

**Early adolescent boys' perceptions of the
Emo youth subculture**

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I dedicate this study to my son and my husband — the joy of my life

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My son, you are my inspiration and motivation in life.

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SUMMARY

The Emo youth is an emotionally expressive subculture associated with specific clothing, behaviour and music. Adolescent boys with skinny jeans, black eyeliner, black dyed hair and long fringes are some of the characteristics that is associated with Emo youth subculture. The social identity theory and developmental psychology theory underpin this research study, while a qualitative case study was utilized to obtain data. Social identity theory focus on intergroup relationships between the in-group and the out-group. For the study 15 individual participants aged 14 were purposively selected. All the participants were English speaking boys. Sociological research investigating boys' masculinities has already recognised the importance and effect of peer group cultures on their identity construction. The aim of the study was to explore and describe early adolescent boys' perceptions of the Emo youth subculture and the research question that guided it was: What are early adolescent boys' perceptions regarding the Emo youth subculture? Data were collected by means of drawings and subsequent focus group discussions. The findings indicated that the Emo youth subculture has norms and values that give rise to concern. The vulnerability caused by the lack of emotional support from family and peers is evident in findings. The present study confirmed that the Emo youth subculture provides a sense of belonging and security to sensitive and emotional adolescents, but the norms and customs that are associated with the subculture can possibly inhibit an adolescent to integrate and move on to the next developmental life phase. Depression, self-harming and suicidal tendencies that are associated with the subculture need to be addressed timeously. The concerns need to be explored further so that programmes and intervention strategies can be developed and instituted so that these adolescents can receive the support they so desperately need to be able to integrate and move on to the next phase of their life. The present study contributes to the literature regarding the Emo youth subculture in that it sheds some light on the potential needs of adolescents belonging to this subculture.

OPSOMMING

Die Emo jeugsubkultuur is 'n emosioneel-ekspressiewe subkultuur wat met spesifieke gedrag, musiek en kleredrag verbind word. Kenmerkend van adolessente seuns wat aan hierdie subkultuur behoort, is die dra van noupassende broeke, swart oogomlyner, swart-gekleurde hare en lang kuiwe. Die sosiale identiteitsteorie en ontwikkelingsielkundeteorie onderlê hierdie navorsingstudie, terwyl 'n kwalitatiewe gevallestudie gebruik is om data te bekom. Sosiale identiteitsteorie fokus op intergroep-verhoudings tussen die in-groep en die buite-groep. Vir die studie is vyftien 14-jarige individuele deelnemers doelgerig gekies. Al die deelnemers was Engelssprekende seuns. Die uitwerking van portuurgroep subkulture op identiteitsvorming is reeds herhaaldelik erken deur sosiologiese navorsing op die manlikhede van seuns. Die doel met die studie was om vroeë adolessente seuns se sieninge van die Emo jeugsubkultuur te ondersoek en te beskryf aan die hand van die navorsingsvraag: Wat is vroeë adolessente seuns se sieninge ten opsigte van die Emo jeugsubkultuur? Data is ingesamel deur middel van tekeninge en daaropvolgende fokusgroepbesprekings. Die bevindinge het aangedui dat die norme en waardes van die Emo jeugsubkultuur tot kommer aanleiding gee. Die kwesbaarheid wat veroorsaak word weens 'n gebrek aan emosionele ondersteuning van die gesin en portuurgroep kom duidelik uit die bevindinge na vore. Hierdie studie bevestig dat die Emo jeugsubkultuur 'n gevoel van samehorigheid en sekuriteit aan sensitiewe, emosionele adolessente bied, maar dat die norme en gewoontes kenmerkend van die subkultuur 'n adolessent kan strem in integrasie en in die aanbeweeg na die volgende lewensontwikkelingsfase. Depressie, self-benadeling en selfmoordneigings wat met die subkultuur verband hou, moet vroegtydig aangespreek word. Die knelpunte vereis dat verdere ondersoek gedoen word sodat programme en strategieë ter ingryping ontwikkel en ingestel kan word sodat hierdie adolessente die ondersteuning kan kry wat hulle so dringend nodig het om hulle in staat te stel om te integreer en aan te beweeg na die volgende fase van hul lewe. Hierdie studie dra by tot die literatuur oor die Emo jeugsubkultuur in die sin dat dit begin lig werp op die moontlike behoeftes van adolessente wat aan hierdie subkultuur behoort.

LETTER OF PERMISSION

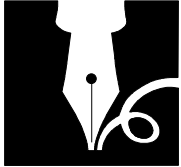
I, the supervisor, declare that the input and effort of Eloise Strauss, in writing the dissertation reflects research done by her. I hereby grant permission that she may submit this dissertation for examination purposes in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree Master of Arts in Psychology.

Prof Vera Roos

Supervisor

CONFIRMATION OF LANGUAGE EDITING

It is hereby declared that language editing has been conducted by Executype CC.



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CHAPTER 1

Background and Literature Orientation

The emergence of different youth subcultures is a phenomenon that is increasing worldwide (Chamberlin, 2007). A youth subculture can be described as a group who define themselves in relation to peers who share a common life style in terms of a specific identity and who communicate using technology (Chamberlin, 2007; Cotterell, 2007). A youth subculture serves a valuable purpose for early adolescents because they define themselves in relation to the unique values and beliefs of the group and experience feelings of belonging and a shared identity (Hodkinson, 2002).

