.32
Gender female	0.87	0.73	0.40	1.91
Age ≥ 14 years				
Leisure boredom	1.07	0.02	1.01	1.13
RCSG black	1.25	0.63	0.50	3.09
RCSG white	1.07	0.89	0.42	2.71
Gender female	0.46	0.03	0.24	0.91

4.6 Discussion

As far as could be determined from the systematic review of the literature in chapter 2, the present study is the first in the world to investigate leisure boredom and high school dropout using a longitudinal design. The study has shown that leisure boredom is a predictor of dropout among older learners in the grade 8 cohort that was sampled. The older learners for this grade are known be at higher risk for dropout, and the level of boredom in this higher risk group can be used to identify learners who are more likely to dropout during the next four years of school. In the younger stratum of this cohort, leisure boredom was not a significant predictor of dropout. These findings raise the question whether leisure boredom will be predictive of dropout in older learners but who are not old for their grade.

These results must also be considered against the high level of dropout overall in this cohort. Further research is needed to investigate modification effects of age on the predictive performance for high school dropout of the LBS.

Learners who reported a higher level of boredom in their leisure time may have been experiencing boredom with other components of, and activities in their lives, such as school. Research evidence shows that adolescents who reported high levels of boredom in school also experienced boredom with out-of-school activities such as leisure (Larson & Richards, 1991; Shaw, Caldwell & Kleiber, 1996). Thus, learners who feel more bored in their leisure time may be at greater risk of dropping out of school due to their perception of school as being boring. This may be due to disliking certain subjects or teachers, not seeing the relevance of subjects, and feeling either understimulated or overwhelmed by subject content and requirements. In schools where there are limited, or no after-school, extracurricular sport and leisure activities (such as the case in many poorer schools in South Africa), the experience of boredom both within and after school may be compounded. The adolescent may feel disconnected from the school, making dropping out of school easier.

Perceiving school as boring may also be a result of adolescent resistance to adult control and authority (Larson & Richards, 1991). Adolescents may respond through passive non-participation in school activities, which feeds into the cycle of under stimulation and boredom. Ultimately, this may lead to the adolescent dropping out of school. Further research needs to be done among South African adolescents on the experience of boredom at school.

The present study has certain limitations. First, the sample was limited to school-going adolescents in Cape Town, an urban part of South Africa. Thus, we do not know the extent to which the results are generalisable to adolescents living in other parts of the country or in rural areas. Second, the LBS was the only measure of adolescents' leisure experiences used in the study. Although this instrument has satisfactory psychometric properties in the Cape Town setting as reported in chapter 3 (Wegner, Flisher, Muller &

Lombard, 2002), and has been used elsewhere in the world (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990; Iso-Ahola & Crowley, 1991), the inclusion of other measurements may have provided a more comprehensive understanding of adolescents' experiences of leisure and boredom. Third, although every effort was made to confirm the dropout status of learners thus classified, without this confirmation coming from the learners themselves, or members of their families, some misclassification may have occurred. However, where there was doubt as to whether the student had dropped out, the student was included as still being in school. Thus, if there was any misclassification bias, it was likely to result in an underestimation of the effects of leisure boredom. Fourthly, with the present sample size (n=281), we were not able to extend the model to investigate mediating or moderating factors such as substance use in the analysis of the relation between leisure boredom and dropout, or test for interactions. The association between high school dropout, and substance use (Flisher, Townsend, Chikobvu, Lombard & King, 2004), and sexual risk behaviour (Flisher, Townsend, Chikobvu, Lombard & King, 2005) has been reported. However, there is a need for further research to investigate interactions between different variables and the complexities around high school dropout.

Tentative implications for practice at this point are that schools have a responsibility to implement strategies for addressing leisure boredom at high schools as part of the response to school dropout. For those learners with high leisure boredom, the aim should be to reduce boredom through strategies that encourage exploration and participation in leisure, sport and recreational activities both during and after school. This is especially important in schools where after-school sport and leisure activities are limited or non-existent. Often this is the case for schools situated in poorer areas. More detailed recommendations are given in chapter 7.

4.7 Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study has broken new ground in that it is the first cohort study in the world to examine leisure boredom as a predictor of school dropout. As such, it contributes to our knowledge of adolescent leisure boredom and our understanding of high school dropout in South Africa. Leisure boredom should be considered as part of the complex factors contributing to high school dropout. However, the situation is complicated and we need to understand it better. There is a need to examine further, the longitudinal association between leisure boredom and school dropout.

Chapter Five

Through the lens of a peer: understanding leisure boredom and risk behaviour in free time

> To take a photograph is to participate in another person's mortality, vulnerability, mutability. Precisely by slicing out this moment and freezing it, all photographs testify to time's relentless melt. Life is not significant details, illuminated by a flash, fixed forever … photographs are. The camera makes everyone a tourist in other people's reality, and eventually in one's own.
>
> (Susan Sontag)

5.1 Introduction

Risk behaviour is frequently associated with leisure and free time, as was explained in chapter 1. In the systematic review of the literature (chapter 2) there was clear evidence of a link between leisure boredom and risk behaviour among young people; however, nearly all of this research was conducted in the developed world. However, the review only included studies that employed quantitative methods of enquiry. There is a need for qualitative studies that provide an understanding of the phenomenon of leisure boredom and risk behaviour from the perspective of adolescents themselves, and which shed light on the interplay between leisure boredom and contextual factors.

As was previously discussed in chapter 1, levels of leisure boredom among South African adolescents are relatively high; more so among black and coloured adolescents, and among girls and younger adolescents generally (Wegner, Flisher, Muller & Lombard, 2006). Furthermore, as shown in chapter 4, adolescents who experience higher leisure boredom are at greater risk of dropping out of school (Wegner, Flisher, Chikobvu, Lombard & King, 2007). There was a need to investigate adolescents' perceptions of leisure, their experiences of boredom in free time, and their views about how risk behaviour is associated with leisure and boredom. Based on the assumption that adolescents growing up in poorer areas tend to be disadvantaged by their particular environments, the present study involved adolescents living in one such area on the outskirts of Cape Town, South Africa. The community and the majority of schools in this area are under-resourced, especially in terms of leisure and recreational facilities, partly due to poverty as well as a lack of awareness about the benefits of leisure (Evans & September, 2004). Considering that there is a need for more research about adolescent dropouts (as concluded in chapters 2 and 4), the present study included adolescents who had dropped out of school in the preceding two years.

5.2 Research questions and aim

The following research questions were addressed in the study: (1) What are adolescents' experiences during their free time? (2) How does the environment influence adolescents' experiences during free time? (3) What is the form (activities, properties and relation to time), function (process and experience), and meaning of boredom in free time? (4) Why does boredom in free time occur? (5) How do adolescents perceive boredom to be related to risk behaviour?

The aim of the study was to investigate adolescents' perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour by documenting their experiences during free time.

5.3 Background

5.3.1 The experience of leisure and free time

Adolescents' experiences of leisure and free time can be understood by considering the meaning attributed to the performance of the activity and the purpose or goal that the individual hopes to achieve through participation. The perception that one is competent and in control of one's leisure activities, that one's needs are being met, feeling a depth of involvement and being playful and spontaneous when performing leisure activities are all factors that contribute to a sense of satisfaction through constructive use of leisure time (Ellis & Witt, 1994). It is during their free time activities – as opposed to productivity (school or work) and maintenance activities (for example, chores) – that adolescents experience freedom, intrinsic motivation and positive affect (Kleiber, Larson & Csikszentmihalyi, 1986). When individuals experience the environment as containing sufficient opportunities for action (challenges) balanced by their own capacity to act (skills), the quality of the experience is usually highly positive. Csikszentmihalyi (1975, 1990) referred to this optimal experience as flow. Adolescents who have opportunities to experience flow through engagement in leisure pursuits will also experience satisfaction and well-being, which ultimately contributes to their positive health and development.

In a review of literature about youth engagement and health outcomes, engagement was regarded as meaningful participation and sustained involvement in an activity with a focus outside of the individual (Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement, 2003). The review provided strong support for an association between youth engagement in structured, goal-oriented activities over time, for example extra-curricular activities, and various positive health outcomes. According to the review, youth who engaged in such activities were less likely to use substances, engage in risky sexual behaviour or become pregnant, drop out of school, or engage in violent behaviour. They were more likely to complete a college degree, be less depressed, have higher self-esteem, be more physically active and show greater commitment to friends, families and communities. The authors

were critical of research which measured engagement as the frequency of involvement, or the number of activities one is involved with, and rather supported the emerging theoretical and empirical argument that conceptualises engagement as meaningful, sustained participation in activity.

Considering this argument, it is not so much the number of leisure activities participated in, but rather the satisfaction derived from the leisure experience that is important. This explains why adolescents who are fortunate enough to have a wide variety of leisure resources available to them may still experience dissatisfaction and boredom with their leisure activities. In a study involving high-school students in Brazil (n=16 117), Carlini-Cotrim and de Carvalho (1993, p. 102) concluded that it was not the quantity of extracurricular activities, but the quality defined as "... experience, creativity and opportunities for reflection" that was important for leisure satisfaction.

Møller (1991, p. 9) found that black youths living in townships viewed leisure activities that provided a means to an end – termed 'semi-leisure' such as education and moneymaking activities – more worthwhile than 'pure' leisure activities. She also found that one-third of the youths reported that they felt excessively bored and restless, and she proposed that in the absence of meaningful activities, it was not surprising that many youths, especially those who were unemployed, engaged in socially deviant activities.

5.3.2 Leisure as occupation

The concept of occupation is embedded within the domain of occupational therapy and refers to the performance of roles and engagement in tasks and activities for the purposes of productivity (for example, working and attending school), self-maintenance (for example, meal preparation and personal hygiene), and leisure (Christiansen & Baum, 1991). Kielhofner (1995, p. 3) defined occupation as "…doing culturally meaningful work, play or daily living tasks in the stream of time and in the contexts of one's physical and social world". Optimal performance in occupations occurs as a successful, positive

transaction between the domains of the person, the environment and the occupation (Law et al., 1996). There is an assumed relationship between engagement in, and performance of occupation, and health. Meaningful and purposeful engagement in positive or healthy activities contributes directly to the individual's health, wellness and development, and promotes a cycle of further positive performance and engagement. On the other hand, engagement in unhealthy, negative or risky activities affects health and well being negatively and sets off a maladaptive cycle of dysfunction.

Individuals derive meaning in life through their engagement in, and achievement of, goal-directed occupations as determined by their life roles in accordance with culturally and socially acceptable norms and expectations. In the thesis, I have defined leisure as the purposeful and intentional use of free time to engage in self-selected and self-directed activities and experiences that are meaningful and intrinsically motivating to the individual in that they are enjoyable, fun, refreshing and pleasurable. Therefore, leisure can be regarded as a major occupation during adolescence that provides valuable opportunities for development of self, skills and well being through engagement in leisure activities. However, leisure can also be a negative experience, and be utilised for risky, negative and/or unhealthy activities.

5.3.3 Occupational risk factors

A deficit in the experience of, or inability to engage in, meaningful occupations increases the likelihood of ill-health, dysfunction and risk behaviour. From the viewpoint of Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory (1979, 1995), the deficit or inability may occur at any of the levels. Physical or mental impairments, parental control, lack of resources, and poverty are examples of factors that could prevent adolescents from engaging in meaningful leisure pursuits. Building on this theory, Wilcock (1998, p. 137) contributed greatly to the occupational therapy knowledge base with her work on

"occupational risk factors" that included "occupational deprivation" and "occupational imbalance". Occupational deprivation occurs when factors beyond people's control limit their choice of, and opportunity to engage in occupation. Occupational imbalance occurs when engagement in occupation fails to meet the individual's unique physical, social and mental needs, or when there is incongruity between what one wants to do and what one has to do. In South Africa, poverty plays a major role as an external agency or circumstance causing occupational deprivation and imbalance for many individuals and communities (Fourie, Galvaan & Beeton, 2004).

5.3.4 The influence of environment on occupation

In promoting adolescent health and well-being it is important to consider the influence of the environment on the precipitation and perpetuation of occupational risk factors. From the discipline of occupational therapy, Law et al. (1996) proposed in the Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model that the environment be viewed as one of three core constructs of human occupational performance. According to the PEO model, the environment comprises cultural, socioeconomic, institutional, physical and social domains. Each domain is considered from the unique perspective of the person, household, neighbourhood and community. Occupational performance is the outcome of the transaction between the person, the environment and the occupation (Law et al., 1996). The environment is continually shifting and changing over time and space, which requires individuals to adapt and change their behaviour, and thus, their occupational performance.

Kielhofner (1995) proposed that the environment influences behaviour in two ways; firstly, the environment affords opportunities for performance, and secondly, it may press or constrain the individual and/or demand certain behaviour. How individuals choose to behave in the context depends on their innate characteristics including values, interests, capabilities, skills and experiences, and how they interpret their environment is shaped by culture.

An important component of occupational therapy intervention is to consider the many possibilities for accessing and developing resources, and removing or reducing barriers within the environment.

5.4 Methods

5.4.1 Study setting

The study was conducted in two economically deprived communities situated approximately 35 km from the centre of Cape Town, South Africa, called Belhar and Mitchells Plain. Part One of the study was conducted in Belhar, specifically in an area called Extension 13, and Part Two was conducted in Mitchells Plain. In the mid-1970s, the government established these (and other) communities called 'townships', in accordance with the policy of apartheid. The Group Areas Act was an eviction policy whereby black and coloured people were forcibly removed from their homes and relocated to the townships. This resulted in present day economically deprived communities (also known as 'previously disadvantaged' communities), of which these particular communities are typical examples.

Statistics for the total population of these two areas, the breakdown into racially classified social groups, and the proportion of adolescents aged 13-19 years are presented in Table 5.1. A comparison of socio-economic indicators for Extension 13 (Belhar) and Tafelsig (a suburb of Mitchells Plain) is presented in Table 5.2. Included for the purpose of comparison, is an area of Cape Town called Rondebosch, which is a historically white suburb. This comparison clearly highlights the disparities and inequities caused by apartheid that influence our society today.

Table 5.1 Population statistics for Belhar and Mitchells Plain

Area	Total population	Racially Classified Social Group				Adolescents 13-19 years
		Coloured	Black	Indian	White	
	N (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Belhar	46 511 (100)	43 954 (94.50)	1 696 (3.65)	636 (1.37)	225 (0.48)	7 256 (15.60)
Mitchells Plain	398 649 (100)	264 022 (66.23)	131 663 (33.03)	1 743 (0.44)	1 220 (0.31)	59 881 (15.02)

Source: Statistics South Africa Census 2001

Table 5.2 Comparison of socio-economic indicators for areas in Cape Town

Area	% Adults (20+) with highest qualification < grade 12	% Economically active unemployed adults	% Households earning <R19 200 per annum	% Labour force in unskilled occupations	Composite index
Extension 13, Belhar	86.78	52.84	55.01	22.59	54.31
Tafelsig, Mitchells Plain	86.96	38.65	43.55	25.50	48.67
Rondebosch	15.10	2.52	20.19	6.36	11.04

Source: Statistics South Africa Census 2001

Mitchells Plain and Belhar are similar in many ways. In both communities, housing consists mainly of densely clustered brick homes with 2-3 bedrooms, semi-detached houses and flats. Due to financial constraints and limited availability of homes, many people sub-let portions of their property or rooms within their homes. Some homeowners build informal structures in their backyards known as 'wendy houses' or 'shacks'. Often, overcrowding is a problem with two or more families staying in one house, which leads to health and social problems. A small percentage of the population lives in informal shack settlements situated on the outskirts of the communities, which do not have electricity, running water and toilet facilities. Electricity is 'borrowed' from streetlights, or families make use of kerosene lamps. Water and toilets are usually within walking distance of where homes are situated.

Both communities have major social problems including gangsterism, unemployment, alcohol and illicit substance abuse especially *'tik'* (a crystal methamphetamine derivative), teenage pregnancies, violence and crime. Many people, including children, are witness to violent crimes such as gang shootings; however, despite the social problems most residents display human resilience by adapting to their environments and implementing precautions in their daily lives as a survival strategy. There are many urban renewal initiatives and strategies in both communities that aim to facilitate community members and organisations to play a role in eradicating the various social problems and develop solutions ("Vital to learn", 2004).

5.4.2 Design

5.4.2 1 Qualitative research approach

The purpose of the study was to understand adolescents' perceptions about leisure boredom and risk behaviour during free time, and examine the influence of the environment on their experiences. Thus, a qualitative approach was considered the most

appropriate and effective method of conducting the study. Qualitative research values "… the socially constructed nature of reality" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 8), thus, enabling the researcher to interpret phenomena in terms of the meaning attributed to them by individuals. As qualitative research occurs in natural settings, the socio-cultural context of individuals (Hohmann & Shear, 2002), and the resulting complexities and constraints that occur as a result of this can be examined. The purpose of qualitative research is not to generalise, but rather to understand phenomena from the perspective of the participants within their natural settings (Babbie & Mouton, 2001).

5.4.2.2 Visual methodology

Visual methodology – for example photography, videos, films, collage, artwork and performance – is a relatively new form of qualitative data collection that originated in the fields of visual anthropology and visual sociology (Kanstrup, 2002). Visual methodologies have been neglected in the past, particularly in psychology and the social sciences, and perceived as being less scientific and credible than traditional scientific research methods which focus on the written and spoken word. Visual imagery has been criticised for the ambiguity that exists when attempting to interpret visual data (as opposed to verbal data). Recently however, there has been more recognition of the contribution and possibilities that visual media provide researchers, such as enabling access to information that would be hard to obtain using other methods, changing the voice of the research, and enabling both researcher and audience to widen their experiences, understanding and representation of the topics of interest (Frith, Riley, Archer & Gleeson, 2005).

Visual methodologies provide researchers with a valuable means of making sense of social phenomena and allowing participants' voices to be elicited. It is a technique that was used with teachers and community health care workers working with youth in rural Kwa-Zulu Natal (South Africa) to give a visible face to HIV and AIDS and a voice for communities to move towards creating solutions themselves (Mitchell, DeLange, Moletsane, Stuart & Buthelezi, 2005). Photography offers opportunities for collaboration

around the data with co-researchers and participants, thus enabling biases to be challenged. Dialogue between researchers and participants is facilitated because of the visual nature of the medium. This becomes particularly useful and necessary when working with adolescent participants who may not yet have developed sufficient abstract thinking abilities and the vocabulary required to express themselves adequately though discussion alone. This may be compounded if the adolescent participants perceive the adult researchers to be in a position of power or authority.

Thus, photographs taken by the participants themselves were the main data source used in the study presented in this chapter, and facilitated our access (as adults and as researchers) into the adolescent participants' lived reality of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in free time.

5.4.3. Parts of the study

The study comprised two parts. In the following section, participant selection, data gathering procedures and ethics are described separately for each part, followed by a general discussion of data analysis and trustworthiness. The themes that emerged from the combined analysis of both parts of the study are discussed under the Results section.

5.4.3.1 Part One

Participants

Participants for Part One of the study were selected using convenience sampling. The community group comprised adolescents attending the local library on one particular afternoon (n=5, three girls and two boys, age range 15 to 18 years). The school group comprised learners from a randomly selected grade 8 class at a local high school (n=10, four girls and six boys, age range 13 to 15 years). All of the adolescents who were approached by the research team, agreed to take part in the study.

Data gathering procedure

During introductory sessions held at the library and the school, the participants were asked to form pairs. Each pair was given a disposable camera. None of the participants had ever owned a camera or had any experience of photography. We spent part of the session explaining how to use the cameras and take good photographs. Then the participants were requested to "Take photographs of teenagers having fun" over a period of five days including a weekend. They returned the cameras to us and we had the photographs developed. We then held a focus group with each group, in which the participants told us about their photos. Firstly, we asked participants to write captions on the back of their photos depicting what was happening. This was not very successful as nearly all of the participants struggled to write anything. Judging from the little that was written and discussion with the participants, this was due to literacy difficulties. This was followed by an unstructured discussion about the photographs. The researcher and three under-graduate student researchers (two of whom were from the communities where the study was conducted) facilitated the groups. The researchers all kept journals in which extensive field notes were made after the groups, as well as reflections about the communities. These served as further sources of data.

Ethics

Ethical approval for the study was obtained from the Research Committee of the University of the Western Cape. The principal of the selected school gave permission for the learners to take part in the study. In line with recommendations from the Declaration of Helsinki (2000) and the Revision of Medical Research Council Ethics Guidelines (2002), every precaution was taken to respect the privacy of the participants, maintain the confidentiality of personal information, and safeguard participants' health and human rights. Participants took part in the study voluntarily and were aware that they could withdraw from the study at any time, for any reason or no reason at all, without loss of benefit or penalisation.

Issues of an ethical nature were discussed with the participants during the introductory session. We talked about the importance of asking permission from potential photo-subjects, informing people that the photographs would be used for research purposes and that identities would be protected by blocking out faces. Partly as compensation as well as an attempt to get the participants to return the cameras, they could take five photographs to keep of whatever they wished. Out of the ten cameras, all but one was returned and nearly two hundred photographs were available for analysis.

5.4.3.2 Part Two

Participants

Purposive sampling is a commonly used method of sampling in qualitative research, and involves selection of participants based on previously defined inclusion criteria (Babbie & Mouton, 2006). The following criteria were used to select participants for Part Two of the study.

Adolescents were included if they:

- Were aged 13 to 20 years,
- Started grade 8 in 2004 or 2005, but subsequently dropped out of school before the end of 2006.

Adolescents were excluded if they were:

- Attending school,
- Employed.

Recruiting participants for this part of the study proved to be very challenging. From three randomly selected high schools in the identified community, a list was obtained of learners who had started grade 8 in either 2004 or 2005 but subsequently left school. From the list, 160 potential participants were identified and contacted telephonically. Of the adolescents who met the inclusion criteria, only 27 agreed to take part. Reasons for not wanting to take part ranged from general suspicion that the research was related to

school in some way, or that they needed to look after babies and do housework, or that they simply did not feel like participating. On the day of the groups, eight adolescents refused to attend the groups even though they had previously consented to participate, and two had to take their babies to the clinic. This resulted in a sample of 17 participants – nine boys (mean age 17.4 years, age range 16.0 to 19.8) and eight girls (mean age 17.1 years, age range 16.3 to 20.8).

Data gathering procedure

Three gender-specific focus groups were run at a school in the local community. Focus groups were the preferred method of data gathering because they capitalise on the interaction within a group to gain rich experiential data about a particular topic, and the group discussions provide direct evidence about similarities and differences in participants' opinions and experiences (Babbie & Mouton, 2006). These were facilitated by the researcher (female) and a co-facilitator (male). The homogenous group composition, focus group protocol and conscientious facilitation enabled us to encourage confidentiality, and promoted a group climate in which everyone was encouraged to participate. All of the focus groups were audio-taped for later transcription.

The photographs taken during Part One of the study were used to trigger discussion around boredom and risk behaviour in free time. Four posters, each with a key question, were pasted on the wall. The questions were: (1) Being bored means … (2) Teenagers like me get bored when … (3) Places that make teenagers like me get bored are … (4) Being bored can be a problem for teenagers like me because … . Participants had to select photos that answered the four questions and stick them onto the respective posters. This was followed by a discussion of the questions and photos, which was facilitated according to the semi-structured focus group protocol (Appendix 5.1). The participants chose the pictures because they held some meaning that related to the issue of boredom (as defined by the four poster categories). In the discussion that followed, we (as researchers and group facilitators) attempted to elicit and uncover these meanings by talking about what the picture depicted, and how the photograph related to boredom, from the perspective of the adolescent participants.

Ethics

Ethical approval and permission for the study was obtained from the Research Committee of the University of Cape Town. Active parental consent was obtained from the parents/guardians of the selected participants by means of a Parent Information and Consent form (Appendix 5.2). Participants took part in the study voluntarily and gave written assent by completing a Participation Information and Assent form (Appendix 5.3). As mentioned for Part One of the study, the recommendations from the Declaration of Helsinki (2000) and the Revision of Medical Research Council Ethics Guidelines (2002) were followed. Participants received a meal voucher from a local takeaway shop as compensation and were served snacks at the focus groups as an expression of appreciation.

5.4.4 Analysis

A common method of qualitative data analysis involves three core steps – "… developing an organizing system, segmenting the data, and making connections" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 302). Based on these core steps, Denzin and Lincoln identified four analysis styles: "… immersion/crystallization, editing, template, and quasi-statistical" (1998, p. 302). The deciding factor in selecting an analysis style is the analyst's relationship to the text based on a continuum of "open and intimate" to "structured and distant" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 304). The immersion/crystallization method of analysis was deemed most appropriate in this study, as we wanted the data to "speak to us and tell us a story".

5.4.4.1 Analysis of photographs

Each photograph was considered to be a meaningful unit. Following the method suggested by Kanstrup (2002), photographs that were similar in some way were sorted into groups, for example, photographs depicting socially-acceptable leisure activities

were grouped, and photographs depicting areas or landscapes in the community were grouped. This was a collaborative process involving the researcher, a colleague and the three student co-researchers, and entailed much discussion and regrouping. Once we had agreed on the final groupings, we then described the scenes evident in the grouped photographs in writing – these constituted the categories. Where present, the participants' captions on the backs of the photographs were included in the written descriptions. From the written descriptions and the photographic evidence, we looked for further patterns among the categories that related in some way to the research questions – these were then grouped into themes.

5.4.4.2 Analysis of focus groups

The focus groups were audio taped, and then transcribed verbatim. Using NVivo 7 (QSR International, 2006) software for qualitative data analysis, a process of inductive thematic analysis was conducted by identifying codes, sorting these into categories, and then grouping categories into themes by means of similarities and patterns within the data. Finally, categories and themes from both the analysis of the photographs and the focus groups were cross-referenced and merged where appropriate.

5.4.5 Trustworthiness

There are various ways to ensure rigor or truth value within a qualitative study. Trustworthiness refers to the neutrality, integrity and accuracy of the findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Measures to ensure trustworthiness include credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Babbie & Mouton, 2001). This study employed several methods to establish trustworthiness. Firstly, there was triangulation of data through the use of multiple methods of data collection including photographs, focus groups, field notes and journals. Secondly, photographs taken by participants in Part One of the study, as well as the findings generated from the analysis of the photographs were discussed with participants in Part Two of the study, thus constituting a form of peer verification

and member checking. Thirdly, investigator triangulation occurred through discussions with colleagues and co-researchers.

5.5 Results

Data from both parts one and two were analysed for emerging themes, using the research questions as the focus of the analysis. The data sources included the photographs, transcripts of focus groups, field notes and journals. The resulting themes and related sub-themes, and the categories are presented in Table 5.3.

5.5.1 Theme 1: No entry – no exit

The influence of the environment on the adolescents' experiences during free time is investigated in this theme, and contextualises the major impact that the environment has on the participants' experiences during their free time. The name of this theme comes from the adolescents having 'no entry' into leisure facilities and 'no exit' from their context.

5.5.1.1 Limited leisure resources

As evidenced in the photographs, the community has limited recreational resources – those that do exist are usually locked up, preventing adolescents from accessing the facilities. Often, sports fields and playing fields at schools are used as parking lots, or are so run-down and neglected that they are unusable. The sports fields are locked and surrounded by electric or barbed wire fences (Figure 5.1) mainly to prevent unwanted elements from vandalising equipment and using the area for illicit activities as indicated in the quote below. However, this means that adolescents are not able to access

community sports facilities unless they are members of a club; this entails a fee which is unaffordable for many of the adolescents.

> They lock it up because now gangsters wanna take over the grounds there, then we can't play on the field and stuff. (Boy, 15 years)

Table 5.3 Themes, sub-themes and categories

Themes	Sub-themes	Categories
• No entry – no exit	• Limited leisure resources • Limited leisure opportunities • Poverty	• Positive leisure activities • Risky, negative activities • Use of free time • Relationship to time • Environmental influence on boredom • Environmental influence on leisure • Boredom at school • Form of boredom • Form of leisure • Experiences of boredom • Experiences of leisure • Purpose and function of boredom • Purpose and function of leisure • Meaning of boredom • Meaning of leisure • Process of boredom • Process of leisure • Properties of boredom • Properties of leisure • Reasons for boredom • Boredom relating to risk behaviour • Dealing with boredom • Playing the fool • Enthusiasm about something new / different
• Too much free time, but you have time for yourself	• Free time means … • Doing nothing • On your own • *Op die hoeke* (On the street corners)	
• Boredom is *gevaarlik* (dangerous)	• Looking for fun • Lack of supervision	
• Every person must get bored	• Part of life • Doing something	

Figure 5.1 A sports field with locked gates and high barbed-wire fence

Although there are recreation/community centres in the communities, these appear to be under-utilised for youth recreation programmes. This occurs for a number of reasons including a shortage of suitably skilled staff, lack of money, and because leisure and recreation are often regarded as being less important than providing resources such as soup kitchens and crèches (Evans & September, 2004). The unsatisfactory use of community centres is illustrated in the following discussion that took place in the group of boy dropouts:

Researcher:	Why do the community halls and sports fields make teenagers feel bored?
Participant 1:	Cause there's no one there to do activities with…
Researcher:	So there's nobody to run any programmes?
Participant 1:	No
Participant 2:	Yeah they say they gonna make us a soccer field then they don't do it
Researcher:	Okay
Participant 1:	That's why it's boring, makes us feel bored
Participant 2:	Because the people steal all the stuff there at the community centre

Participant 1: And there are no activities to do
Participant 2: And there is nobody to do it with, there's not a lot of young people there.

In the communities there are a number of parks and open fields that are surrounded by houses, flats and busy roads. These parks are not very appealing places as the equipment is broken and covered in graffiti, or nonexistent as it has been stolen. Despite this, adolescents spend a lot of their free time in the parks. Apart from being perceived as places for younger children and therefore boring, girls perceive the parks to be undesirable places to spend time as they are unsafe (due to gangsters) and dirty. Therefore, they preferred to be on the road in front of their houses where they felt it was cleaner and safer. This group of boy dropouts said:

Researcher: So being bored means sitting in the park and doing nothing?
Participant 1: Yes chilling with friends
Participant 2: But in the park is also *klein kindertjies* (small children)
Researcher: So why do you think these young people are feeling bored?
Participant 1: Because they are in the park that's why it's boring. They got nothing else to do that's why they in the park…
Participant 3: Maybe the place is boring
Participant 2: Yeah now they playing in the park
Researcher: Tell me about the surrounding area
Participant 2: They got nowhere to go.

There are numerous derelict buildings and deserted houses in the area which have been vandalised. Many have broken down walls, have been burnt out, and are covered in graffiti. Although groups of adolescents hang out there – often to use drugs and alcohol – these places are considered boring as they are undesirable and not safe, and are frequented by gangs and sexual assailants.

The kids use these places to smoke dagga. And sometimes even, they rape girls there. (Boy, 15 years)

Researcher: Describe what's happening in that picture, what's the story there?
Participant 1: A place like that makes teenagers bored
Researcher: Because?
Participant 1: Its just boring man, it's not right for me
Researcher: What would you prefer, where would you rather be?
Participant 1: Doing something like go to the movies, but not that!

Participant 2: You get teenagers that would go to places like that, doing their thing, they go *tik* themselves mad there or drink or smoke weed or something, but it's all bad things. (Girls' group)

Participants used the colloquial dialect to refer to these places as *suiker huisies* (sugar houses) or 'sweet' places to spend time. This is because young people are free to do whatever they want there; however, the activities are nearly always risk-oriented, anti-social pursuits. This group of girl dropouts said:

Researcher: A *suiker huisie*… I haven't heard that one before…! Okay why is it called a *suiker huisie*?
Participant 1: Because you can do whatever you want there
Participant 2: It's a kind of wrong thing…
Researcher: Wrong thing… alright. Do you think people may feel bored when they're there?
Participant 1: No because they got something to do
Researcher: Like?
Participant 1: Their drugs
Participant 2: Writing on the walls.

Figure 5.2 A derelict building known as a suikerhuisie (sugar-house)

5.5.1.2 Limited leisure opportunities

The sub-theme shows that for adolescents living in these communities, the environment offers very limited opportunities to utilise leisure, sport and recreational resources. Included in the environment are the home, schools and local community. Adolescents have few options for exposure to, and exploration of leisure activities – and in particular, high-yield activities (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992). This means that there is very little engagement in leisure activities that provide opportunities for meaningful participation and sustained involvement over time. For adolescents who have dropped out of school, there are even fewer opportunities available. Therefore, the environment contributes significantly to occupational deprivation (Wilcock, 1998) in that adolescents are unable to participate in a range of healthy leisure activities due to environmental limitations.

5.5.1.3 Poverty

Poverty is perceived as one of the major factors maintaining this situation as it limits choices for engagement in a wider variety of leisure pursuits. As this boy said:

> If you don't have money you can do nothing. (Boy, 18 years)

So there is no entry into leisure resources and activities, and no exit from the context in which they find themselves. As a result of the environmental contribution towards occupational deprivation, these adolescents are experiencing high levels of boredom during their free time. The environment does however, offer many opportunities for risk activities like substance use, and anti-social behaviour such as vandalism. The situation is compounded by poverty and the lack of employment opportunities for adolescents who have dropped out of school without a qualification. Dealing in drugs offers a convenient and lucrative way to make money and support a costly drug habit, and/or a baby, as was indicated by this participant:

> *…want ek het 'n baby gemaak toe sê ek myself ag jy't nie 'n job nie, wat gaan jy maak, hoe gaan jy geld kry? Eendag, ek het eendag gesmokkel, net een dag toe kry ek 'n honderd rand toe check ek hoe ek kan my fix vir my koop, ek kan weer 'n pakkie kiembies koop, ek kan 'n melk koop, right elke dag nei, jy moet werk, understand?*
>
> (…because I made a baby, so I said to myself oh you don't have a job, what will you do, how will you get money? One day, one day I sold drugs, only one day, then I got one hundred rand, so I saw how I could buy my fix (drugs), I could buy a packet of nappies (diapers), I could buy milk, right so every day see, you must work, understand?) (Boy, 18 years)

Caldwell (2005a) described certain environmental elements that contribute towards positive developmental outcomes for youth. These elements include "… opportunities, structure and supervision, adult guidance and support, peers, and physical and psychological attributes within the environment" (p. 173). As evidenced in this theme, the environment in which the participants live offers very little of any of these elements, thus compromising the healthy development of adolescents and contributing greatly to their experiences of boredom during free time. There was a feeling of wanting to escape the community before things could get better, as this boy participant indicated:

Participant:	I would like to get out of this community first before I take boredom on
Researcher:	Why?
Participant:	Because this community is not right.

5.5.2 Theme 2: Too much free time, but you have time for yourself

In this theme, the participants' experiences during their free time are described by providing an account of their utilisation of free time. The form (activities, properties and relation to time) and function (process and experience) of their free time pursuits are investigated and described. This contributes to a deeper understanding of why these young people feel bored, and the meaning that free time boredom has for them. The name of the theme quotes a 17 year-old boy participant. It sums up the general perception of the participants that free time is a double-edged sword – on the one hand, they valued their free time as they could do mostly what they wanted and were not constrained by chores and other work; however, this free time was often meaningless and

unconstructive, leading to the experience of boredom. The four sub-themes described below highlight the different components of this theme.