Different types of youth subcultures exist, such as Jocks, Punks, Goths, Emo, Skinheads (Skott-Myhre, 2009) just to name a few. For the purpose of this research the focus will be on the Emo subculture. According to Simon and Kelley (2007) being the Emo subculture is a frame of mind and a group with whom early adolescents experience a sense of belonging. The norm underpinning the Emo youth subculture with which early adolescents identify is that people prefer not to be categorized or labeled (Definis-Gojanovic, Gugic & Sutlovic, 2009; Phillipov, 2010). The term Emo has no precise definition, but is commonly known to be an abbreviation of the word *emotional* (Ryalls, 2007). The Emo youth subculture is linked to “Emotionally hard-core” punk music (Scott & Chur-Hassen, 2008) and a stylistic preference which generally consists of black clothes and tight pants (Reevy, Malamud & Iro, 2010). Adolescents belonging to the Emo youth subculture have been found to be emotionally motivated individuals known for their sensitivity, having a lack of self-confidence, being depressed, self-loathing and practicing self-mutilation (Bailey, 2006; Munteanu, Costea, Palos, Jinaru, & Dragomir, 2011; Simon & Kelley, 2007). Some members of society perceive the Emo youth subculture as having a possible preoccupation with death because of their lifestyle and music with themes of sadness and despair, while others argue that adolescents who identify with the Emo youth subculture are innocent, sensitive, trusting, extremely vulnerable and depressed (Definis-Gojanovic et al., 2009). Adolescents belonging to the Emo youth subculture often feel alienated and prefer to make contact and seek support through the internet, which has become an accessible medium where otherwise isolated adolescents belonging to the Emo youth subculture can meet and spend their time online (Simon & Kelley, 2007). Adolescents belonging to the Emo youth subculture utilize social networks to build relationships where they can express themselves, be accepted and where they experience company (Seganti & Smahel, 2011). The Emo youth subculture attracts those who do not fit into the prevalent social environment (Scott & Chur-Hassen, 2008) and are known to challenge the dominant ideology of popularity in the adolescent world (Ryalls, 2007).

The Emo subculture and music challenge traditional masculine ideologies (Peters, 2010; Williams, 2007) through embodying a “crisis of masculinity” by reframing gender and developing it into a possible gay entity (Peters, 2010). Although boys that are part of the Emo youth subculture typically present as heterosexual, they are often referred to as “Emo fags” by those outside the subculture (Schmitt, 2011) resulting in them being rejected by a society that does not accept such a representation of masculinity (Peters 2010). This significantly contributes towards a formation of a negative sense of identity in their experiential environment from which the adolescent

create their meanings and perceptions (Robertson, 2008). This is especially true when boys fail to differentiate and interpret their experiences, which might erode self-confidence, cause feelings of shame and guilt, sadness, loneliness and disconnectedness (Lampert, 2003).

Youth is defined as the transitional period between being dependent and becoming independent — in other words a life stage between childhood and adulthood (Kehily, 2007). Although this stage comprises persons between 12-24 years of age (Bennell, 2007), the focus of this study will be on early adolescents with ages 10-14 years (Corr & Balk, 1996; Radzik, Sherer & Neinstein, 2002). Early adolescence is a time of adjustment from childhood dependence and reliance on the family unit and society, towards a greater sense of autonomy and competence (Ferguson & O'Neill, 2001; Geldard & Geldard, 2010). This time of adjustment is best described by Erikson's psychosocial theory (Louw & Louw, 2007). According to Erikson (1968) early adolescents develop their identity by defining who they are, discovering what is important to them and what direction they want to take in life. During this developmental phase adolescents experience a temporary period of confusion and develop a personal and social identity by exploring and questioning existing values and experimenting with different roles in order to develop their own goals and values. An early adolescent strives for the development of social identity, which is achieved by having a sense of belonging within a valued group (Tanti, Stukas, Halloran & Foddy, 2011). Peer groups form the platform for testing new levels of intimacy, support, guidance and provide role models which influence the formation of self (Heaven, 2001; Plante, 2007). Early adolescents are known to experience intense relationships with same-sex peers (Radzik et al., 2002). An important developmental task during early adolescence is the ability to reorganize peer relationships, which involve the expansion and deepening of interpersonal connections (Ferguson & O'Neill, 2001). Erikson (1968) supports this view by concluding that adolescents often confide in their peers and that peer relationships play an important role in their lives. Adolescents experiment intensely with new and intimate relationships and are particularly looking for friendships or groups where they can feel a sense of belonging and which is also a clear indication of the adolescents' need to disconnect from their parents and to become independent (Louw & Louw, 2007). Erikson (1968) argues that adolescents are concerned with the trend of finding a place to belong by joining an adolescent subculture, which form part of the preliminary identity formation.

The aim of this research is therefore to explore early adolescent boys' perception of the Emo youth subculture in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the subculture through the eyes of a vulnerable developmental group.