5.5.2.1 Free time means …

The photographs clearly depicted the types of activities that the participants engaged in during their free time. Many of these activities could be regarded as being positive and healthy leisure pursuits. Boys participated in numerous physical activities such as soccer, riding bicycles, cricket, rollerblading and skateboarding – all of which happen in the streets (Figure 5.3). Only one picture showed girls doing a physical activity – skipping, although they told us that they enjoyed playing street netball too. Other leisure activities were watching television, reading, playing pool, video arcade games, dice games, sleeping, playing with pets and listening to music. Participants enjoyed spending time at local shopping malls, on street corners, in game shops, at friends' houses listening to music, playing PlayStation, driving around, going to the beach, sleeping and eating.

Figure 5.3 Playing soccer in the street

Many photographs showed adolescents engaging in substance abuse. For example, one photograph showed two boys standing in the middle of a road in front of a shop; one boy smokes a cigarette whilst his friend attempts to take the cigarette out of his mouth. Another photograph showed three girls standing against the wall of a *shebeen* (private houses from where alcohol and drugs are sold illegally) – one girl smokes, the other girls drink beer from bottles. Another photograph showed a boy sitting on an upside-down toilet in a wooden shed next to a box of dominoes. He has a piece of paper in his hand filled with *dagga* (cannabis). The caption on the back of the photograph is, "He cleans the dagga". Another photograph showed a group of older adolescents sitting in a circle; one boy blows thick smoke from his mouth, the boy next to him is holding a broken bottleneck upside down in his hand; this is a common method of smoking *dagga* in South Africa. The caption says, "They are sitting and smoking pipe". Participants told us they enjoyed partying at friends' houses because they could dance, smoke, drink and use drugs. This occurred mostly when adults were not at home. Some of the participants spent time visiting local *shebeens,* but here, in contrast to homes, the adults did not disturb the adolescents.

> *Daar's 'n klomp ou mense* (there are a lot of old people) but they don't make teenagers feel bored because most of them go to a shebeen to drink wine. (Girl, 16 years)

All of the boy dropouts and the majority of girl dropouts reported that they had used, or were still using drugs; *tik* (crystal methamphetamine) was the most commonly used drug. All of these adolescents blamed their dropping out of school on their drug addiction. One boy described how his "free time was not *lekker* (nice)" because he spent most of his time planning how to make money, or dealing in drugs, or using drugs. He described how he experienced withdrawal symptoms from heroine:

> I was on *tik* also, but now *tik* you can say no, no. I *tik* today and tomorrow I wake-up, I'm gonna come down and (decide) I can stay away from *tik* for a week. But heroine is another thing, heroine you use for a week, for a month, end of that month then you start getting crazy, your back pains, your joints, everywhere you get aches, so you have to use it (heroine). Why? Because you want to get the aches away! Grandpas, Disprins (pain medication) that's not

> gonna work why, because your mindset has already said now heroine is gonna help you. (Boy, 19 years)

Other photographs depicted pseudo-violent activities. For example, one photograph showed two young adolescent boys stand next to each other, their arms around one another's shoulders. Their clothing and behaviour mimic the style of local gangsters, with shirts hanging loose and one boy wearing a woollen cap pulled almost right over his eyes. The other boy holds a pen to his friend's neck and pretends to stab his friend. Another photograph showed a young boy standing in a backyard pointing a gun with one hand (Figure 5.4). The participant who took the photograph told us the gun was not a toy. The caption reads, "Our school kids are just like gangsters".

Figure 5.4 Young boy in his backyard pointing a gun

Many boys and some girls spent a lot of their free time at game shops. Generally, a game shop is a room at the back of a shop or house containing pool tables and video arcade games (Figure 5.5). However, the monotony of this activity led to boredom, especially once they had mastered a particular game.

> You go to game shops and it's gonna get monotonous like if you go there every time repeatedly and it can get monotonous, yeah the game … nothing's gonna change, the same stuff all the time so its gonna get boring. It's keeping the same pattern. (Boy, 17 years)

Figure 5.5 A game shop with pool table and video games

Some photographs showed adolescents carrying out various chores – sweeping the yard, cutting the lawn and washing cars. Girls tended to spend most of their time taking care of babies and/or younger children (their own and/or those of their siblings), and doing household chores. In comparison, boys generally seemed to have much more free time available than the girls. Sometimes boys had to do chores in and around the house, but this tended to be regarded more as the work of women and girls. As one boy participant said:

> …that's why the mommies are there. (Boy, 17 years)

All of the participants did not like doing chores and felt they were boring because they were forced to do them, were repetitive, and meaningless because they had to be repeated. Not having a choice in the situation resulted in resistance to adult authority (Larson & Richards, 1991), which was interpreted and communicated as boredom.

> Sweeping the yard – sometimes its boring because you don't like to listen and they (parents) said you must do it. It's sometimes irritating, to listen to your mom. (Boy, 17 years)

> …because you just cleaned and then the dog come again and then it's work again, you clean again" (Boy, 16 years)

Girls spoke of spending time with old(er) people (family and friends), which they felt was very boring due to the repetitiveness of the conversation and because the topics of conversation held very little meaning for them. As this group of girl dropouts said:

> Participant 1: Picture (photo) one, sitting with old people
> Researcher: Okay
> Participant 1: Oh yak!
> Researcher: Why do you get bored when you are with old people?
> Participant 1: Because there's no one your age, like I said only old people
> Participant 2: Because they talk a lot
> Participant 1: Sitting with them and they talk about "that times" and "that year" and when you were small you did "that" and oh uh-ha and how they were when they were your age and all that stuff…
> Participant 2: And its not now like that, things are different now, different to be a young person!
> Researcher: Okay so when they talk about the things that happened long ago and when you were small, that makes you feel bored?
> Participant 1: Yes because every time you sit with them they talk about the same things over and over.

Generally, the participants perceived that the element of repetition within their daily activities and time use led to feeling bored. This was also the perception when there was a poor fit between the activity or situation, and the participant's expectations. When adolescents are not fully engaged in an activity, boredom may result due to the sense of disconnection that arises within the situation (Conrad, 1997). This group of girl dropouts said:

Researcher: So you said everyday is the same thing, is that part of being bored?
Participants: Yes!
Participant 1: The same thing over and over and over…

The boy dropouts felt bored at school mainly because of free time during intervals and free periods. Our experience of working in schools in these areas supports this; on many occasions learners are observed roaming around the school during class time because they are 'bunking' (truanting) or the educator is absent. According to the boys, adolescents use this time to smoke cigarettes, and use *dagga* and *tik*. Previous studies have shown that students who are more bored in school are more likely to be bored in free time (Larson & Richards, 1991; Shaw, Caldwell & Kleiber, 1996). The boy dropouts described how boredom occurs in school and what they do about it:

Researcher: So places that make you feel bored?
Participants: School (general agreement from all participants)
Researcher: Okay – what about school makes you bored?
Participant 1: *As jy 'n vervelige meneer het* (if you have a boring [male] teacher)
Researcher: So it's the teachers?
Participant 2: Yeah History and Maths
Researcher: But guys remember we're talking about free time. So is there free time in school?
Participants: Intervals
Participant 1: Sometimes you get a free period…
Participant 3: Sometime you make your own free period…
Researcher: Intervals and when you get a free period, what do you do?
Participant 2: Walk around, smoke, sit around…
Participant 3: Jump over the fence, *dan koop julle goed, dan kom julle weer skool toe* (then you buy stuff, then you come back to school)
Participant 2: *Dan sit jy in jou toilet by die skool* (then you sit in your toilet at school)
Participant 1: Walking around and roaming around school…
Participant 3: *Mirt* … (sell drugs illegally)
Researcher: Mirt, okay so when you have a free period you sell stuff?
Participant 3: Cigarettes… drugs…

In summary, this sub-theme documents the participants' utilisation of their free time, the types of activities engaged in and their perceptions of these activities. Many of these activities could be classified as low-yield activities (Carnegie Council on Adolescent Development, 1992) because they are not goal-oriented, offer little outlet for creativity,

require little discipline and focus, do not offer appropriate challenges, do not build skills or require much competence, and do not require persistence and commitment over time. Sporting activities such as skateboarding and street soccer demand some of these elements to a certain extent, and thus could be considered high yield activities; however, the informal nature and context in which these activities occur probably negates some of the benefits. Furthermore, there was clear evidence of involvement in substance use, including use of cigarettes, alcohol, *dagga*, *tik*, and heroine (to a lesser extent) among all of the participant groups. Drugs and alcohol appear to be freely available and are engaged in openly.

Elements of monotony, repetition (Conrad, 1997), lack of meaning (Barbalet, 1999) and having no choice (Caldwell, Darling, Payne & Dowdy, 1999) in activities were all evident in the participants' utilisation of their free time, and contributed to their experiences of boredom during free time.

5.5.2.2 Doing nothing

Much of the participants' free time was spent doing nothing. There are many photographs of adolescents sitting or lying around in groups, and the phrase 'doing nothing' was frequently used by the participants to refer to time that goes by without meaningful activity or purpose. As one girl said:

> Sitting there getting lazy doing nothing. (Girl, 16 years)

Watching television was an activity that many of the participants did because they had nothing else to do. Even when this activity had some measure of purpose in that they were watching a favourite programme or were with friends, the activity was regarded as having little meaning or value. For the participants who had dropped out of school, watching television was just a way to use up time.

> …especially when it's cold, you get up, clean the room, clean the house, and then there's nothing to do after that. Get a blanket, sit in front of the TV, oh no… (Girl, 19 years)

As indicated in the first theme, the participants spent much of their free time at home or in the parks. They perceived this as 'doing nothing' and felt they were forced to do this due to their lack of money. Because they had nothing to do and nowhere else to go, the under-stimulation meant that this time lacked purpose and meaning, thus resulting in feelings of boredom.

5.5.2.3 On your own

According to the participants, being on their own was very boring. Any situation or activity which limited interaction with peers was perceived as being more boring. In this quote, the girl dropouts talk about how reading in the library is perceived as being boring because of the lack of social interaction:

> Participant: It's boring, sitting alone in the library reading, your friends is still maybe around and maybe looking at magazines is not that boring, but reading books like that…
> Researcher: Do you find reading boring?
> Participant: If it's something interesting, but in the library… no ways man! You alone there, if there was friends maybe…

For the participants that had dropped out of school, being 'on your own' was perceived as being a very boring situation (Figure 5.6). This is not surprising as these adolescents are alone for much of their time during the day, when family and friends are at work or school. The isolation of these dropouts and decreased opportunities for interaction with peers compounds their sense of disconnection from the rest of society and the lack of stimulation, thus contributing to their feelings of boredom. The fact that so many adolescents drop out of school and experience this situation was expressed by one of the boy dropouts:

> There by us everybody leaves school. You are at home, nothing to do… (Boy, 17 years)

Figure 5.6 On your own at home

5.5.2.4 Op die hoeke (On the street corners)

Gathering together, or 'hanging out' on street corners was a predominant free time activity for both boys and girls. Sometimes, instead of the street corners, girls preferred to gather outside their houses in their yards, which they referred to as 'sitting on doorsteps' (Figure 5.7). In response to having nothing to do and/or being alone, the purpose of hanging out (mainly on street corners) is to create opportunities for social interaction with peers, and it provides meaning by giving the adolescents something to do in that they can observe what is happening in the neighbourhood. Young people of both genders meet up on street corners and spend time discussing other young people or 'gossiping'. There are many photos that show adolescents hanging out in groups on the streets in front of houses. Often the youths are shown making hand signals that are recognised in the community as gang signals (Figure 5.8); however, the meaning of these gestures was not discussed in the focus groups. It appears as if hanging out together in a group – although

not a formal gang – gives the adolescents the feeling of being part of a gang and a sense of solidarity with peers.

> *…want daar kan jy almal sien wie verbykom,wie aankom en wie agter jou staan of voorstaan. Ons kyk vir hulle aan, ons hou net vir hulle so dop*
> (…because there you can see everyone that comes by, and who is standing behind you or in front of you. We look at them, we watch them). (Girl, 20 years)

> …on the street corners, maybe waiting for more friends to come and planning to go wherever, to this house or by the merchants (drug dealers). (Girl, 18 years)

> I was sitting there, nothing to do, talking about other people, okay, gossiping. Because if you're bored – I've got nothing to do – you say to someone else, hey did you see that Katriena is wearing a very short little skirt! They're boys, they talk about other people! (Boy, 19 years)

Figure 5.7 Girls sitting on a doorstep outside a house and smoking

Figure 5.8 Boys hanging out on a street corner

Despite the amount of time spent hanging out on the street corners, the participants felt that eventually this activity could also become boring when there was nothing to do, and often this would lead to some form of risk behaviour. This is illustrated in the following quotes:

> Unless you gonna have something that you gonna do, then you can be bored with your friends, that happens a lot and you just sit and now you don't know what to speak about anymore, you just sit and look at each other. (Boy, 18 years)

> …like you pulling your pants off, all the friends must now laugh at his bum (Referring to photograph of a boy pulling down his pants). (Boy, 16 years)

> *…as ons mos nou daar gaan sit dan sal ons miskien 'n boatjie gerook het, iets soos daai… dan raak jy tatie.*
> (…if we now go and sit there, then perhaps we would smoke a boat (dagga), something like that…then you go mad). (Referring to photograph of boys lounging on an electricity box, see Figure 5.9). (Boy, 17 years)

Figure 5.9 Boys hanging out and smoking dagga

5.5.3 Theme 3: Boredom is *gevaarlik* (dangerous)

The participants' perceptions of how boredom in free time is associated with risk behaviour are described in this theme. As indicated by the name of this theme (a quote from a 16 year-old boy dropout), the participants clearly perceived boredom as being 'dangerous' as it leads to many forms of risk behaviours and activities. They felt this was mainly as a result of under-stimulation which arose out of having nothing to do, as this girl indicated:

> …there was always nothing to do and then I used to go to my friend's next door that time, she isn't staying there (now), and we just tried it (*dagga*) out because we were bored and then it started coming a every weekend thing and okay from there on its…Yes look at picture one né, there's a lot of friends sitting there, they all, they got nothing to do now they smoking pipe and all that. (Girl, 18 years)

5.5.3.1 Looking for fun

Participants perceived boredom to be associated with feelings of restlessness causing them to look for fun in the form of risky pursuits and behaviours, as indicated by the following quotes from the girls' groups:

> Participant 1: It can be a problem because when you are bored you have nothing to do. *En dan gaan daar 'n klomp dinge in jou mind en dan wil jy sommer doen dit en daai* (And then a lot of things go on in your mind and you just want to do this and do that)
> Researcher: *Dinge soos wat?* (Things like what?)
> Participant 1: Like doing drugs man!
> Researcher: Doing drugs…
> Participant 1: Drinking wine and whatever, whatever…
> Participant 2: *Tikking* and maybe go break someone's house in…

> Participant 1: (describing photograph) So he's with his friends and he's pretending to stab his friend with a knife… it's very dangerous for children like that
> Researcher: Right, and how do you think that boredom links to what they are doing? Do you think those children are feeling bored?
> Participants: Yes
> Researcher: And what does that make them do?
> Participant 1: Doing dangerous stuff to make it fun for them…
> Participant 2: And boredom can lead to doing stupid things, it makes you steal, do drugs.

Because the options for leisure engagement are so limited, alternatives for hanging out on the streets that were perceived by some adolescents to be safer also ended up placing them at risk, as this quote indicates:

> *Is betere om pool te skiet as om op die hoeke te sit, want ek is af van die pad af*
> (It's better to shoot pool than sit on the corners because then I'm off the streets).
> (Girl, 17 years)

It was clear that the participants regarded boredom as a cause of risk behaviour. Risk activities were perceived to alleviate boredom (Figure 5.10). However, risk behaviour resulted in other problems such as addiction to substances. Although not investigated in depth, it was evident from the participants that peer pressure played a role in risk behaviour – particularly substance use. In the quote below from the group of boy

dropouts, the link between boredom and risk behaviour (substance use and violence), and the influence of peer pressure is illustrated:

Researcher:	What is happening in pictures one and two?
Participant 1:	They gonna fight there by (picture) one
Participant 2:	Drinking (picture 2)
Participant 1:	That is not actually boredom, but boredom was the reason they doing that (fighting and drinking) now you see. Before they had done that they were bored.
Researcher:	And so the boredom goes away?
Participant 1:	Yeah and so they give you a problem
Researcher:	And so, this is interesting, so where young people are using drugs or alcohol then you say they are not bored?
Participant 1:	Then they are not bored anymore
Participant 2:	But it's a problem because they put their minds…it's now totally off from boredom. So like the people use *tik* if you use *tik dan's jou kop op, jy doen die laaste ding wat jy wil doen* (then your head is messed up, you do the last thing that you want to). If you use that methyl thing – crystalmeth – if you use *tik*, *nou kom 'n tjommie daar dan tik jy, dan is jy nie bored nie* (then a friend comes along, then you *tik*, then you are not bored)
Researcher:	So can I say that when you are bored you do these activities?
Participants:	Mmm… (nodding)
Researcher:	And when you do these activities?
Participant 2:	*Is jy nie bored nie* (you are not bored)
Participant 1:	But when you do it, it's gonna be a problem.

But even risky activities also become boring when they are done everyday, as this girl said:

Researcher:	Why is that, what is it about smoking that's boring?
Participant:	Well you smoke everyday, and you don't feel the same anymore. (Girl, 17 years)

Figure 5.10 Boys rolling and smoking dagga

5.5.3.2 Lack of supervision

Although the games shops provided some form of fun recreational activities, they were perceived as being dangerous because they were associated with risky pursuits, which was attributed partly to the lack of supervision. As this group of boys said:

Participant:	Most of the children start smoking at game shops you see, *daar's waar die ding ruk, by daai game shop* (that's where it's fun, at the game shop)
Researcher:	Cigarettes? Or we talking about…
Participant:	Cigarettes, anything, some of them even stand in front of them (shop owners), they smoking weed (cannabis) or something like that you understand?
Researcher:	Yeah…
Participant:	Some of them go and they stand at the back of the game shop, and then they smoke the other *goetertjies* (things)
Researcher:	Mmm…
Participant:	Most of the girls come out of the game shops pregnant, understand? So that's why games *is nie reg nie* (are not right).

Standing on street corners was regarded by the girls as risky in terms of personal safety; there was the possibility of getting robbed, shot or kidnapped and raped. As these girls explained:

Participant 1:	*Op die hoeke* (on the street corners)
Participant 2:	Sometimes you just sit on the corner and do nothing
Researcher:	Mmm, so it can sometimes be boring. Do you like standing on the corner? You're saying no, you E… you liked it, you D.., you don't. Why don't you like it?
Participant 2:	You can get hurt and bored
Researcher:	Okay why?
Participant 2:	Because there's lots of gangsters around and when they shoot and you stand on the corner…
Researcher:	Do you think it's more dangerous for girls or boys?
Participant 1:	Girls
Researcher:	Okay let's talk about girls, why is it more dangerous for girls do you think? What happens to girls on the corners?
Participant 1:	(They) get raped.

5.5.4 Theme 4: Every person must get bored

In this theme, the participants' need for constructive, meaningful free time activities is discussed. It is often boredom that provokes the desire to engage in some activity (Scitovsky, 1999) and find meaning in the activity (Barbalet, 1999; Martin, Sadlo & Stew, 2006).

5.5.4.1 Part of life

It was very difficult for the participants to articulate the meaning of boredom in their free time, most likely because it was a concept that they had never previously thought about in any depth. However, there was the realisation that boredom is a part of life, as this quote indicates:

Participant:	But you must get bored
Researcher:	Why must you get bored?
Participant:	Because it's a part of life to get bored, every person must get bored (Boy, 17 years)

The participants also felt that boredom was a problem because it led to young people wasting their time and achieving nothing in life. This led to feelings of restlessness and irritation with the situation, as these quotes indicate:

> No man I'm young, I don't want to sit there when you know there is somewhere you can go! (Girl, 18 years)

> You can sleep your life away. (Boy, 16 years)

5.5.4.2 Doing something

The following discussion amongst the boy dropouts captured the idea that boredom can serve as a means of propelling the individual towards action:

> Boredom is not a good thing, but you can make something about boredom or you can do something to get boredom off your mind. (Boy, 18 years)

When asked about what they would like to be doing, various activity options were discussed. Many of the boys expressed the desire to work in the Navy and the Police. However, they lacked information and seemed to be unaware of how to apply for these jobs. Interestingly, many of the participants expressed the desire to return to school due in part to their boredom, although they expressed that it would have to be night-school (girls with babies), or college where they could do two grade-years in one year. The participants also suggested sports, youth clubs, and groups for girls with babies. The issue of adult involvement was briefly raised although not pursued in depth, as this fell beyond the scope of the present study. This group of girls said:

Participant:	A youth club or something just to keep them busy, like have fun and games
Researcher:	Do you think adults should be involved in the club in any way or not?
Participant:	No
Researcher:	Okay. And how would you run the club - do you think young people should be running the clubs rather than adults?
Participant:	Adults can run the club, but it must be like… ours
Researcher:	So young people must decide what they want and it must be your place.

There was a similar discussion in the other girls' group:

Participant:	It's a lot of problems for young people cause you get girls that's got a child - they can't handle it, now they take um tablets, overdose themselves, kill themselves, and it would be better if there's…, if all of them can like come together and talk about their problems and so support each other
Researcher:	But maybe a youth centre could have that kind of thing happening as well
Participants:	Yes!
Participant 1:	Like support groups for young girls who are pregnant or got babies, as well as fun things. That could be helpful
Participants:	Yeah!

Although we had made it clear at the start that the focus groups would be once-off events, there was an expectation among the participants of a follow-up the next week. Participants were eager to attend more focus groups – or something similar – and expressed disappointment when we reminded them that this was not the case, as these quotes show:

Researcher:	Alright girls - thanks very much! Do you have any questions that you want to ask at this point?
Participant:	When are you, when are we seeing you next week again?
Researcher:	We are not, this has just been a once-off
Participant:	Oh. (Girls group)

Researcher:	Okay guys - I think we've come to the end. Would anybody like to add anything else?
Participant 1:	Um - when is our next session?
Researcher:	Unfortunately there's only this one
Participant 1:	One, once a week or once a month?
Researcher:	There are no more sessions after this
Participant 1:	And then how we gonna know now about this?
Participant 2:	So you won't, you won't come back here?
Researcher:	We won't come back
Participant 3:	Oh this is only for one day?
Researcher 1:	Yeah, for one day
Researcher 2:	We want to know why you are disappointed.
Participant 1:	Because it was like… you can meet people, can refresh yourself…
Researcher:	Okay so you can talk and meet friends and other people
Participant 3:	At home you can't…
Participant 1:	Sometimes you get *dik* (tired/irritated) of your own friends at home

> Participant 2: (This morning) I wash me, I got dressed and walk a *bietjie* (bit) around … so from this morning till now I didn't smoke yet – understand? So actually you did keep me now busy with this time. So yeah, so the craving… nothing yet come to my brains because you … that's why I asked is this the last time, so o*utomaties more gaan ek nou weer rook* (automatically tomorrow I will go and smoke again) understand? (Boys group)

5.6 Discussion

This study made use of a relatively new method of qualitative data collection – visual imagery (photographs) – to explore and document adolescents' perceptions about their experiences of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in free time. One group of adolescents took photographs of their leisure time, and another group of adolescents who had dropped out of school used the photographs to construct their understanding of the phenomena of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in their daily lives. This was a productive method of enabling young people to make a contribution towards developing insight and understanding of adolescent behaviour within a specific context. The photo-posters that were created facilitated dialogue about the topic between the young participants and the adult researchers. The pooled result created a far better approximation of reality than what would have been possible with abstract discussion alone. Thus, the use of visual methodology contributed to the quality of data and therefore, to the value and usefulness of the study.

It was evident from the results that for these adolescents, leisure was not separate from boredom – both constructs formed part of their free time experiences. Risk behaviours were also very much part of free time. Among both the school-going and the dropout participants, boys had more free time available than girls, with the boy dropouts having almost the entire day free. Whilst free time was valued because the adolescents could do as they pleased, because there was the perception that there was nothing to do, much of this free time was spent hanging out on street corners. This was even more so for the dropouts who felt isolated and avoided being alone.

Substance use was associated with hanging out. The lack of meaning, monotony and repetitiveness of hanging out every day was interpreted as feelings of boredom. Activities such as substance use and playing the fool were ways of alleviating the boredom by having fun. Similar results emerged in an ethnographic study of the meaning of substance use among adolescents hanging around on streets in Scotland. Pavis and Cunningham-Burley (1999) found that whilst spending time on the streets at night and over weekends could be both boring and exciting, young people valued the "… unsupervised, adult-free space" that the streets afforded them (p. 588). The authors reported that substance use was an integral part of their leisure experience and street-life; cigarettes were used to facilitate social interaction with same- and opposite-sex peers and strengthen social bonds, while alcohol and illicit drugs created fun and excitement.

The environment had a major influence on the adolescents' experience of boredom in free time and there was clear evidence of occupational deprivation and imbalance (Wilcock, 1998). Occupational deprivation occurred as adolescents were restricted by their environment from engaging in leisure activities due to factors such as the lack of resources in the community and schools, lack of money, and safety concerns. The restriction in occupational choice led to occupational imbalance as the adolescents spent most of their time hanging out on street corners or in backyards, thus increasing the risk of exposure to, and engagement in unhealthy or negative leisure activities. Clearly, adolescents developmental needs are not being met though leisure engagement in this particular environment. Furthermore, occupational imbalance occurs as there is incongruity between what leisure pursuits they would like to do in their free time, and what they are able to do in reality.

Central to this discussion is the concept of entrapment. There is evidence in this study that these adolescents are trapped by poverty and their circumstances; what is less explicit, is that they are also trapped by societal norms and values. In this community it is quite usual for adolescents to aspire to become gangsters or "taxi-queens" (girlfriends of taxi drivers who receive gifts and money). Often the good that does exist gets destroyed, for example, schools are often vandalised over weekends forcing learners and educators

to spend days cleaning up. The effect of this is that people become demoralised, and a maladaptive cycle is set in motion from which people feel there is no escape. This sense of entrapment may explain why despite their feelings of boredom and the desire to be engaging in some form of constructive activity, the participants seemed to lack the motivation to act on their desire. However, future research needs to investigate this phenomenon in more depth.

The greatest limitation of the study was the difficulty in recruiting participants who had dropped out of school. As indicated in the Methods section above, many of the adolescents were highly suspicious of our motives in the research, and refused to give their assent to participate in the study as a result. Others said they were not interested in taking part because they just did not feel like it. This is another indication of the lack of motivation among this group of adolescents. Adolescents who have dropped out of school are a marginalised group in society, and there is ample scope for research investigating a variety of factors such as levels of boredom and motivation among them.

5.7 Conclusion

This study has contributed to our understanding of the phenomena of leisure and boredom, and the association with risk behaviour for young people living in an economically impoverished area of South Africa. The value of this study is that adolescents were able to play a major role in deciding what aspects of their leisure to reveal in the photographs they took. This was further developed through discussions of the photographs in focus groups with adolescents who had dropped out of school. The results provide clear evidence that leisure is an occupational concern for these adolescents, due to the occupational deprivation and imbalance occurring within their free time. This results in feelings of boredom in free time. The environment is a main contributor towards this situation.

Chapter Six

HealthWise South Africa: cultural adaptation of a school-based risk prevention programme

When thrown into the sea the stone said, "After all, this is also a home".
(African proverb)

6.1 Introduction

There is a need for effective prevention programmes to reduce risk behaviour among young South Africans. Adolescence is a period when risk behaviours frequently commence; therefore, it is a critical time to promote healthy behaviours. Schools play a major role in the socialisation of children and the development of acceptable adult behaviours (Lister Sharpe, Chapman, Stewart-Brown & Sowden, 1999), offer relatively easy access to the adolescent population, and the infrastructure and availability of educators mean that programmes can be delivered cost-effectively (Flisher, Brown & Mukoma, 2002). But before interventions can become an integral part of the school system, their effectiveness should be determined through programme evaluation.

The majority of evidence-based prevention interventions aimed at reducing risk behaviour and promoting health among adolescents have been designed, implemented and evaluated in North America (Kirby et al., 1994; UNAIDS Best Practice Collection, 1997), Europe and Australia (Mukoma & Flisher, 2004).

There is a relative lack of research evaluating health interventions in developing countries (Kaaya, Mukoma, Flisher & Klepp, 2002; Mukoma & Flisher, 2004; Ross, Dick & Ferguson, 2006; Speizer, Magnani & Colvin, 2003; UNAIDS Best Practice Collection, 1997), although recently the HIV/AIDS pandemic in sub-Saharan Africa has focussed attention on child and adolescent reproductive health (Gachuhi, 1999). Reviews of evidence about the effectiveness of HIV prevention interventions among youth in developing countries found that programmes generally had a degree of success in increasing knowledge and attitudes (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004; Kaaya et al., 2002; Magnani, MacIntyre, Mehyrar Karim, Brown & Hutchinson, 2005; Ross et al., 2006; Speizer et al., 2003). Changing behaviour is more challenging; however, adult-led programmes that were based on the school curriculum, and incorporated characteristics previously shown to be effective in developed countries had a positive effect on reported behaviours (Ross et al., 2006). Modest effects on the onset and incidence of sexual intercourse and a reduction in the number of sexual partners (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004; Kaaya et al., 2002), and improvements in condom use behaviours (Magnani et al., 2005) have been reported. Certainly, there is a critical need to strengthen research in developing countries, and for careful monitoring and evaluation of interventions.

The lack of research in developing countries has meant that interventions in these countries have had to rely upon models developed and evaluated elsewhere (UNAIDS Best Practice Collection, 1997). A central question is, to what extent can programmes developed in a Western context be adapted for a developing world context? In the developed world, evaluations have focused primarily on efficacy and effectiveness, with relatively little research on the process of implementation (Elliott & Mihalic, 2004). When moving programme content from one cultural context to another, evaluating the process of programme development and cultural adaptation becomes very important as this reveals the extent to which the adapted programme can be implemented with fidelity and further adaptations that are needed.

Currently, a dynamic tension exists between fidelity and adaptation. Some argue that without adequate fidelity, it is unlikely that programmes will effectively achieve intended outcomes (Elliott & Mihalic, 2004). However, it would seem equally important to consider the local culture and context where the programme will be implemented, and to ensure that the programme is adapted to fit consumers' needs. Castro, Barrera and Martinez (2004) proposed a design strategy for hybrid prevention programmes that incorporate adaptation to enhance programme fit with the culture of the local community, whilst also maximising fidelity of implementation. They cautioned about the possibilities of cultural mismatch that can threaten programme efficacy despite high fidelity, when cultural adaptation has not occurred and local life issues and world views have not been considered. Furthermore, the authors advocated the adoption of a community-based participation approach in programme design and research that incorporates both a top-down approach (scientific experts in programme design) and a bottom-up approach (mobilising community involvement and buy-in).

6.2 Research questions and aim

The study presented in this chapter was an independent component of the overall process evaluation of a pilot study to evaluate a school-based risk reduction intervention (referred to from here on as a 'programme') called HealthWise (Caldwell et al., 2004). The aims of the overall process evaluation were to understand how the newly developed programme met local needs and to test the measurement of proximal and distal outcomes in order to develop an intervention that could then be further evaluated with a larger sample. The programme was based on successful programmes in the United States of America (US) but developed for use in a particular South African context.

The specific study presented in this chapter describes the process of programme adaptation of US content to a particular South African context. The process was guided by the following research questions: (1) What elements or aspects of the local culture and context informed the further adaptation of the HealthWise programme? (2) What elements of the programme were considered difficult or inappropriate? (3) How did educators deviate from the programme and why? (4) How useful was the programme perceived to be?

The aim of the study was to investigate the process of cultural adaptation of the programme and determine stakeholders' perceptions of its usefulness.[6]

6.3 Background

6.3.1 Life skills education in South Africa

Life skills education has gained increasing support as a strategy to address risk behaviour. Experiential techniques and participatory methods such as role play are employed to help young people gain knowledge; make positive, healthy decisions; examine attitudes; develop skills; and avoid risks. Effective life skills programmes should start early, be data-driven and theory-based, exist as a separate topic rather than be integrated throughout the curriculum, include educator training in participatory methods, and be monitored and evaluated (Tiendrebeogo, Meijer & Engleberg, 2003). The Department of Education, South Africa, has introduced Life Orientation as a compulsory learning area from first to twelfth grade (Department of Education, 2002; Department of Education, 2003).

[6] Wegner, L., Flisher, A.J., Caldwell, L., Vergnani, T. & Smith, E. (2007). HealthWise South Africa: cultural adaptation of a school-based risk prevention program. *Health Education Research.* doi: 10.1093/her/cym064

Life Orientation includes health promotion, wellness and well-being as core learning outcomes, and accommodates the Department of Health's Life Skills and HIV/AIDS education programme (Department of Education, 2003). Although life skills education can positively alter behaviour such as delaying sexual initiation and preventing substance use (Tiendrebeogo et al., 2003), coverage and content of life skills education vary greatly between schools, and schools where learners are at higher risk of pregnancy and HIV infection have been the least likely to offer life skills (MacIntyre et al., 2000). There is a need for educator training and support because educators struggle with the transfer of sexual reproductive knowledge and skills, and facilitative teaching methods in the classroom context (Ahmed et al., 2006).

6.3.2 Programme development

The goal of the HealthWise programme development was to design the programme with strong input from educators and local experts so that the final programme would be one that would meet local needs, be sustainable, and be implemented with a high degree of fidelity. All of the investigators in South Africa and the US have extensive experience in developing and delivering school programmes. The team was acutely aware of the risks faced by adolescents in this environment, and sensitive to language issues, economic disparities, and racial issues within the community and schools where the programme would be placed. Initially, the research team took the US content and developed a new programme called HealthWise based on what was known from empirical research conducted in South Africa as well as consideration of cultural and contextual factors including psycho-cultural factors such as the influence of peer pressure on sexuality among South African adolescents, adapting individualistic (Westernised) notions of autonomy and self regulation to a collectivist (South African) approach, and the specific low socio-economic context and environment in which the schools were situated (Caldwell et al., 2004).

However, the team also recognised that despite their best efforts, a rigorous process evaluation was needed to assess cultural relevance and further refine the programme. Briefly, the process of refining the adaptation was that educators were asked to deliver the programme as it was designed, participate in an extensive evaluation of the process, and make recommendations for modifications. This chapter documents this process.

6.3.3 Description of the HealthWise programme

HealthWise is a comprehensive life skills programme that aims to reduce risk behaviours by increasing the influence of protective factors such as positive behaviours and attitudes. It adopts a positive youth development perspective. Targeted risk behaviours include substance use and sexual risk behaviour. The protective factors include skills to make leisure positive and meaningful; self-management skills such as learning how to reduce anger, anxiety and stress; negotiating relationships; identifying and avoiding risky situations; and learning facts about substance misuse and sexual health (Caldwell et al., 2004; Caldwell, Smith & Wegner, 2004). Initially, HealthWise comprised 17 lessons and was taught to eighth grade learners (mean age 14 years, age range 13-16 years).