Problem Statement

There is limited research around youth subcultures within a South African context (Mooney, 2005). Adolescents belonging to the Emo subculture has been identified with self-harming behaviour which potentially increases the risk for suicide (Munteanu, et al., 2011) and are known to embody core values associated with depression (Martin, 2006). It is therefore important to understand more of the subjective experiences and perceptions of early

adolescents regarding the Emo subculture. This research aspires to contribute to literature on the Emo youth subculture by exploring early adolescents' perceptions of it. It also hopes to help identify intervention strategies that potentially can empower educators who interact with early adolescent boys. The primary research question that guided the study was:

What are early adolescent boys' perceptions regarding the Emo youth subculture?

Conceptual Framework

The ontological assumption on which this research was based is that social reality is constantly changing and developed through the process of interaction (Creswell, 2009; Howitt, 2010). People interact with their environment and make sense of it based on their social and historical perspectives (Creswell, 2009). Epistemological assumptions address the knowledge-gathering process (Grix, 2002). In the present study the researcher explored and comprehended the social world through the participants' standpoint and by gathering the information in their life setting (Creswell, 2009). In the interpretation of the data and writing of the report the researcher had to be aware of how her social and historical perspective influenced her view of the world (Creswell, 2009).

A social psychology perspective (Chadee, 2011; Hogg & Cooper, 2007) specifically focusing on social identity theory (Abrams & Hogg, 2010; Tajfel, 1982) provided the lens through which the research was planned and conducted. Social identity theory argues that as soon as people identify with social groups their group identity forms an important part of their self-concept and how they view themselves in the social world (Killen & Rutland, 2011). Intergroup behaviour is characterized by a struggle between groups to protect and promote their uniqueness (Abrams & Hogg, 2010). People who strongly identify with their group have a stronger motivation to discriminate in favour of their group, thus socially reject and support negative stereotypes (Killen & Rutland, 2011). In-group members are motivated to endorse the group norms which are characterized by uniform attitude, behaviours and shared beliefs (Hogg & Abrams, 2010). Fiske (2000) argues that the core social motive of groups is belonging — getting along in one's group.

Report Layout

- Chapter 1: Orientation to the research.

The first section serves as a general introduction to the study. The problem statement, purpose of the study, conceptualisation, research methodology, trustworthiness and ethical consideration of others, are set out within this section.

- Chapter 2: Potential journal article.

This section is intended for a journal article. The title of the article will be “Early adolescent boys’ perspective of the Emo youth subculture phenomenon”

- Chapter 3: Conclusions and recommendations.

This section of the study comprises the summative research findings, conclusions and recommendations that had been reached through this study.

- Chapter 4: Addenda.

The various documents, guidelines, forms, schedules, etc. that were used in this study are included in this section as addenda.

- Chapter 5: Consolidated reference list.

The final section comprises a consolidated list of references that were used in this study.

CHAPTER 2

Manuscript intended for The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher Submitted for Examination

Early adolescent boys' perspective of the Emo youth subculture phenomenon

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Abstract

The aim of this study was to explore and describe early adolescent boys' perceptions of the Emo youth subculture. The Emo youth subculture is an emotionally expressive subculture associated with specific clothing, behaviour and music. Theories underpinning this research include a social identity theory and a developmental psychology theory, while a qualitative case study was used to obtain the perceptions of 15 boys aged 14 years from the South Tshwane school. Visual data were obtained through drawings and textual data were obtained from the explanations of the drawings and focus group discussions. The main theme that emerged from this study was that early adolescent boys perceived the Emo youth subculture as a self-destructive and negative group and described the members of this group as being depressed, self-mutilating and with suicidal tendencies. Early adolescent boys seem to join the Emo youth subculture because they find acceptance and protection within the group from being bullied, in contrary to no support from their family or peers. Emo nevertheless provide these boys with a good self-concept and self-esteem.

Key words: Emo, early adolescent, boy, subculture, focus group

The aim of the research is to explore the early adolescent boy's perception of the Emo youth subculture in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the subculture through the eyes of a vulnerable developmental group, who, for different reasons, has a growing tendency to join subcultures. Early adolescence, as a developmental phase, can be described as stressful and challenging and is regarded as a transitional period in the course of life (Brendgen, Wanner, Morin & Vitaro, 2005; Schonert-Reichl, 1999). Early adolescence (age 10-14 years) is characterized by the start of the shift from dependence on parents /care givers to independence (Radzik, Sherer & Neinstein, 2002). Erikson (1968) referred to this shift as the development of identity. It is a time of exploring, questioning and experimenting with different roles in order to develop an own set of values and goals. During this changing time peer groups are often regarded as an indispensable network through which concepts of identity and self-esteem are developed (Erikson, 1968). A peer group also offers a sense of belonging and provides emotional support (Tarrant, 2002).