The theoretical basis underpinning the HealthWise curriculum is ecological systems theory (Bronfenbrenner, 1992, 1995). This implies a dynamic interaction between multiple risk and protective factors, contexts and the environment, and behavioural outcomes, at any particular time. The HealthWise lessons form part of four key intervention approaches: (1) self-awareness; (2) skill development; (3) knowledge, analysis and synthesis; and, (4) community integration (Caldwell et al., 2004).

HealthWise was not developed for, and has not been used in the United States (US). Rather, HealthWise combines three separate components - two of which have been implemented independently in the US. One component involves elements of a Life Skills Training programme (Botvin & Kantor, 2000) shown to be effective in reducing the onset of substance use (Botvin, Schinke, Epstein & Diaz, 1994). It focuses on teaching developmentally appropriate skills, such as anger management and decision making, and includes lessons regarding the effects of specific substances. The second component is an evidence-based leisure education intervention called TimeWise: Taking Charge of Leisure Time (Caldwell, 2004). TimeWise helps youth learn personally meaningful and healthy ways to use their free time, avoid boredom, develop interests, become aware of community resources, and overcome constraints to participation in desired leisure activities (Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith, 2004). TimeWise has been shown to effectively promote intrinsic motivation, and reduce extrinsic motivation and amotivation among school-going adolescents in the USA (Caldwell, Baldwin, Walls & Smith, 2004; Caldwell, Ridenour, Smith & Maldonado-Molina, under review).

In the absence of sexuality training models with proven effectiveness in the developing world, as well as on an international level (Senderowitz, 2002) the third component of HealthWise consists of an integrated approach drawn from a number of sexuality curricula. The aims are to increase awareness of risky sexual behaviour and teach learners how to avoid sexual risk including pregnancy and transmission of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Learners learn how to set personal goals for sexual abstinence or alternatively, low risk sexual involvement, and practice skills needed for effective condom use. The Abstinence - Be faithful - Condomise (ABC) model was included in the HealthWise curriculum as it forms part of the Education Department's sexuality training curriculum, and as such, is a model with which educators are familiar. Thus, the ABC model served as a starting point from which to work with the educators around sexuality. The ABC model of prevention is promoted by the South African government as a primary strategy to prevent the spread of HIV (Deputy President Mlambo-Ngcuka, 2006); however, is has been criticised for being unrealistic for use in developing countries as it does not take into account gender

inequality and poverty which together may make it difficult for people to abstain, be faithful or condomise (Masindi, Hlatshwayo, Msimang, Monareng & Treger, 2002). In an effort to address this concern, we incorporated discussions and activities whereby learners were made aware of the right of each individual to choose if, when and how to have sexual relations; and how to communicate this to potential sexual partners. Finally, the curriculum ensures that learners are introduced to community resources that cater for adolescent reproductive health needs.

The combination of these three components into one package reduced overlapping sessions and allowed for an integrated approach to broader-based social skills such as managing risk. The integration of these three components was accomplished through a careful analysis of programme content, an understanding of the school context in which the programme was to be delivered, and an appreciation of the challenges facing adolescent development within the economically deprived context of the study.

In addition, according to the principle of community-based participation in programme planning, evaluation and research, the team worked together with stakeholders from the district education department to ensure that HealthWise lessons and objectives integrated with specific learning outcomes for the eighth grade (and later on, the ninth grade) Life Orientation curriculum. The details of this integration are presented in Appendix 6.1. The HealthWise curriculum replaced certain components of the standard Education Department Life Orientation curriculum, so by completing HealthWise, educators were fulfilling certain of the learning outcomes for the subject.

6.4 Methods

6.4.1 Schools and participants

The context of the study was Mitchells Plain, South Africa (described in chapter 5). In order to ensure a fair chance of success for the pilot intervention, we identified 12 of the 16 high schools in this community that were 'adequately functioning'. Schools were judged to be adequately functioning if they had satisfactory leadership and management structures in place, for example, a functioning governing body, and if the curriculum was generally implemented according to plan. This judgment was made with assistance from the district Education Department body. Four of the twelve schools were then randomly selected to participate in the study. Finally, two classes at each of the four schools were randomly selected to receive the HealthWise programme (n=226 learners).

Life Orientation educators at participating schools were invited to participate in the study. Of the eight participants, six were women, all were coloured, and their ages ranged from 32 to 48 years. Five participants had Bachelor's degrees, one had a Master's degree, and the qualifications of two were unknown. Their experience of teaching Life Orientation ranged from 0 years to 20 years.

Thirty-two randomly selected learners from participating classes at the four schools took part in four gender-specific focus groups. Learners' ages ranged from 13 to 16 years, 16 were boys, 25 were coloured and 7 were black.

6.4.2 Educator training

Eight educators and one principal attended a three-day training workshop held in January 2003, and each received an educator training manual (Caldwell & Smith, 2003). Training consisted of describing programme theory and expected outcomes, discussing maintaining fidelity, practicing teaching the lessons, discussing the process evaluation and the educators' role in helping to modify the programme. In addition, participatory methods were employed to enable educators to become familiar with each of the lessons in the curriculum and practice teaching some of the activities. Educators were thus aware that HealthWise was based on US content that had been modified for the South African context and that they were going to be instrumental in further modifying HealthWise. It was evident from the training evaluation that educators responded positively to the training workshop, as was evident from their evaluation. The team felt that training could have been extended to provide for deeper insight and understanding of the HealthWise curriculum; however, this was not possible because of a lack of time due to the educators' full schedules.

The workshop was followed up with regular monthly meetings held at each of the schools, whereby educators could reflect on the curriculum, share their experiences and discuss difficulties.

6.4.3 Procedure

An overview of the data collection procedure is presented in Table 6.1. We collected data from focus groups with educators held during, and after the implementation of HealthWise, focus groups with learners, interviews with principals, lesson evaluation forms completed by educators after every lesson and lesson observations. The focus groups and interviews were audio taped and later transcribed.

6.4.4 Analysis

As the present study was a process evaluation with specifically defined questions, we used a deductive, structured approach to data analysis. We devised a template using our evaluation questions, which served as a filter to organise the data and facilitated thematic analysis. Codes and categories were identified and grouped into themes based on emerging patterns and similarities.

6.4.5 Ethics

The study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of the University of Cape Town, The Pennsylvania State University and the Western Cape Education Department. Informed consent was obtained from participating educators and principals. Parents/guardians of participating learners received an information letter and gave passive consent. All data were kept confidential.

Table 6.1 Overview of data collection

Data source (number)	Method	Examples of interview questions
Educator focus groups (four)	Semi-structured question guide	To what extent were you able to implement the planned curriculum as set out in the educator manual? What were your reasons for deviating from the planned curriculum? To what extent does HealthWise meet the needs of your learners in terms of their specific background? Cultural diversity? Age? Context? Interests?
Learner focus groups (four)	Semi-structured question guide	How useful is HealthWise in your life? What do you think about the lesson? *(For each of the 17 lessons)* How does the lesson meet your needs? How interesting was the lesson? How did the lesson help you with any problems you may have? What would you like to change about HealthWise?
Interviews with principals (two)	Semi-structured question guide	What are your impressions of how HealthWise was implemented in your school? What difficulties were you aware of during the implementation of HealthWise?
Lesson evaluation forms	Open-ended questions	Please reflect on your perceptions of the lesson. What worked, and why? What did not work, and why? How would you change the lesson? *(For each of the 17 lessons)*
Lesson observations (two sessions)	Field notes	-

6.4.6 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness and credibility, or the integrity and accuracy of the findings (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998) were ensured in several ways. Firstly, there was data triangulation through the use of multiple data sources. Secondly, interdisciplinary investigator triangulation occurred as research team members individually analysed data, and then conferred. Thirdly, member checking was employed as we discussed findings with the participants to ensure accurate representation of their perceptions and viewpoints.

6.5 Results

The results will be discussed under two major themes that emerged from the data analysis, namely, the importance of local culture and context, and fidelity versus adaptation.

6.5.1 Theme 1: Local cultural and contextual considerations

As could be expected, cultural and contextual factors within the local community were very relevant for the adaptation of the programme. Dimensions used to guide the adaptation were cognitive-information processes, affective motivational characteristics, and environmental characteristics (Castro, Barrera & Martinez, 2004).

6.5.1.1 Cognitive-information processes

We examined the extent to which the core content of HealthWise was relevant to learners' needs, age and stage of development by looking at their responses to, and understanding of programme content. Most learners were able to recall the main components and messages of the lessons concerning risk behaviours, skills and self

awareness, and found the content interesting and useful. This was substantiated by the educator feedback. Regarding substance use and sexual risk, learners reported that the lessons increased their understanding of how to make healthy choices, and taught them new skills:

> I liked when they show you what you must do with a condom. We first put it on our fingers… they show you first, where you must open it. Look at the expiry date. Squeeze the air out. (Boy learner, 13)

Decision-making, anger management and conflict management skills were regarded as being particularly useful:

> It makes me like look at problems and situations differently than what I used to, like the 4C process (decision-making), … nowadays I go step by step through the problem instead of just making a decision. (Girl learner, 14)

Educators felt that learners acquired new knowledge and that HealthWise used a different approach. Whilst this was valued, it challenged both educators and learners:

> I think it's new in a sense and refreshing because it brings other ideas from outside the school, and that becomes challenging. It gets our kids to start thinking deeply about issues related to themselves and their health. (Male principal)

Educators perceived the application of this new knowledge in everyday life situations to be more difficult. However, they could assist many learners to apply their new knowledge, particularly in classroom situations:

> The Conflict Management session was very successful but I still find learners just jump up and start fighting, but there was an opportunity to go back, this is what we have discussed, the warning signs…it's just that it will take time for them to actually apply their knowledge. (Male educator)

In contrast to their detailed discussion of risk behaviours and learning new skills, learners' discussions about the leisure lessons were superficial. Learners reported an increased awareness of new sport and leisure activities but were hesitant to engage in them:

> For me, the lesson on free time, in my free time my sport is soccer but I wanted to try another sport, but then I said no, I can't play cricket and I don't understand cricket and rugby, because in my free time I always play soccer. Soccer is my free time. (Boy learner, 14)

To determine the extent to which learners understood the programme content, we considered the learners' ability to comprehend the material through reading, writing and expressing themselves. Language difficulties sometimes made comprehension difficult and caused implementation delays. Educators spent time explaining terms, for example, 'interests' and 'values.' Each lesson introduction took at least one period, forcing educators to teach individual lessons over a number of periods. Some learners complained about having to write too much:

> Educators spoke about how difficult it was for learners to write anything or express themselves. It takes them a long time to think about things and do the worksheets, adding to the time pressures. Also, educators need to spend a lot of time getting learners to understand the terminology. J (educator) explained that the level of his learners made things go slower – he mentioned that some are almost illiterate, some don't listen. (Field notes)

Despite the language and writing difficulties, most educators felt strongly that HealthWise should not be made easier as this was seen as lowering standards, and was a culturally sensitive topic:

> I think that we should be very careful about dropping standards. We should not drop standards, because that is the universal problem in our country at the moment. And I think that is the only way, keeping standards up there and bringing them (learners) up there as well. A glossary will be important, but we need to make sure that the level stays like that. We don't expect them to know all the words, but that is where they learn, even if it's big words. That is how they learn. (Male educator)

Most learners felt they learned more from role plays and discussions than the writing tasks. Educators noted this but observed that these activities tended to delay the progression of the teaching:

> I think they (learners) enjoyed the discussion part … that's why they complained about the writing part, you still have to put it down on paper in words, and that's very difficult for them to do. Maybe the kind of themes that are in this book, it's more the kind that stimulate discussion. I tried to rush because I wanted to finish by a certain date and the discussion could have gone on and on. At some point you have to say 'well discussion is finished now'. (Female educator)

6.5.1.2 Affective-motivational characteristics

We needed to determine how appropriate the HealthWise content was for the local community. Drug abuse was identified by all respondents as a major problem in the community:

> Yes, in our community drugs are freely available. Our kids don't see anything wrong with doing drugs and that's shocking. (Male principal)

The lessons on sexual behaviour prompted sensitive reactions in some educators. There was a tension between wanting to promote a conservative approach towards adolescent sexual behaviour, and the realities of adolescent sexual behaviour in the community. Schools not only have to deal regularly with the challenge of teenage pregnancy, but educators also reported increasing levels of HIV infection among youth. Educators felt that the HealthWise lessons helped learners talk more freely about sexual issues:

> The debate is on should sex education be taught at school. At our assemblies and everywhere we talk about abstinence and we say don't get involved in those things, but in Life Orientation class, they talk about these things, they say it's reality, it's happening. Learners also hear from other learners' experiences and that plays a major role in the way they learn about different things. (Male principal)

Some educators expressed discomfort about teaching aspects of the sexuality lessons, and explained how they had made adaptations:

> -You did that lesson *(use of condoms)* (*laughs*). I was very nervous! (Female educator)
> -She used me to do the condom lesson! (Male educator)

> They (learners) wanted to know what oral sex and anal sex is. And you need to explain those terms. I expected some feedback from parents but it did not happen. On the sexual variations, I thought it fit to bring in what is acceptable and what not. (Male educator)

6.5.1.3 Environmental characteristics

The school environment offered many challenges that needed to be considered in adapting HealthWise. Large classes of 45 – 60 learners resulted in overcrowded classrooms and learners having to share desks and chairs. This made group work difficult:

> She (educator) said that she can't do any group work, she can't even get them to work in pairs because then it would be chaos, because the classroom is so small, and there's no way she can get them into groups because then she wouldn't even be able to move around the classroom. (Field notes)

Educators sometimes had difficulty with the leisure lessons. They ascribed this to a lack of community leisure and recreation resources as well as socio-economic factors that made it difficult for learners to engage in leisure activities:

> Learners were not keen on the lesson 'Beating boredom and developing leisure interests'. They find it hard to become interested in new activities, for them there are always financial costs involved, which is a problem. For many the hindrance is money or transport, and leisure activities are practically non-existent. (Female educator)

6.5.2 Theme 2: Fidelity versus adaptation

We determined the extent to which HealthWise was implemented with fidelity and how educators deviated from the programme. Educators understood that because they were participating in a research study, they needed to implement HealthWise according to plan. While they were committed to adhering to the programme, this resulted in feelings of stress and tension, which were exacerbated by HealthWise taking longer to implement than planned.

Teaching time was lost and continuity affected by sporting events, tests, high absenteeism rates, and even the weather as learners stayed home on cold or rainy days:

> I felt very stressed in the beginning because I wanted to stick 100% to the programme. It's only after all the discussions that I relaxed a bit and I improvised. Made the lessons a bit shorter, tried not to leave anything out, but I did it my way. And we completed the worksheets, all of them, that's the one thing I stuck to. (Female educator)

Adhering to the programme meant that some educators felt restricted by not being able to infuse their own ideas, or inject their personal 'teaching style' into the lessons:

> I think the main problem here was the length of the lessons. And it being a research project, the idea was that we had to follow strictly according to what was in the educator manual. But I think it would be a totally different scenario if you can improvise. If you have the freedom of changing things, then it will not be a problem. I think if we can get to that stage where people can do the lesson, improvise, do it according to their circumstances, then it will be a different scenario. (Male educator)

Clearly, there was a dynamic tension between the desire to adhere to plan, and the pressure to make adaptations in accordance with learners' needs and the context. As the study progressed, we realised that we had to find a balance between fidelity and adaptation:

> But I cannot proceed if the learners didn't understand the concept. So once we have worked through the concept, although I did not stick strictly to the programme, I was still able to complete it. But it was mostly just a language problem that I had to overcome. And once I'd done that we were able to move on. (Female educator)

Despite the challenges, educators perceived their contribution as valuable and important, and felt that they were benefiting from the programme. The training workshop and the educator manual were reported as being very useful. Regular discussion meetings enabled us to monitor and evaluate programme fidelity, and provided support for the educators:

> The regular support meetings helped especially in times when you feel pressured and you know after the meeting you were not the only one behind… then I would be more relaxed for the next lesson and always accommodated. (Female educator)

We determined the extent to which educators implemented HealthWise with fidelity by examining how they improvised or deviated from the planned programme. We defined 'improvising' as 'spontaneous reactions to the situation', and 'deviating' as 'leaving things out'. Educators mainly tended to improvise rather than deviate from the programme, which we regarded as a positive indication of fidelity:

> In Lesson 2, I let learners first list their leisure activities on a piece of paper before writing it into the workbooks. This is because learners don't always seem to understand what is meant by leisure activities. (Female educator)

> K and S (educators) gave learners overhead 2.2 as a handout before doing the worksheet to help learners understand the benefits. They felt this should be added to learners' workbooks. (Field notes)

> It wasn't part of the lesson but I tried to do some role-play. They (learners) loved it, but because of their level of expressing themselves, there came a time where they couldn't express their feelings. I tried to adapt the lesson, I mean add something else… (Male educator)

Educators deviated from the planned programme for two reasons: time pressure in the second half of the implementation, and where they perceived repetition. Most of the repetition was perceived to be in the review and summary lessons, which were omitted from the adapted version of HealthWise:

6.5.3 Adapting HealthWise

Overall, the integration and cultural adaptation of the HealthWise programme was successful. The process evaluation, however, highlighted further pertinent cultural and contextual factors and identified areas for adapting HealthWise in order to promote better programme-consumer fit. These areas centred on time, language, and leisure. The original HealthWise programme and the adapted version are presented in Table 6.2. As the general perception of content was positive, the core components were maintained in the adapted programme, although the sequence of lessons was restructured.