Of the different types of subcultures that exist, such as Jocks, Punks, Goths, Skinheads and others (Skott-Myhre, 2009), this research will focus on the Emo subculture. The Emo youth subculture originated from the eighties' hardcore punk rock music (Simon & Kelley, 2007). Munteanu et al. (2011) argue that the term Emo was derived from the word *emotional*. The Emo subculture represents a group of sensitive adolescents with particular preference in clothes, music and behaviours (Munteanu et al., 2011; Scott & Chur-Hansen, 2008). According to Bailey (2006) the Emo youth subculture provides a sense of belonging through social interaction. Definis-Gojanovic et al. (2009) argue that the Emo youth subculture attracts early adolescents with serious behavioural problems. Seganti and Smahel (2011) is of the opinion that the internet plays an important role in the social interaction and development of the Emo youth subculture. Schmitt (2011) mentions that the Emo youth subculture's brush with femininity in its openness to an alternative view of masculinity can possibly be perceived as weak, and that it creates the prospect to be supported by some and ridiculed by others (Schmitt, 2011). Adolescents belonging to the Emo subculture have been identified with self-harming behaviour such as cutting, which potentially increases the risk for suicide (Scott & Chur-Hassen, 2008). Adolescents who identify with the Emo youth subculture are described as white middle-class males who share similar hair and clothing styles with females in the subculture (Schmitt, 2011). They wear black stove-pipe jeans, have long black fringes which obscure their faces (Phillipov, 2009), studded wristbands, belts (Seganti & Smahel, 2011) and heavy eyeliner (Peters, 2010). "True Emo-ties are born — not made — and they embody certain patterns of behaviour and thought that serve to bond and unite" (Simon & Kelley, 2007:2). The same authors point out that depression, effort(lessness), empathy, faith, insecurity and non-athleticism are core Emo values, which they further describe as not being physically active, feeling insecure and appearing uncaring of others' opinions (Simon & Kelley, 2007). Emotional depression lies at the core of the Emo culture and is also the link between its members. Members of the Emo youth subculture show empathy with other people and when believing in something they do it wholeheartedly. Adolescents belonging to the Emo youth subculture are authentic and express their emotions easily (Schmitt, 2011). Schmitt (2011) also mentions that boys belonging to the Emo youth subculture present as being more emotional and open. He argues that the Emo youth subculture provides space for its members to develop alternative types of masculinity. According to Anastasi (2005:316) in the prevailing pseudo-philosophies in

modern culture that disapprove of boys showing their true feelings “an adolescent boy may easily find himself in a situation where he feels guilty or weak if he expresses grief, concern or complaints”.

Limited scientific research about early adolescent boys’ perceptions of youth subcultures have been conducted within the South African context, although they are often discussed in the media and deemed potentially dangerous (Definis-Gojanovic et al., 2009; Mooney, 2005). In order to provide support for early adolescent boys it is important to firstly understand how they perceive a subculture to satisfy their needs (Scott & Chur-Hassen, 2008; Martins, 2006). Therefore the question that this study attempts to solve is: What are early adolescent boys’ perceptions of the Emo youth subculture?

Since the social identity theory posits that a considerable part of the selfconcept is a result of in-group connection this theory is used to explain the early adolescent’s identification with the Emo youth subculture (Killen, Richardson & Kelly, 2010; Tajfel, 1982). The in-group is viewed positively through social comparisons with other groups of which they are not members (out-group). Positive identification with a group (in-group) has proved to enhance identity formation and self-esteem (Killen & Rutland, 2011).

Research Design and Methodology

Qualitative research can access the opinions of people regarding their real-life experiences (Babbie, 2010; Janesick, 2002; Yin, 2011). A qualitative design was adopted for this study as the focus was on acquiring adolescent boys’ subjective perceptions regarding the Emo youth subculture. The study is descriptive in nature as it investigates a phenomenon pertaining to Emo youth subculture where limited knowledge exists, presenting a picture of the specific details of a situation and aims to answer the how and why questions (Babbie, 2010; Fouché & De Vos, 2011). A case study research design was applied to gain a broad understanding of how early adolescent boys share and interrelate with each other in their environment and how they make sense of the Emo youth subculture (Maree, 2010). Over time the researcher explored a multiple bounded system (more than one case) by using multiple sources of information — focus groups, documents and field notes — for in-depth and detailed data collection, in order to report the case description and case-based themes (Creswell, 2007).

Research Context and Participants

The study took place in a secondary education context. A school for boys was chosen because the volume of available participants (boys) in the early adolescent group increased the suitability of boys having knowledge of the Emo youth subculture being able to participate. The specific school was in close vicinity, and graciously allowed access for the research to be conducted there.

The sample was selected from the population by means of non-probability, purposeful sampling to provide information-rich cases which contributed to an in-depth understanding (Adler & Clark, 2011; Babbie, 2010). Patton (2002) argues that in qualitative research the sample size depends on the purpose of enquiry; thus sampling

was continued until saturation of data had taken place in terms of generalizing to theoretical propositions and not to populations. The researcher distinguished between those who were of potential interest and those who were not by defining a set of inclusion criteria (Johnson & Christensen, 2011), namely, participants had to volunteer, be English speaking boys aged 14 years and have knowledge of the Emo youth subculture. The sample comprised 15 14-year old boys from different ethnic groups, namely seven Caucasian, seven African and one Indian.

Procedure

Ethical approval for the research was obtained from the North-West University Ethics Committee under number NWU-00060-A1. Approval for the study was also obtained from the Department of Education. The Life Orientation teacher of the school acted as the gatekeeper during data-gathering by establishing a relationship between the participants and the researcher. The researcher informed the gatekeeper regarding the research project, the gatekeeper then discussed the project with the school principal who approved it. To select the sample from the population, the Life Orientation teacher handed out a pre-interview survey form. Thus a non-probability, purposive (judgmental) sampling procedure was used (Babbie, 2010:193). This sampling procedure allowed the researcher intentionally to select information-rich cases that could contribute to an in-depth understanding of the topic at hand (Babbie, 2010). The teacher and the pre-interview survey served to inform participants that participation was voluntary and withdrawal from the study at any stage was acceptable. Those participants that volunteered to take part also had to obtain written consent from their parents on a form provided for the purpose. The participants provided the Life Orientation teacher with a convenient place, date and time where their voluntary participation, the reason for the focus groups, the related research study and the possible publication of results were explained to them. A detailed discussion on the ethical aspects follows under ethical considerations. Consent forms were explained and distributed. Only once the participants and their parents have signed the consent forms, the boys were allowed to take part in the focus group.