Table 6.2 Comparison of original and adapted versions of the HealthWise programme

Original programme (2003)	Adapted programme (2004 – 2008)
Grade 8	*Grade 8*
1. Self Awareness	1. Self awareness
2. *Exploring free time*[a]	2. Managing anxiety
3. My motivation	3. Managing anger
4. Decision making	4. *Exploring free time*
5. Managing anxiety	5. *Free time in my community*
6. Managing anger	6. *Beating boredom and developing interests*
7. *Beating boredom and developing interests*	7. *Overcoming roadblocks*
8. Conflict resolution	8. Decision making
9. Review and reflection	9. Managing risk
10. Sexual relationships and community connections	10. Avoiding risky sexual behaviour
11. *Free time in my community*	11. Myths and realities of drug use
12. *Managing daily leisure*	12. Avoiding and reducing risk
13. Myths and realities of drug use	
14. Myths and realities of sexual behaviour	*Grade 9*
15. Decision making and risk taking	1. Review
16. Avoiding and reducing unhealthy risks	2. *Leisure motivation*
17. Wrap-up	3. Community connections
	4. *Planning and managing leisure*
	5. Relationships and sexual behaviour
	6. Conflict resolution

[a] Italics indicate Leisure lessons

In order to address the time difficulty, we extended HealthWise over two years; twelve lessons taught during two terms in the eighth grade and six lessons taught during one term in the ninth grade. Lesson content was streamlined by simplifying or removing activities and worksheets that educators found repetitive, overly-detailed or not useful.

Language problems were dealt with by removing excess details, and ensuring that all wording was local, for example, '*dagga'* instead of '*marijuana',* and *'supermarkets'* instead of '*convenience stores'*. A glossary of 'New Words' for each lesson was included.

Leisure lessons were challenging for the educators. From the analysis, it was possible to attribute this to: (1) sequence of lessons; (2) perceived and actual barriers to leisure participation, and, (3) educators' personal perceptions and experiences of leisure. In the adapted programme, the original four leisure lessons were expanded into six lessons. In four consecutive lessons in eighth grade, learners first learn about personal time use, benefits of leisure activities, and negative consequences of unhealthy leisure activities. In the second lesson learners identify community resources and become aware of their responsibility to create different leisure possibilities. Learners then learn about negative consequences of, and how to overcome boredom, and develop interests. The fourth lesson deals with leisure constraints and ways to overcome these. In ninth grade, the first leisure lesson deals with what motivates decision making and activity choices, and the second lesson teaches learners to plan their leisure interests and manage unplanned free time.

Barriers to leisure participation included the lack of leisure resources in schools and the local community, safety concerns, lack of transport, and financial constraints. These barriers, combined with a general lack of awareness of the developmental benefits of leisure for youth, meant that leisure was not regarded as a priority. Clearly, we needed to shift the way that educators and learners thought about leisure, which would be an on-going, long-term task.

To facilitate this mind shift and help youth connect to health and leisure community resources, we realised that we had to provide support for the educators and work from a community development approach. Thus, we decided to expand HealthWise to include two youth development specialists whose task was to work alongside the educators and facilitate learners' exploration of, and participation in leisure activities.

A third possible reason for the educators' difficulty in teaching the leisure lessons is their personal perceptions and experiences of leisure. The need to spend time deepening educators' understanding of the value of leisure to promote healthy adolescent development became clear during the process evaluation. Although only a hypothesis at this point, I believe that by understanding the educators' perceptions of leisure through exploring their own leisure experiences, we could improve their ability and commitment to teach the leisure lessons. However, this is an area that warrants further research.

6.6 Discussion

This study supports the notion that school-based programmes based on theories and interventions found to be effective elsewhere, can be successfully adapted for use in developing countries. This process was facilitated by a design strategy that encouraged fidelity of implementation whilst allowing adaptation for the local culture and context. Specific characteristics of effective interventions in developed (Kirby et al., 1994), and developing countries (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004; Ross et al., 2006; Tiendrebeogo et al., 2003) have been identified previously. In the present study, it is useful to identify the characteristics that contributed to the successful adaptation of HealthWise.

The HealthWise programme had a sound theoretical basis (Caldwell et al., 2004) and incorporated programme components previously shown to be effective in the US (Botvin et al., 1994; Botvin & Kantor, 2000; Caldwell, 2004). It was designed as a self-contained life skills programme nested within the Life Orientation curriculum and was taught by trained educators, supporting the notion that curriculum-based, adult-led programmes are effective (Ross et al., 2006; Tiendrebeogo et al., 2003). As it is easier to establish low-risk behaviours than to change existing behaviours, programmes should be aimed at younger children (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004; Tiendrebeogo et al., 2003). HealthWise was designed for young adolescents aged 13-14 years in the first grade of high school.

Effective interventions focus on reducing specific risk-taking behaviours by means of experiential, interactive activities which convey information about risk, social influences and pressures; increase skills and confidence; and reinforce personal values and group norms (Kirby et al., 1994). The present study revealed that the content of HealthWise was relevant and useful for the learners, focussed on sexual and substance use risk behaviours, and included activities such as role plays and a condom demonstration that learners enjoyed. In order to promote educators' confidence and competence to teach the programme they attended a training workshop, participated in regular support meetings, and each received a comprehensive training manual. For a programme to be properly implemented, educators must be properly trained (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004; Tiendrebeogo et al., 2003). During the support meetings we were able to pick up difficulties such as sensitivity around sexual material, and negotiate ways to deal with these problems. These sensitivities are not uncommon among educators (Ahmed et al., 2006) and programmes should be prepared to cope with this challenge (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004).

Programmers need to consider available resources, or the lack thereof, especially in resource-poor areas (Gallant & Maticka-Tyndale, 2004). A flexible approach and a thorough understanding of the constraints, such as overcrowded classrooms and limited leisure resources, enabled us to adapt HealthWise accordingly.

The introduction of two youth development specialists was a very powerful adaptation that holds much promise to increase the fidelity and sustainability of HealthWise. However, future research will need to determine the effect of their intervention. We also intend to determine the cost effectiveness of HealthWise. Finally, the outcome evaluation will reveal the impact of HealthWise on knowledge, attitudes, self-efficacy and risk behaviours.

6.7 Conclusion

The study showed how local culture and contextual factors were used to inform the adaptation of a programme based on US school-based, risk behaviour prevention programmes. The initial attempt to adapt the programme was further modified through an extensive process evaluation. Regarding fidelity, we found that educators were committed to implementing the programme as planned. However, in practice this was not always possible and resulted in feelings of stress. Involving stakeholders in the process of adaptation ensured ownership and investment in the programme, which was important for sustainability. This helped us identify how the programme should be further adapted for use in South African schools. The adapted programme is currently being implemented as a five-year effectiveness study in nine South African high schools, funded by the US National Institute on Drug Abuse.

It is important to note that the adaptation process cannot be accomplished in one step by programme developers working alone. New school-based programmes need to be field tested and be open to feedback from educators, administrators, and learners. Ultimately, researchers need to find a balance between fidelity of implementation and programme adaptation in order to obtain effective programmes that are culturally acceptable to local consumers.

Chapter Seven

Concluding comments

Life can be understood backwards but we live it forwards.
(African proverb)

7.1 Summary

Despite risk behaviour in adolescents being a major concern, prior to the work described in this thesis, there has been very little research investigating the associations between leisure boredom and risk behaviour in South Africa. Therefore, the purpose of the research was to investigate how adolescents experience leisure boredom in their free time, and how this is associated with risk behaviour – specifically substance use, sexual risk behaviour and premature school leaving (dropout). The aims of the research were to:

1. Conduct a systematic review of the literature concerning leisure boredom and risk behaviour in adolescence.
2. Establish the psychometric properties of the Leisure Boredom Scale for use with adolescents in South Africa.
3. Determine whether leisure boredom is a predictor of risk behaviour, specifically school dropout.
4. Understand adolescents' perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in free time.

5. Investigate the process of cultural adaptation of a school-based intervention addressing leisure boredom and risk behaviour, which was developed in a Western context. Also, to determine stakeholders' perceptions of the intervention's usefulness.

In order to investigate the situation in a comprehensive, multi-faceted manner, these aims were addressed individually in five inter-related studies that were described in the preceding chapters. The specific detail of each study was given in the respective chapters. In this final chapter, a summary of the studies followed by overall recommendations arising from the findings of the five studies together, and the conclusion are presented.

It was first necessary to conduct a systematic review of literature in the field of leisure boredom and adolescent risk behaviour to conceptualise past and current topics, trends, debates and issues (chapter 2). A striking finding was that out of the 25 studies reviewed only four were conducted in the developing world. Thus, the review revealed a distinct paucity of research about adolescent leisure boredom and risk behaviour in South Africa. This provided a strong rationale for conducting the studies in this thesis.

Because leisure boredom had never been studied before in South Africa, there were no existing measurements with established psychometric properties for South African populations. Therefore, in order to measure leisure boredom it was necessary to identify a scale and establish its psychometric properties for use with South African adolescents (chapter 3). The Leisure Boredom Scale (LBS) (Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1990) was selected as the most appropriate scale to measure leisure boredom. The results of the reliability tests provided support for the reliability of the LBS, and indicated that the scale had satisfactory test-retest reliability and internal consistency when used to document perceptions of leisure boredom among high school learners in Cape Town.

As early-school leaving is such a critical problem in South Africa, a prospective cohort study was conducted to establish whether leisure boredom was a predictor of school dropout, using the LBS (chapter 4). As far as could be ascertained, this was the first study

in the world to investigate leisure boredom as a predictor of high school dropout using a longitudinal design. The study showed that leisure boredom was a predictor of dropout among the older cohort of eighth grade learners. These learners are known be at higher risk for dropout, and the level of boredom in this higher risk group can be used to identify learners who are more likely to dropout during the following years of school. In the younger stratum of this cohort, leisure boredom was not a significant predictor of dropout. The study concluded that leisure boredom is a factor contributing to high school dropout.

As shown by the preceding study, leisure boredom is being experienced by young South Africans and can clearly influence aspects of their lives. But once again, as far as we know, no previous research in South Africa had investigated adolescents' perceptions of leisure, their experiences of boredom in free time, and their views about how risk behaviour is associated with leisure boredom. Hence, a qualitative study was conducted to investigate adolescents' perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour by documenting their experiences during free time (chapter 5). This was done through the use of photographs taken by the participants themselves, as well as focus groups. The study showed that this group of adolescents (which included dropouts) perceived that they were bored in their free time mainly because they had nothing to do. The economically deprived environment in which they lived contributed to occupational deprivation and imbalance in their free time, maintaining or 'trapping' the adolescents within the situation and contributing to feelings of boredom. The result was that they spent large periods of time hanging out on street corners or in backyards, which provided some form of diversion because it allowed them to socialise, but inevitably this pursuit led to boredom. These young people perceived boredom to be part of life, although it was 'dangerous' because it very often led to risky behaviour (or negative leisure pursuits).

The final study dealt with a school-based intervention that aimed to reduce risk behaviour among adolescents by promoting positive use of free time and leisure (chapter 6). Due to the lack of evaluation research in developing countries, programmers have to rely on model interventions developed and evaluated elsewhere (UNAIDS Best Practice

Collection, 1997). The study questioned the extent that programmes developed in a Western context can be adapted for a developing world context. This qualitative process evaluation study documented the adaptation of an intervention based on American content, for a low socio-economic context in Cape Town, South Africa. It also determined stakeholders' perceptions of the programme's usefulness. The conclusion was that programmes can be adapted successfully provided that local culture and context inform the adaptation. A participatory approach that involves stakeholders in the adaptation process ensures ownership and investment in the programme, which is important for sustainability. Researchers need to find a balance between fidelity of implementation and programme adaptation in order to obtain effective programmes that are culturally acceptable to local consumers.

7.2 Recommendations

The studies presented in the thesis have shown that leisure boredom is a factor that is associated with, and contributes to, risk behaviour in adolescents. Furthermore, the studies provided deeper insight into the perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in adolescents living in economically deprived areas. Clearly, leisure boredom should be addressed as part of the effort to reduce risk behaviour among adolescents in South Africa. However, this research has also highlighted the need for more research to be conducted within this field in South Africa. This should be kept in mind when considering the recommendations below.

When formulating recommendations, it is important to consider the empirical findings of research, as well as relevant theory. Theories are organised ways of thinking about phenomena through descriptions of the phenomena, explanations of relationships, prediction of outcomes, and proposals for change and control of the phenomena. Throughout the thesis, I have considered adolescents within the environments, relationships and systems that make up their contexts.

For example, in chapter 5, the importance and influence of the environment on adolescent development, leisure boredom and risk behaviour was evident. In chapter 6, the community in which the intervention took place, as well as input from key stakeholders from within this community, were considered in order to adapt the intervention appropriately. Considering this, the theory that best fits the research presented in the thesis, is Ecological Systems Theory (EST) (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1992, 1995). In his theory of ecological systems, or the ecology of human development as it was originally known (1979), Bronfenbrenner postulated that humans do not develop in isolation but in relation to their families, homes, schools, communities and society in general. He proposed that human development occurs within complex layers of overlapping ecological systems in the environment. Interactions between these layers influence how individuals proceed through life. Changes or conflicts in one layer have a ripple-effect on the other layers, and thus on development. Bronfenbrenner delineated four nested systems in which (adolescent) development occurs. These are: (1) the microsystem – the layer closest to the adolescent containing the structures with which the adolescent has direct contact such as family, school and local community, and includes patterns of activities, roles, relationships and interactions with immediate surroundings; (2) the mesosystem – this layer includes connections and interrelations between structures of the microsystem in which the person actively participates; (3) the exosystem – the larger social system or external environment which indirectly influences development but does not involve the person as an active participant; and, (4) the macrosystem – the larger socio-cultural context such as culture, politics, values, customs and laws which have a cascading effect on the interactions of the other systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1992, 1995).

My recommendations therefore, are presented according to the systems approach of Bronfenbrenner's EST, recognising that systems interact with, build on, and influence, one another. Interventions and programmes should extend beyond merely addressing risk behaviour, and examine the functional systems both within and between settings that can be modified and expanded to promote adolescent health and well-being. Furthermore, as the main goal of the work in this thesis is to promote adolescent health and development

through leisure, other theoretical approaches informing the recommendations in this chapter are the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (World Health Organisation, 1986), and the Position Statement on Leisure Education and Youth at Risk (World Leisure and Recreation Association International, 2001). Finally, it was impossible not to incorporate into the recommendations my own practical experience of working with adolescents within the different contexts and the systems that they exist.

7.2.1 Recommendations at microsystem level

According to EST, the microsystem level is closest to the adolescent and contains the structures with which the adolescent has direct contact such as family, school and local community, and includes patterns of activities, roles, relationships and interactions with immediate surroundings (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1992, 1995). Recommendations at this level focus on promoting adolescent health and development by raising awareness about leisure, and by promoting exploration and participation in various leisure pursuits.

7.2.1.1 Promoting adolescent health and development through leisure

Raising awareness

A predecessor to behaviour change is awareness of a particular issue. From the evidence presented in chapters 5 and 6, there is clearly a lack of awareness about leisure on the part of the adolescents themselves, as well as educators, schools and other community organisations. My experience has shown that many parents also lack awareness. It is crucial that steps be taken to raise awareness about the benefits to adolescents of engaging in positive, healthy leisure pursuits. Adolescents, parents, educators and other relevant role-players need to be informed and educated about leisure as a strategy for promoting health and development, for example initiative, intrinsic motivation, self-regulation, physical activity, relationship building, positive stress release, and self-esteem. They need to understand how leisure boredom and risk behaviour are associated, and become aware of the importance of learning how to deal with boredom. In addition,

role-players need to be educated about leisure, sport and recreational resources available in schools, local communities, and further afield. Where resources do not exist, adolescents should be encouraged to get involved in developing and sustaining the desired facilities and programmes.

Exploring and participating in leisure

As shown in chapters 5 and 6, adolescents – especially those living in deprived communities – have limited opportunities for involvement in constructive, satisfying leisure pursuits. This situation impacts on their health and well-being, and can mean that adolescents become involved in destructive activities such as hanging out on street corners, and risk behaviours such as substance use. Adolescents need to explore and participate in a variety of different types of leisure pursuits including stimulating, challenging pursuits containing positive risks, for example, abseiling and adventure trails. By so-doing, they can develop self-awareness, self-esteem, confidence, initiative and motivation, confidence and relationships, and learn to handle emotions such as anger and anxiety, deal with boredom, and overcome constraints to leisure involvement. Adolescents should be encouraged to identify the types of leisure activities they enjoy, initiate and maintain involvement in desired activities, and develop competence in these leisure pursuits. However, the findings of chapters 5 and 6 revealed a definite lack of resources and opportunities for leisure in economically deprived communities of South Africa. What should be done about this situation? The next section makes recommendations about developing leisure programmes.

7.2.2 Recommendations at mesosystem level

According to the EST, the mesosystem level includes connections and interrelations between settings of structures of the microsystem (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1992, 1995). Recommendations at this level focus on the development of leisure programmes within communities and schools. Youth-adult partnerships are one method of facilitating these

programmes. Finally, recommendations are made regarding general principles for the development of leisure programmes.

7.2.2.1 Developing community-based leisure programmes

As exemplified in chapters 5 and 6, many adolescents in South Africa have large amounts of free time available, yet they have very little to do in this time; this is particularly so for adolescents who have dropped out of school and who are not working. Furthermore, these studies highlighted the lack of appropriate, safe places in communities for adolescents to spend free time.

In the United States of America, "teen centres" have been operating for a number of years as either stand-alone centres or as part of existing community recreation centres (Montandon, Kelly Cronan & Witt, 2005, p. 329). The facilities and structure of these centres varies, and depends on the needs of the population for which the centres are established. Principles which contribute to the success of teen centres include having a plan to recruit young people, attracting and training staff to facilitate youth development, developing consistent funding, and creating and maintaining community support (Montandon et al., 2005).

It is very important that adolescents be encouraged to take as much responsibility as possible to plan and maintain leisure programmes whether in teen centres or elsewhere, although this does not necessarily mean that adolescents should run the programmes themselves. Adult involvement is vital to the success of leisure programmes. The goal should be for adults to support adolescents in being essential players in their own development through positive role-modeling and by equipping them with the relevant skills. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979), the balance of power should gradually shift in the direction of the adolescent. Adults need to offer appropriate guidance, share responsibility and decision-making, and strive to work in partnership with young people (Camino, 2005). Interventions should offer some degree of structure and organisation, provide opportunities for the development of skills and competence, and have some form

of adult monitoring, as recreation centres with no organised programmes and low adult monitoring are associated with greater antisocial behaviour (Mahoney & Stattin, 2000).

Training should be provided for staff working in recreation and community centres. This should focus on raising awareness about the importance and benefits of leisure for young people, and assist workers to identify strategies for programme implementation. An important outcome of training would be to develop action plans (that include an evaluation component) for appropriate and realistic community-based leisure activities and programmes.

As shown in chapter 5, adolescents who have dropped out of school have specific needs regarding leisure (and other) programmes. Programme-planners should make a concerted effort to also include adolescents who have dropped out of school by providing for their specific needs, such as leisure groups held during the day, and teenage-mother-and-child leisure and social support groups. Obviously the needs of adolescent dropouts extend beyond leisure programmes, for example – career guidance and training; however, this would require further research and falls beyond the scope of the thesis.

7.2.2.2 Developing school-based leisure programmes

Running interventions in schools is convenient and cost-effective because schools provide easy access to the adolescent population and offer a readily-available infrastructure (Flisher, Brown & Mukoma, 2002). In the National Curriculum Statement for grades 10-12 (Department of Education, 2005), provision is made for a relatively new subject called Life Orientation (LO). One of the four focus areas in LO deals with recreation and physical wellbeing, with the core learning outcome being that learners are able to explore and engage responsibly in recreation and physical activities to promote wellbeing. However, it appears that this subject is not being utilised to its full potential in exposing adolescents to leisure opportunities; this was evident in our experience of developing and adapting the HealthWise programme with LO educators (chapter 6). LO is an area where health and education interface, providing the opportunity for educator-

and health-service providers to collaborate around the implementation of leisure programmes. Educators require training and support to implement comprehensive LO programmes that include a leisure component and incorporate alternative pedagogic techniques such as role plays and small group work in relation to leisure-knowledge and leisure-related skills.

In the systematic review of literature (chapter 2), only two studies reporting on school-based leisure interventions were located; TimeWise (Caldwell, 2004), and HealthWise (Caldwell et al., 2004). As mentioned previously, the process evaluation of the cultural adaptation of HealthWise was reported in chapter 6. The programme was well-received by the schools; however, it provided valuable insights from which these recommendations emerge. School-based leisure programmes should adopt a positive youth development approach, focus on promoting healthy engagement in leisure and enable adolescents to identify and deal with boredom in free time. Two approaches regarding leisure education programmes need consideration: education through leisure, and education for leisure (Caldwell, 2005b). Education through leisure means that young people develop and grow through their involvement in leisure pursuits, such as the young boy who discovers a love for the outdoors through a hiking experience. Education for leisure entails the learning of skills (for example, the rules of soccer), knowledge acquisition (for example, learning to overcome leisure constraints), and attitude development (for example, learning about the benefits of leisure engagement) (Caldwell, 2005b). However, as exemplified by the findings of the study in chapter 6, educators may need assistance with developing and implementing leisure-education programmes.

Health-service providers can assist with supporting classroom learning with practical application in the adolescents' contexts by facilitating adolescents' connections with leisure and recreation opportunities, making opportunities happen from a community development perspective, equipping adolescents with skills to take responsible action in their leisure time, and enabling adolescents to connect with health resources in communities. Occupational therapists are well-placed to perform this role because of their philosophy and understanding of how health is promoted through engagement in

occupations (such as leisure) that are meaningful to the individual. Furthermore, a core component of any occupational therapy intervention is to make adaptations to the environment to facilitate more effective performance of occupations. This is discussed further in the section on recommendations at exosystem level below.

Finally, there are relevant textbooks available that incorporate whole chapters devoted to promoting adolescents' (and educators') leisure-knowledge and skills, and developing positive attitudes and values about leisure and recreation. Examples include the Hands-On Life learner books and educator guides for grades 10, 11 and 12 (Friedman, Ryan, Vergnani & Wegner, 2005a & b; Heese, Turley, Vergnani & Wegner, 2007a & b; Ryan, Turley, Vergnani & Wegner, 2006a & b).

7.2.2.3 Youth adult partnerships and leisure programmes

Youth-adult partnerships (YAPs) are an innovative method of facilitating adolescent development (Camino, 2005; Shepherd, Larson, Camino & O'Connor, 2005). Forming YAPs between for example, educators and learners, or university students and adolescents, is a creative and useful method of developing, coordinating and maintaining leisure projects in schools and communities. Linked to the study in chapter 6, the HealthWise Brown Paper Studio Project (Lesko, Bosman & Wegner, 2006) is an example of a successful YAP. These partnerships are also an effective method of building self-efficacy among role-players and encouraging young people to take responsibility for developing leisure resources. YAPs are an example of programmes that enhance adolescent development through involvement in responsible, task-oriented activities outside of the home (Bronfenbrenner, 1979). Role-players' principles, values, skills and competencies should be taken into consideration, and an action-oriented method that incorporates time and space for reflection, which is explicit about roles and expectations, and which uses a third party to explore group assumptions and values facilitates successful partnerships (Camino, 2005). Projects should be needs-driven and based on sound project planning strategies and action plans.

Tertiary education institutions such as universities and colleges are good places for recruiting young adults who are keen to partner with adolescents in developing community- and school-based leisure programmes, for example, hiking clubs. A further benefit of these YAPs is that the university students can act as mentors and role models to the adolescents, and encourage them in a variety of spheres of life in addition to leisure (Lesko, Bosman & Wegner, 2006).

7.2.2.4 Principles for leisure programmes

The following recommendations about general principles for leisure programmes emerge from the work done in the studies reported in chapters 5 and 6, and are based on recommendations made in the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (World Health Organisation, 1986).

Create and sustain opportunities

Community centres, organisations and schools need to provide opportunities for adolescent leisure pursuits in the afternoons and evenings, over weekends and during school-holidays, enabling adolescents to develop leisure interests through involvement in stimulating, challenging leisure activities. Parents require training about their role in facilitating their adolescent children's' free time, and the importance of monitoring – as opposed to controlling – their free time activities (Sharp, Caldwell, Graham & Ridenour, 2006). Receiving some form of reimbursement or reduction in school or club fees – particularly for those who are unemployed – could potentially encourage parents to become more involved in such programmes.

Accessible, affordable, available and safe resources

In order for young people to be able to participate in healthy leisure activities, the required resources and facilities need to be available in schools and communities, and be accessible and affordable for young people. In addition, a priority is to ensure safety in communities by providing places where adolescents can engage in leisure pursuits.

Just as there are security volunteers at schools, so there need to be security volunteers in the community, such as parks and skateboard rinks for example.

Raising awareness

Community organisations, for example – libraries and community centres, and schools should be encouraged to play a role in promoting awareness of the benefits of healthy leisure through leisure campaigns. These could be run in conjunction with anti-drug and safe sex campaigns, thus providing adolescents with positive alternatives to risky pursuits.

Strengthen existing initiatives

Existing community initiatives, such as the Extra-Mural Education Project (EMEP, 2006) should be supported and strengthened through partnerships with other relevant organisations with an interest in leisure, for example – universities involved in related research. Networking between these community organisations and schools should be promoted. Existing school initiatives, such as Learners Representative Councils (LRCs) consisting of learners elected by their peers to run campaigns in schools, offer potential access into schools for outside organisations and could be targeted to promote leisure within the school community.

Networking

Effective networking needs to occur between role-players involved in adolescent education, health and leisure, with a view to providing opportunities for adolescents to get involved in leisure pursuits. This should include relevant government departments, schools, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community organisations, and leisure resources. Other interested parties, such as universities wanting to carry out research or student training, could also get involved.

7.2.3 Recommendations at exosystem level

According to EST, the exosystem level refers to the larger social system or external environment which indirectly influences development (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1992, 1995). Recommendations at this level are directed at the reorientation of two sectors or services: (1) education – by means of the health promoting schools approach (although there are other methods); and, (2) health – I have chosen to focus specifically on reorientation of occupational therapy services, although it would be valuable for all health service-providers to reflect on how they could incorporate leisure promotion among adolescents, and the other recommendations made in this chapter, wherever appropriate and possible.

7.2.3.1 Health promoting schools approach

As evidenced in the results from the study described in chapter 4, leisure boredom is a factor that plays a role in the high rate of high school dropout. Boredom is experienced frequently in school settings as well as in free time due in part to the lack of after-school programmes (as reported by our participants in the study in chapter 5). Educators (and parents) have low awareness of the value of leisure as a developmental tool, and little experience in facilitating leisure-related programmes (as evidenced in chapter 6). Furthermore, leisure and leisure-related programmes offer valuable opportunities for the development of 'connectedness' with schools and communities. It is recommended that schools consider the health promoting schools approach in their efforts to address these (and other) issues.

The health promoting schools (HPS) approach strives to create a safe and healthy school environment with appropriate health services, where families and the community are involved in efforts to promote health (Department of Health, 2000; Flisher, Brown & Mukoma, 2002). This approach is in line with Bronfenbrenner's (1979) notion that supportive links in settings increase the developmental potential of the settings. Schools need to be informed about the HPS approach, and be assisted to transform themselves

through the adoption of HPS principles and strategies. This however, is a long-term process, but would facilitate the infusion of leisure and recreation programmes into school activities as part of a 'healthy schools' initiative. This is particularly important where schools do not have extra-curricular or after-school activities. Furthermore, schools are in a position to educate parents about the importance of leisure. The key objectives from the Ottawa Charter (WHO, 1986) which provide direction for the development of health promoting schools, as well as examples of related leisure interventions, are presented in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Key objectives for the development of HPS and examples of leisure interventions

Key objectives for the development of HPS	**Examples of leisure interventions**
• Build education and school policies which support health and well-being.	• Develop policy for implementation of appropriate leisure and recreation programmes, during and after-school. The policy should provide that all learners and educators be involved in leisure programmes.
• Create safe and supportive teaching and learning environments which include the creation of human rights.	• Ensure that school sports fields, playing areas and classrooms are safe and inviting places to spend time, during and after-school. • Promote the development of leisure and recreation clubs at school.
• Strengthen community action and participation through enhancing and expanding the relationship between schools and communities.	• Encourage parents to become involved in school leisure programmes, for which they could receive some form of remuneration, for example, a reduction in school fees.

	• Encourage community organisations to become involved in the provision of leisure programmes at the school. These could cater for both adolescents and adults from the local community. This would also ensure that the school is utilised to its full potential.
• Promote personal skills of members of the learning community.	• Capacity development for educators and parents regarding all aspects of leisure, for example, the benefits of leisure for adolescent development, the importance of active parenting and positive role-modeling. Draw on specific skills of individuals where possible, for example, a father may be a mountain climber and be willing to start a hiking club. • Promote peer-education programmes among learners that foster leisure participation in a wide variety of different leisure pursuits.
• Provide access to and reorientate health and education support services.	• Use district and site-based support teams to promote leisure, for example, access relevant funding, and address barriers to leisure involvement. Strive for collaboration between education and health services wherever possible.

7.2.3.2 Reorientation of occupational therapy services

There are implications for services across the board resulting from the research documented in this thesis. However, as an occupational therapist, I have chosen to focus recommendations specifically on the reorientation of occupational therapy services.

The traditional role of occupational therapists has been rehabilitation; however, in South Africa in the last few years this role has rapidly expanded to include health promotion (Watson & Swartz, 2004). The reorientation of occupational therapy services requires transformation in education and training, continued professional development training for qualified therapists, and an emphasis on relevant research. Occupational therapists need to consider their role in youth development within the South African context and how to deal with the challenges raised by occupational risk factors – deprivation and imbalance. Occupational therapists should ask themselves the following questions: How does the environment influence adolescent performance in leisure? What opportunities, and what barriers, regarding leisure exist in the environment? To what extent are adolescents able to perform their desired leisure pursuits? How does this impact on adolescent behaviour?

The occupation of leisure offers occupational therapists a fertile context in which to work with adolescents. Through leisure and recreation pursuits, occupational therapists can devise strategies for enrichment, empowerment and enablement thus promoting occupational development in adolescents in whatever setting they may be working. A useful frame of reference based partly on Bronfenbrenner's EST (1979) is the Person-Environment-Occupation (PEO) model (Law et al., 1996). According to the PEO, in order to promote optimal occupational performance, or as it is applied here – healthy, positive use of leisure time and a reduction in unhealthy, risky, negative leisure pursuits – interventions should target the person, the environment and the occupation. At the centre of the model lies the component of occupational performance – the experience and performance of leisure pursuits. This occurs as the outcome of transactions between person, environment, and occupation.

Based on ecological systems theory, occupational therapists working with adolescents need to move beyond deficit-based models that address only problem behaviours, to models that develop youth capabilities and assets. The focus should be on developing knowledge, skills, attitudes, values and behaviours. Two obvious settings for carrying out this work are schools and communities, in collaboration with relevant role-players and stakeholders. Occupational therapists need to familiarise themselves with, and base their

interventions on the Ottawa Charter for Health Promotion (WHO, 1986). In line with the Ottawa Charter, the Community Project Process Model (CPPM) was developed by the Department of Occupational Therapy at the University of the Western Cape (De Jongh, under review). The CPPM is a useful tool which can be used by occupational therapists (and others) to identify, develop and implement interventions in communities and schools. The steps of the CPPM are: (1) community entry, (2) needs assessment and analysis, (3) intervention planning by setting outcomes, objectives and indicators, (4) intervention implementation, (5) intervention evaluation, and (6) future planning.

In school settings, as mentioned above, occupational therapists can make a valuable contribution within the learning area of Life Orientation. The learning outcomes of the subject (Department of Education, 2002((see Appendix 6.1) and the nature of many of the teaching methods used, for example role plays and small group work, provide ample opportunities for occupational therapists to use their knowledge to assist educators. In addition, occupational therapists can work in partnership with educators, learners and community organisations to facilitate classroom learning in practice and promote adolescents' exploration and participation in leisure activities. Occupational therapists should aim to act as programme facilitators or catalysts, and assist role players to implement programmes themselves.

Leisure provides a multitude of opportunities and the scope for this to happen. A good example of this is the HealthWise Brown Paper Performing Arts Project at Glendale High School in Cape Town (Lesko, Bosman & Wegner, 2006). Two occupational therapists from HealthWise collaborated with a performing arts group called Brown Paper Studios from the University of the Western Cape (UWC) to implement a performing arts project at a high school situated in a low socio-economic area in South Africa. The following excerpt is from an article that appeared in the UWC On-Campus News (Wegner, 2006):

> As numerous learners had indicated a great interest in drama, singing and dancing, HealthWise in collaboration with the UWC Brown Paper Studio, implemented a Performing Arts programme at Glendale High School. The programme ran from May to December 2005, with learners participating in weekly sessions with Brown Paper facilitators. Learners learned about different aspects of performing arts as well as acquiring a variety of life skills. When asked to comment on the programme, a learner said, "We do drama, singing and acting. It's nice, very nice. Instead of doing drugs we do drama". Another learner said, "I would do something like this in our communities because there are a lot of children that need this. They are *tikking* and drinking and doing drugs and I can count on my hands how many of them are still in school". The programme culminated in an end-of-year production called "Looking for Mike", which was hosted at the UWC Performing Arts Centre in December. UWC Rector Brian O'Connell attended one of the performances and said in a speech afterwards, that "magic has been created at UWC today".

Apart from learning about different aspects of the performing arts, the participating learners acquired a variety of life skills and benefited in many other ways including personal growth and development, improvements in school work, developing relationships, overcoming cultural barriers, and learning to make healthy choices in leisure time (Lesko et al., 2006).

7.2.4 Recommendations at macrosystem level

According to EST, the macrosystem level refers to the larger socio-cultural context such as culture, politics, values, customs and laws which have a cascading effect on the interactions of the other systems (Bronfenbrenner, 1979, 1992, 1995). Recommendations at this level focus on promoting leisure at the level of local and national government, policy development regarding leisure, the involvement of media and business in leisure-related issues, and supporting research and development in leisure. The focus of the recommendations at this level is on creating an awareness that leisure is a valuable tool for promoting healthy adolescent development and wellbeing, and stimulating these systems to incorporate leisure as an integral part of their services.

7.2.4.1 Government departments and leisure promotion

There are various governmental departments which have either a direct or an indirect responsibility to promote healthy leisure among youth. Government departments need to understand and appreciate the value of leisure in adolescent development, risk reduction and wellbeing; thus providing their support for leisure programmes and other leisure promotion initiatives. Departments should examine their procedures to see where they might take an active role in promoting leisure among youth. Apart from the Departments of Education and Health – whose contribution to leisure has already been discussed above, recommendations are given for the following Departments:

Arts and Culture

The role of this department is to promote South African heritage, and promote and develop appreciation, understanding and enjoyment of the arts through strategies that include education, information and marketing. This department should consider strategies that reach out to adolescents with regard to art, theatre, music, dance, crafts, design, literature, and film, as well as indigenous forms of these activities.

Correctional Services

There are currently 62 295 youth aged 14-25 years incarcerated in South Africa's prisons, and 2121 children under the age of 18 years being held in detention (Department of Correctional Services, 2008). The Department of Correctional Services needs to consider leisure services and resources for the juveniles in their care.