Data gathering commenced with participants requested to draw what comes to mind when they think of Emo, and then to provide a description on the back of the page. Upon completion, two focus group discussions were conducted with seven participants in the one group and eight in the other group. Questions asked during the focus group discussions included: When you think of the Emo youth subculture what comes to mind? What do you think made it necessary for Emos to form a subculture? How do you think an Emo view the world? What do you like best and least about the Emo subculture? The focus group interview lasted for about two hours. Since all participants were able to express themselves comfortably in English it was the language used as medium of communication. All the data were captured on video as well.

Data Gathering

Data were gathered by means of drawings and focus group discussions.

Drawings. Drawings are regarded as a personal account of participants' subjective perceptions and interpretation of their lives and the events of the world around them; the participants' drawings created during the focus groups aided the researcher in gaining an enhanced understanding of their experiences and perceptions (Lichtman, 2010; Merriam, 2009; Strydom & Delport, 2011). The participants were requested to express themselves through a drawing and an explanation of the drawing regarding the question: What comes to mind when you think of Emo? Different drawing media, such as paper and crayons, were provided to choose from. No discussions were allowed. When done the participants wrote their pseudonyms on the paper and handed it to the researcher.

Focus group discussions. According to Krueger and Casey (2009) focus groups are an appropriate method for data gathering in attempting to understand what people really think and feel, the differences in perspectives between groups or categories of people and to encourage participants to share their perceptions about the topic of interest. Therefore focus groups were used to gather data to explore the 14-year old's perspective of the Emo youth subculture.

Data Analysis

Textual data analysis. Analysing data gives meaning and brings order and structure to the data that has been collected (Schurink, Fouchè & de Vos, 2011). In this study the textual data analysis and interpretation was guided by thematic content analysis. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) thematic analysis is appropriate for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns or themes in particular data. The aim of thematic analysis is to identify keys in the text by looking at data inductively and iteratively, which facilitate understanding and interpretation of raw data. Although the data must be interpreted, summarized and categorized, thematic analysis remains close to the raw data throughout the process of analysis (Matthews & Ross, 2010).

The following phases of thematic analysis suggested by Braun and Clarke (2006) guided the data analysis:

- 1 **Becoming familiar with the data** During this phase, video recordings of the focus groups were viewed and the transcriptions as well as the drawings' explanations studied repeatedly until the researcher was familiar with the content and could formulate possible themes.
- 2 **Generating initial codes** Coding involved taking chunks of text and placing them in specific categories in such a way as to enable subsequent analysis of the data (Matthews & Ross, 2010; Silverman, 2010). Data were organised into meaningful clusters that became salient during Phase 1, and the clusters were colour coded on the transcribed data sets.
- 3 **Searching for themes** Codes were grouped into themes that were arranged in a mind map with particular attention to codes that related to the research question.
- 4 **Reviewing themes** Some themes from Phase 3 were combined, and some less important themes omitted. Data were re-read to ensure the themes represented the data adequately.
- 5 **Defining and naming themes** Each theme was defined and explained.

- 6 **Producing the report** The report identified the emergent themes and related the analysis to the research question and the literature review (Matthews & Ross, 2010).

Visual data analysis. The visual data were obtained through drawings, which were analysed according to the recommendations of Roos (2012), namely, to obtain the literal meaning of the drawing from its creator's discription. Thereafter the relationships between the different objects in the drawings were determined and applied to the research question in order to obtain insight into the early adolescent boys' perceptions of the Emo youth subculture.

Trustworthiness

Nieuwenhuis (2010) deems the reliability and validity of qualitative research as credible and trustworthy. In this study measures of trustworthiness were also based on criteria provided by Lincoln and Guba (1985).

Guidelines for Ensuring the Trustworthiness of the Study

- **Credibility** Triangulation was ensured through multiple sources of data including focus groups and drawings (Litchman, 2010; Schurink et al., 2011).
- **Transferability** Transferability implies that it is the reader's responsibility to decide whether the researcher's findings and conclusions can be transferred to other contexts or situations (Shenton, 2004). To enable the reader to make the judgment, the findings must be rich, thick descriptions of the study and all its particularities (Merriam, 2009). The researcher conducted an in-depth analysis of the focus group transcriptions and drawings to provide a logical and clear presentation of the data within the theoretical framework (Schurink et al., 2011).
- **Dependability** Peer examination was utilized by making use of colleagues and methodological experts. They continuously examined the research process to ensure the dependability and consistency of the findings.
- **Conformability** Conformability is achieved when the findings of the study were shaped by the participants' perspectives and not through research bias and thus can be confirmed by another (Schurink et al., 2011). Accurate reflections of the participants' views were obtained through visual data (drawings) and recording, transcribing (out-sourced) verbatim the focus group interviews.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical approval for the research was obtained from the North-West University Ethics Committee under number NWU-00060-A1. The following ethical measures were followed during the study:

- The researcher attempted to avoid harm by informing the participants beforehand that the investigation could trigger memories that might result in discomfort (Strydom, 2011) and that they can withdraw at any moment during the study (Morrow, 2007). Throughout the study the researcher remained sensitive and alert to any

emotional distress so that, should the need had arisen, the relevant participant could be referred to the school's psychologist.

- According to Strydom (2011) informed consent is achieved by providing adequate information about the goal of the study, the procedures to be followed during the investigation, the potential advantages, disadvantages and dangers that the participants could be exposed to, as well as the credibility of the research. Informed consent was obtained from the Department of Education, the principal of the school, the participants and their parents.
- Privacy involves the aspects of personal confidentiality where participants have the right to decide what and how much to disclose. The participants chose pseudonyms so they could stay anonymous. The right to refuse disclosure and/or withdrawing from the study without penalty were guaranteed in the consent form as well as in discussions before the focus group session commenced. Group rules were created by participants, for example, the participants agreed to keep the focus group discussion confidential. All records including recorded material were stored in a lockable cabinet or electronically on the researcher's PC that is password protected and only accessible by the researcher (Richards, 2009).
- The role of the researcher as well as the purpose of the study, namely to explore 14-year old boys' perceptions regarding the Emo youth subculture, were clearly and honestly stated in the respective consent forms. The researcher confirms that the research process proceeded as indicated and that the findings were not deceptive in anyway.
- The researcher was well equipped with the required skills and competencies and received on-going supervision.
- The focus was on the experiences of the participants and this dictated the specific rules for conducting and using the study; the researcher was responsible for clearly perceiving the participants' responses, as well as authentically translating the data and presenting the findings. The principle of beneficence was applied as a matter of righteousness.
- Participants had unrestricted access to the research findings.

Findings and Literature Confirmation

The table below shows the themes and subthemes derived from the data.

Table 1

Themes and subthemes derived from the data

Main themes	Subthemes
Types of identification with Emo youth subculture	Physical expression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visual characteristics Behavioural expression

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attention-seeking• Self-harming• Anti-social behaviour
	Emotional expression
Needs of early adolescents addressed by Emo youth subculture	<div>Sense of belonging<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A need to be understood• A need for help</div>
Vulnerability in relation to their peers and family	<div>Ridiculed</div> <div>Lack of family support</div> <div>Stereotyped</div>

Types of identification with the Emo youth subculture

The participants of the study identified with people who belong to the Emo youth subculture on a physically, behavioural and emotional level.

Physical expression

Adolescents that belong to the Emo subculture have distinct visual characteristics. The following quotes from their descriptions support the impression that Emo adolescents present themselves in a specific way (To save space ‘focus group’ and ‘participant’ are abbreviated fg and p respectively): *Skinny white boys, that's dyed their hair black* (fg2p1); *People how like, wear skinny jeans, they make cool haircuts, and they wear big shoes* (fg2p2); *People that wear black clothes, black eyeliner, rock star clothes and they like things that are dark and evil looking* (fg2p5).



Figure 1. Drawing of an Emo boy dressed in dark clothes

The participant described his drawing as follows: *This is my general perception of an Emo. He is wearing dark clothing, he looks depressed and has slatted his wrists* (fg2p4). Peter (2010) confirms that Emo boys wear

tailored clothing, heavy eyeliner, black hair with a long dramatic fringe and thus confirms the participant's perceptions. The colour of clothes communicates the emotions of an adolescent belonging to the subculture. This is confirmed by two participants: *If you really Emo you'd probably wear a darker colour like a black, ja like red and black, like associate with them being sad or depressed (fg1p1); When you are Emo, you want people to see that you are depressed, that is why you dress that way (fg1p1).*

Behavioural expression

Specific behaviour of attention-seeking, self-harming and anti-social behaviour was noted. The response of concern was that Emo adolescents use cutting as a way of seeking attention. According to one of the participants, *I have a friend who was Christian, or who is Christian and he was Emo, like he was cutting himself like love and weird stuff written on his arm, and he was so proud of it (fg2p4).* The Emo youth subculture is strongly identified with self-harming behaviour: *I think slitting wrists and stuff is mostly associated with Emos because it's like, the thing, it's not very common among other cultures (fg1p2).* Definis-Gojanovic et al. (2009) suggests that the media links the Emo youth subculture with self-harming behaviour but as yet no scientific proof for this exists. Martin (2006) shares this view and adds that the report of cutting incidence is said to be high and a key aspect of the Emo youth subculture although no formal research had been done.