Environmental Affairs and Tourism

The National Environmental Education Programme (NEEP) is a collaborative project coordinated by the Department of Education. Its purpose is to support educators in implementing environmental education at schools, and integrate it with the outcomes-based curriculum. The Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism supports NEEP with resource materials on contemporary environmental issues (Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism, 2008). Furthermore, this department should

strategise for the provision of safe, pleasant leisure and recreational resources that are needs-based and appropriate for adolescents. Examples include skateboard parks, public swimming pools, hiking routes in nature conservation parks, and outdoor recreational adventures. Special consideration should be given to learners and youth from economically deprived communities.

Social Development

One of the key service delivery programmes of this department is to enable youth to take responsibility for positive lifestyles and contribute to and participate in family and community activities (Department of Social Services, 2008). As indicated in the thesis, there is a definite need for leisure and recreation interventions and programmes for adolescents, particularly in economically deprived areas, which would assist the department to achieve their goal. Furthermore, the department has funding available for such initiatives. The Department of Social Development regularly hosts conferences that address youth development, for example, the National Youth Development Practice Policy Conference (February, 2008). The objectives of the conference include gaining understanding of the service and experience of Youth Development Workers, assisting in the understanding and definition of youth work, guiding effectiveness in the service provided to youth, and establishing the existence of youth workers and their experiences. Conferences such as this are an ideal forum for raising awareness about leisure as a strategy for youth development, and developing interventions.

Sport and Recreation

One main objective of this department according to the proposed revised White Paper is to develop and promote healthy, sporting communities (Department of Sport and Recreation, 2008). Sports are leisure activities; therefore, this department needs to consider strategies for developing and offering inclusive sporting programmes in schools and communities.

7.2.4.2 Policy development for leisure promotion

Governmental departments, in collaboration with other relevant stakeholders, should ensure the development and implementation of policies relating to leisure promotion at all levels of society (as recommended above). Policies should be developed that ensure the creation of a range of safe, appropriate leisure and recreational services, facilities and resources for adolescents. Schools should examine their policies around leisure, sport and recreation, and ensure that services are being implemented effectively.

7.2.4.3 Media involvement in leisure promotion

Considering the educational and socialisation value and popularity of mass media such as television, radio and magazines, governmental departments and other stakeholder organisations should design and disseminate appropriate material for the media. The media should be encouraged to become more involved in promoting public awareness of the benefits and value of healthy, positive leisure engagement for adolescents.

7.2.4.4 Business involvement in leisure promotion

Corporate businesses can be approached and invited to support and sponsor youth recreation initiatives and programmes, especially in low socio-economic communities. Funding, the provision of transport and safety are challenges facing leisure programmes that offer opportunities for the involvement of corporate businesses in community leisure initiatives.

7.2.4.5 Non-governmental organisations' involvement in leisure promotion

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) have a major role to play in promoting leisure participation, as mentioned previously. One example is the Extra-Mural Education Project, which is an independent development agency whose primary goal is the holistic development of schools as dynamic, well-managed hubs of good quality recreation, art,

lifelong learning and support services for learners, educators, support staff, parents and local communities (Extra-Mural Education Project, 2006).

7.2.4.6 Research and development in leisure

More research is needed within the field of leisure boredom and risk behaviour among youth in South Africa. Collaborative partnerships between local and international universities and other research organisations facilitate research and development. HealthWise South Africa is an example of a successful collaboration involving a multi-disciplinary team of researchers from South Africa and the USA (Caldwell et al., 2004). Such collaborations provide expertise, funding and opportunities for capacity-building on all levels. Recommendations for future research in leisure include:

- Establishing the reliability of other leisure-related measures such as the Leisure Experience Battery for Adolescents (Caldwell, Smith & Weissinger, 1992) and the Free Time Motivation Scale for Adolescents (Baldwin & Caldwell, 2003) for use with South African adolescents.

- Investigating leisure boredom as a predictor of other forms of risk behaviour, for example, substance use and violence.
- Investigating associations between leisure boredom and risk behaviour among various groups of adolescents, for example, adolescents who have dropped out of school, those in substance abuse centres, and those confined to delinquency centres.
- Using participatory action research methods with youth as co-researchers to further investigate adolescents' experiences of risk behaviour during leisure and free time.
- Determining the parameters of the role, and the value of a new category of community worker – the youth development specialist with a focus on leisure.
- Conducting cross-cultural comparisons of leisure boredom and other factors of the leisure experience such as motivation.
- Development, implementation and evaluation of leisure promotion and education programmes in schools and communities.

7.3 Conclusion

The studies presented in the thesis show that leisure boredom is a factor that is associated with, and contributes to, risk behaviour in adolescents. Furthermore, the studies provided deeper insight into the perceptions of leisure boredom and risk behaviour in adolescents living in economically deprived areas. Clearly, leisure boredom should be addressed as part of the effort to reduce risk behaviour among adolescents in South Africa.

This research highlights the importance of promoting positive use of free and leisure time, and enabling adolescents to deal with boredom. Building knowledge in this area is useful for individuals and organisations concerned with adolescent health, education and development. Expanding our knowledge about the links between leisure boredom and risk behaviour contributes to the growing body of knowledge about factors that are associated with risk behaviour. This will enable us to develop and implement more effective preventative and promotive health and education interventions. Ultimately this research contributes to the strategic development of health, school and community policies, resources and interventions for adolescent leisure and recreation, in the effort to reduce risk behaviour among adolescents.

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Appendices

Appendix 2.1

The Leisure Boredom Scale

(adapted from Iso-Ahola & Weissinger, 1987, 1990)

1. For me, leisure time just drags on and on.
2.* During my leisure time, I become highly involved in what I do.
3. Leisure time is boring.
4.* If I could leave school now and have enough money, I would have plenty of exciting things to do for the rest of my life.
5. During my leisure time, I feel like I'm just bored and hanging around.
6. In my leisure time, I usually don't like what I'm doing, but I don't know what else to do.
7.* Leisure time gets me aroused and going.
8.* Leisure experiences are an important part of my quality of life.
9.* I am excited about leisure time.
10. In my leisure time, I want to do something, but I don't know what to do.
11. I waste too much of my leisure time sleeping.
12.* I like to try new leisure activities that I have never tried before.
13.* I am very active during my leisure time.
14. Leisure time activities do not excite me.
15. I do not have many leisure activities available to me.
16.* During my leisure time, I almost always have something to do.

* Reverse coding applies to these items

Appendix 5.1

Focus Group Protocol

Introduction

Hi, my name is Lisa Wegner and this is Xavier September. I work at the University of the Western Cape. As part of my research, I'm interested in hearing your opinions about how young people feel about their free time. Free time is all that time you have free from doing things that you have to do, like school work and chores. It's the time you have free after school, in the evenings and on weekends.

Before we get started, I would like you to go through this information letter. It describes what we will be doing here today, and also asks your permission for me to audiotape our conversation. If you agree with what's written on this form, please go ahead and sign and date the bottom. You'll also get a copy of this form for your records. (Go through the Learner Information and Assent Form).

I hope that the things we talk about today will be useful for understanding how young people experience their free time, and any challenges that they may have in this time. However, if any of the questions that I ask make you uncomfortable, please let me know. You do not have to answer any question that you do not want to, we can simply move on. Also please remember that what we talk about in this group is private and confidential. That means that you may not talk about what happened in the group or what anyone spoke about, to anyone outside of the group.

Do you have any questions before we begin? (Answer any questions).

1. Icebreaker – "Fruit Salad" activity

2. Introductory questions

None of you are at school anymore, and none of you are working, is that right?

How much time do you have free to do whatever you want to do?

How do you spend your free time? What do you do all day? In the evenings? Over weekends?

How do you feel about this free time? What are some of the good feelings you have?

What are some of the bad feelings? Introduce the concept of boredom if it has not come up already.

3. Photo-posters activity

Have a look at these photographs…..they were taken by some other teenagers to show what they do in their free time. Now have a look at these posters. Let's read these sentences (point to each and read aloud):

1) Being bored means… (form, function and meaning of boredom)

2) Teenagers like me get bored when…. (form, function and meaning of boredom)

3) Places that make teenagers like me get bored are…. (environmental influence)

4) Being bored can be a problem for teenagers like me because…. (boredom and risk)

I would like you to think about these questions and answer them by choosing photographs that show your answer. Stick the photos onto the posters.

4. Discussion of photo-posters

Ok let's talk about the questions and the photos you chose to answer the questions.

Let's tell the story of the photograph. What is happening?

Why do you think these young people in the photograph are feeling bored?

In what ways does the situation/activity make young people feel bored? (monotony, repetition, time dragging, apathy, no challenge, etc.)

Why do you think these young people are doing this activity/in this situation? (situational reasons for boredom – because they want to, have to, have nothing else to do, because of their friends, etc.).

Look at where this activity is happening. What about the place makes these young people feel bored?

In what ways is it bad that these young people are feeling bored?

Additional prompts if time allows:

Tell the story of what you think happens next in this photograph?

In what way are you like /different from the young people in these photographs?

Can you tell me about a similar situation you have been in, where you have felt bored?

5. Closing

Well, those were all the questions I had for you. Thank you for sharing all your thoughts and feelings; they will be very useful for our research as we try to improve leisure opportunities for young people.

Do you have any questions for me? (Answer any questions).

Thanks for your participation!

Appendix 5.2

RESEARCH STUDY

THROUGH THE LENS OF A PEER: UNDERSTANDING ADOLESCENT BOREDOM IN FREE TIME

PARENT INFORMATION AND CONSENT LETTER

April 2007

Dear Parent/Legal guardian

We are talking to you today to ask for your help in a research study. We are asking your permission for your child to volunteer in our research study. Your child was randomly selected from a list of children who have left school before completing Grade 12.

WHAT IS THE STUDY ABOUT?

The study is about young people's experiences in their free time. Free time is the time when your children do not have to do work or chores. Usually, it is the time after work and on weekends, when children choose what they want to do. This study will help us understand what problems young people experience during their free time so that we can know how to improve the situation and make suggestions to relevant organisations. This research study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Cape Town and will be done according to internationally accepted ethical standards and guidelines.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

Your child, as well as about 9 other boys or girls, will meet in a group with several researchers to talk about their experiences of free time. The group will take about 60 minutes and will happen at Spine Road High School. There will be a light snack provided. Researchers will be running the group and can answer any questions your child may have.

The group will be recorded on audio tape so that we will have a good record of the answers that learners share. These recordings will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in one researcher's office at UWC. They will only be seen by members of the research team. These tapes will be destroyed by May 2008, or within one year of being written down, whichever comes later. Written records will also be kept on a passworded computer and only be seen by the research team. However, these written records will not be destroyed.

WILL ANYONE KNOW THAT YOUR CHILD WAS IN THE STUDY?

Only the other children in the group will know that your child participated in this study. Your child's participation and his/her answers will be kept strictly private and confidential. It is expected that your child will not tell others what individual group participants said. Only the research staff will hear the audio tapes. In written records, your child's answers will be labelled by school and a person number only. If your child's answers are shared with other researchers, he/she will be identified only in general ways, like "16 year old girl."

DOES YOUR CHILD HAVE TO PARTICIPATE?

NO. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. Your child may stop participating in the group, or choose not to answer any question, at any time without penalty.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOUR CHILD WANTS TO TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT TOPICS FROM THE GROUP?

If there are any issues or topics that your child would like to discuss further or get more information about, he/she may talk with one of the discussion leaders. In addition, your child will receive a list of useful telephone numbers of organisations that provide a variety of services to young people, whom your child may contact if he/she wants.

WHAT ABOUT THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

Most of the research results that are reported will be based on all of the people' answers combined together. As stated above, individual answers will be reported using general labels.

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ANY PART OF THE STUDY?

If you have any questions about the study, please contact the researcher.

Lisa Wegner, Researcher

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17

Bellville, 7535

Tel. (021)959-3153

Thank you for your interest and support! We will post you a copy of this consent letter.

DO YOU GIVE PERMISSION FOR YOUR CHILD TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

YES / NO (please circle parent/guardian response)

_____

Print parent/guardian name Print child's name Date

_____

Postal address

_____

Contact telephone

_____

Researcher's signature Print researcher's name Date

Appendix 5.3

RESEARCH STUDY

THROUGH THE LENS OF A PEER: UNDERSTANDING ADOLESCENT BOREDOM IN FREE TIME

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND ASSENT LETTER

April 2007

Dear Participant

WHAT IS THE STUDY ABOUT?

The study is about young people's experiences in their free time. Free time is the time when you don't have to do work or chores. Usually, it is the time after school or work, and on weekends, when you choose what you want to do. This study will help us understand what problems young people have during their free time so that we can know how to improve the situation and make suggestions to relevant organisations. This research study has been approved by the Research Ethics Committee at the University of Cape Town and will be done according to internationally accepted ethical standards and guidelines.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN?

You, and about 7 other boys or girls will meet with several researchers to talk about your experiences in free time. The group will take about 60 minutes. There will be a light snack. Researchers will be running the group and can answer any questions you may have.

The group will be recorded on audio tape so that we will have a good record of the answers that you share. These recordings will be stored in a locked filing cabinet in one researcher's office at UWC. They will only be seen by members of the research team. These tapes will be destroyed by May 2008, or within one year of being written down, whichever comes later. Written records will also be kept on a passworded computer and only be seen by the research team. However, these written records will not be destroyed.

WILL ANYONE KNOW THAT YOU WERE IN THE STUDY?

Only the other people in the group will know that you have been in this study. Your answers will be kept private. If you speak about the group afterwards, it is expected that you will not tell what the other people said. Only the research staff will hear the audio tapes. In written records, your answers will be labelled by a person number only. If your answers are shared with other researchers, you will be labeled only in a general way, like "girl aged 16 years."

DO YOU HAVE TO PARTICIPATE?

NO. Taking part in this study is completely voluntary. You may stop participating in the group, or choose not to answer any question, at any time without penalty.

WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU WANT TO TALK TO SOMEONE ABOUT TOPICS FROM THE GROUP?

If there are any issues or topics that you would like to discuss further or get more information about, you may talk with one of the discussion leaders. In addition, you will receive a list of useful telephone numbers of organisations that provide a variety of services to young people, whom you may contact at any time you want.

WHAT ABOUT THE RESULTS OF THE STUDY?

Most of the research results that are reported will be based on all of the people' answers combined together. As stated above, individual answers will be reported using general labels.

DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT ANY PART OF THE STUDY?

If you have any questions about the study, please contact the researcher:

Lisa Wegner

University of the Western Cape

Private Bag X17

Bellville, 7535

Tel. (021)959-3153

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU WANT TO TAKE PART IN THE STUDY?

☐ ← Please tick this box if you agree to take part in this discussion group about your experiences in free-time. The group will be audio taped.

_____

Participant's Signature Print Name Date

THANK YOU FOR HELPING US!

_____

Researcher's Signature Print Name Date

Appendix 6.1

Integration of the Education Department's Life Orientation learning outcomes and HealthWise

*Life Orientation Learning Outcomes (Grades 8 and 9)	** HealthWise Curriculum Grade 8	**HealthWise Curriculum Grade 9
Learning Outcome 1 Health promotion: The learner will be able to make informed decisions regarding personal, community and environmental health.	**Lesson 4** Exploring free time **Lesson 5** Free time in my community **Lesson 6** Beating boredom and developing interests **Lesson 7** Overcoming roadblocks **Lesson 8** Decision making **Lesson 9** Managing risk **Lesson 10** Avoiding risky sexual behaviour **Lesson 11** Myths and realities of drug use **Lesson 12** Avoiding and reducing risk	**Lesson 1** Review **Lesson 2** My motivation **Lesson 3** Community connections **Lesson 5** Relationships and sexual behaviour
Learning Outcome 2 Social development: The learner will be able to demonstrate an understanding of and commitment to constitutional rights and responsibilities, and to show an understanding of diverse cultures and religions.	**Lesson 3** Managing anger **Lesson 7** Overcoming roadblocks **Lesson 8** Decision making **Lesson 9** Managing risk **Lesson 10** Avoiding risky sexual behaviour **Lesson 11** Myths and realities of drug use **Lesson 12** Avoiding and reducing risk	**Lesson 1** Review **Lesson 2** My motivation **Lesson 5** Relationships and sexual behaviour **Lesson 6** Conflict resolution
Learning Outcome 3 Personal development: The learner will be able to use acquired life skills to achieve and extend personal potential to respond effectively to challenges in his or her world.	**Lesson 1** Self-awareness **Lesson 2** Managing anxiety **Lesson 3** Managing anger **Lesson 4** Exploring free time **Lesson 5** Free time in my community **Lesson 6** Beating boredom and developing interests **Lesson 7** Overcoming roadblocks **Lesson 8** Decision making **Lesson 9** Managing risk	**Lesson 1** Review **Lesson 2** My motivation **Lesson 4** Planning and managing leisure **Lesson 5** Relationships and sexual behaviour **Lesson 6** Conflict resolution

	Lesson 10 Avoiding risky sexual behaviour **Lesson 11** Myths and realities of drug use **Lesson 12** Avoiding and reducing risk	
Learning Outcome 4 Physical development and movement: The learners will be able to demonstrate an understanding of, and participate in, activities that promote movement and physical development.	**Lesson 4** Exploring free time **Lesson 5** Free time in my community **Lesson 6** Beating boredom and developing interests **Lesson 7** Overcoming roadblocks	**Lesson 1** Review **Lesson 2** My motivation **Lesson 4** Planning and managing leisure

* Source: Department of Education (2002). Revised National Curriculum Statement Grades R-9 (schools) Life Orientation. Pretoria, South Africa: Department of Education.

** Source: Caldwell, L.L., Smith, E.A. & Wegner, L. (2004). HealthWise South Africa: Life Skills for Young Adults – Educator Training Manual. Funding provided through a Grant from the National Institute of Drug Abuse, author published.