According to the participants Emo adolescents cut themselves to get rid of the pain they are feeling and they can possibly go as far as committing suicide: *When I think of Emo I think of blood and tears. Blood because Emos usually cut themselves, they cut themselves because they are taking the pain they feel on the inside and take it out on themselves. Tears, these are not tears of joy they are the exact opposite and they are crying because they cut themselves and all of the pain that the family feels when the Emo person does this, or worse, commits suicide (fg1p3).* This view was illustrated as follows:

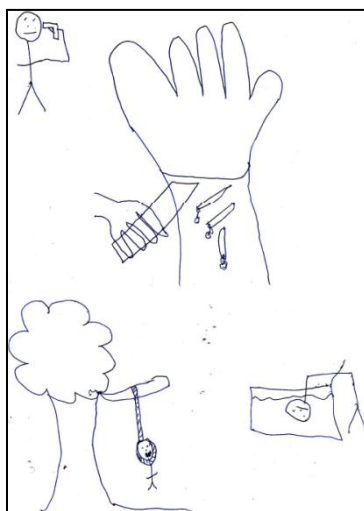


Figure 2. Drawing of different ways of harming oneself

I drew these things because I think Emo people are suicidal (fg1p5). Emo adolescents use different objects to cut themselves: Some people has technology tools to cut themselves, small saw and stuff like that to actually slit

themselves (fg2p4). Rudolph, Flynn and Abaied (2008) states that adolescents' persuasive need to identify with peers by experimenting with ill-fated activities explains the spreading of cutting as a means of coping with unexpressed of pain.

In a study done by Seganti and Smahel (2011) they experienced that Emo adolescents withdrew from their environment and ascribed this to either that their peers rejected them or that they decided to exclude themselves. The participants' perception of the Emo adolescent in the study was that they exclude themselves and only communicate with others just like them: *I think that if you're dressing in dark colours, if you like go into a corner, they're excluding themselves from other people* (fg1p3); *They're anti-social, they wouldn't have many friends, they have friends, but their friends are basically Emo or some of it* (fg2p1).

Emotional expression

Emo adolescents are perceived as being depressed: *When I think of Emo, I think of people who are depressed, and they find that the way out is to slit their wrists, wear dark stuff, dye their hair and things like that* (fg2p4); *The problem was going on, they were all depressed, they took to being Emo as a way to solve it, and now that they've solved the problem, they've got so into it, they just kind of using it as an excuse or like to get attention* (fg1p1); *Emo's are trying to hide in the background ...intentionally want to be depressed* (fg1p2); *If I were Emo, I actually wouldn't care, like who cares if I die tomorrow, who cares* (fg4p1); *When you're Emo, you want people to see that you're depressed, that's why you dress that way, and if you want them to see that you're struggling emotionally, so that's why you dress that way. So it's kind of making people notice you by dressing that way* (fg1p1). Simon and Kelley (2007) state that depression is a core Emo value and forms the basis of the entire Emo philosophy; Munteanu et al. (2011) confirm that depression is a dominant psychological element of Emo adolescents.

Emo adolescents were also viewed by the participants as sensitive: *They are sensitive, they feel Emotions, like when they see animal cruelty they'll, like might cry or become extremely angry, uhm, they could look at war and other countries and think that's wrong, they would join like, the salvation army, peace corps* (fg2p1); *Emo as people, uhm, Emo people are really deep when it comes to Emotion, or that's sort of a nice thing about them, you can actually have a real conversation with them* fg4p2); *Emo is more like Emotionally* (fg1p4). The findings of Munteanu et al. (2011) agree and suggest that the Emo adolescent is a very sensitive person, while Simon and Kelley (2007) point out that empathy with others' pain is one of the Emo core values.

Emo adolescents are perceived as being expressive through music, art or poetry: *I think Emos express themselves by art and music, like, if you think about heavy metal, that doesn't like really have like, a proper, if you think about words, all you can hear is practically just screaming, so they're getting all that anger out at the same time and also with art, they paint what they feeling* (fg1p3); *Emos also associate themselves, like, expressing themselves like in art, I know many people who like paint, and they're Emo, they're depressed and they paint when they're angry instead of cutting themselves* (fg1p1). According to Bailey (2006) the Emo youth subculture is a place where adolescents can express their feelings about life through music.

Needs of Early Adolescents Addressed by the Emo Youth Subculture

Sense of belonging. The participants perceived the Emo subculture as providing adolescents with a place to belong, where they can be a part of something and be able to express themselves: *Emos formed a subculture because they need to feel a sense of belonging (fg5p1); You now actually turn to Emo because nobody thinks I'm good enough, or Emo would just accept me (fg2p8); I think they created the Emo subculture, because they also need a sense of belonging (fg3p1).* Ryalls (2007) describes the Emo youth as supportive and an encouragement for adolescents belonging to the subculture, as did some participants: *Let's say you're useless at everything, so why not join that group, just for the hell of it, so that you feel like, a part of it, so I think that's why they go into the Emo group, to feel secure, and like, a part of something now (fg1p4); I think it also has to do with self esteem, now they're like, when they go Emo, that their self esteem will go up, because they're part of a group (fg1p3).* According to Tajfel and Turner (1979) self-concept and self-esteem contribute to social identity and strong group identification can promote self-esteem and identity formation.

Need to be understood. According to one participant the Emo adolescent has a need to be with others like him that he can talk to and be understood: *They're now in the Emo group, and here there other people like them, so this is a way of expressing themselves and being able to talk about their problem without, and they know everybody there will understand because those people have similar problems (fg3p2); The Emo is trying to be noticed and understood (fg1p7).* The study also revealed that the participants perceived the Emo adolescents as needing help, which they are not receiving from their parents or their environment: *Maybe it's not their fault because their parents would see that they need help, so they should send them to get help (fg2p1); Sometimes like Emo people can't get out, because sometimes their parents are the problem, or the cause ...it's very hard for them to get help (fg1p5); To all the Emo people in the world or wherever, even though they might be really depressed, and they might not be able to afford a counsellor, but there are other people that you can talk to (fg1p1); I think most people probably become Emo because they don't really have someone to talk to about their problems and, like, some of my friends, they really feel depressed about it (fg4p2).* Munteanu et al. (2011) are of the opinion that the solution or prevention of the problem of depressed adolescents is the responsibility of their parents and the success will be determined by how well the parents can communicate with their children.

Vulnerability in Relation to Their Peers and Family

Emo adolescents are perceived to be a joke, weaklings and an insult; according to the participants they are ridiculed by others: *A geek would want to join the group, because, maybe he studies long and gets really good marks, but he is like, weak, so everyone picks on him, and now he decides to go to Emo groups so that he has friends that actually stand up for him and beat up other guys (fg4p1); I think Emo can be used as, like, a saying, or an accusation to someone ...like people, if somebody is like crying for no reason, they'll say why are you going all Emo on me? (fg2p1); I think that they, sometimes they are made fun of, just like they are not taken seriously, by people, it's not that people really want to laugh at them, it's just that people don't think that they're serious, people take it as a joke that this is, they're Emo but it's a joke to them, they're not serious about anything (fg2p3).* Bailey (2006) noted that

the adolescents belonging to the Emo youth subculture are perceived as overly emotional and become targets because they freely express their feelings.

Lack of Emotional support. Emo adolescents are perceived as suffering a lack of emotional support especially from their families. This is illustrated in the drawing below as well as in quotes provided by the participants.

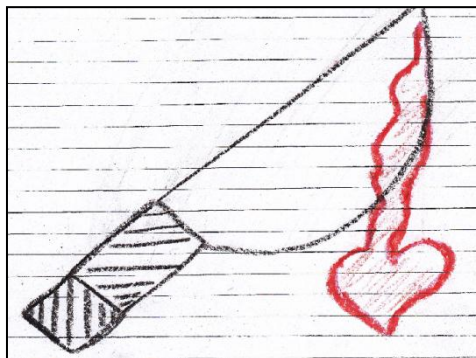


Figure 3. Drawing of a knife with dripping blood in the shape of a heart.

When I think of the word “Emo” I imagine a knife with blood dripping on it, because Emo people usually cut their wrists. I also imagine the blood forming a heart because the Emo people I know seem to be deprived of love (fg1p2); I think that they believe that the person in which they believe in, doesn't want them, uhm, actually makes them feel like, they are worthless (fg2p6); They could have come from broken homes, you know where their parents fight and stuff, divorced or separated ..they feel as if their family group is messed up, so they become depressed about that, they don't talk to anyone about that (fg1p2). According to this participant abuse and lack of support from parents might be a reason why they decide to join the Emo group: Some parents would like abusing their child and stuff, so now they're trying to feel like, ok, fine, something you are abusing me, there's no one I can go to, let me join this Emo group here, they might take me, and sort out my life, and help me (fg2p7). Emotional problems in the family and the lack of a support group, someone to talk to might be a reason why an Emo adolescent needs to cut himself: There's something wrong in their family, they just want to let it out, some other way by cutting themselves instead of actually talking to someone, like a support group or something, ja some even go as far as suicide (fg4p2).

Stereotyped. Stereotypes refer to culturally shared beliefs, negative and positive, regarding characteristics and behaviours of particular groups (Graham, Taylor & Ho, 2011). The following two participants perceived the Emo youth subculture as being stereotyped by others: *It could just be a fashion statement, so it's kind of stereotyping if you say that they, all people in dark clothes are Emo (fg1p1); They're also stereotyping saying that Emo people listen to heavy metal, and they slit their wrists, and that they, uhm killed things, and stuff like that (fg1p6).* According to one of the participants Emo adolescents are being rejected by others because of the stereotyped view regarding the subculture.

Discussion

The Emo youth subculture provides a sense of belonging and security to sensitive and emotional adolescents searching for identity. The group's openness to emotional expression makes them a target as they are perceived as being weak. The lack of emotional support from their family and peers enforces the need for acceptance. This need to conform to the group's specific norms and values takes its toll on the individuality of its members. Depression, self-harming and suicidal tendencies are all related to the subculture. The unhealthy norms inhibit the adolescent to become integrated as an individual and move on to the next life phase. One of the implications of the study could be acknowledgement of the need to develop a psychosocial intervention programme to expose adolescents to more options that they can use to develop their identity. This programme should address the unhealthy norms of the Emo youth subculture without effecting the individuality and creativity of its members. The results of the study show that early adolescents have an intense desire to be part of a group. This desire makes early adolescents a vulnerable and imperishable group of individuals. One aspect that emerged during the study was how passionately the participants shared their knowledge revealing their need to voice their opinion to someone who will listen.

Recommendations and Limitations

Further research on the Emo youth subculture is recommended since it is evident that there are aspects of concern regarding their emotional well-being. Better knowledge would expand professionals' understanding on how to better support this vulnerable group. Care should be taken so that any support would not restrict the freedom of expression or the creativity of these adolescents.

A limitation of this study was the very small population sample, but which imposes the necessity to continue research on a more extended sample group. The lack of scientific resources on the Emo youth subculture also hampers the linking of the data with literature.

Conclusion

The study revealed that the Emo youth subculture offers refuge to a group of sensitive and emotional adolescents with a particular taste in music, clothes and behaviour. The subculture provides a sense of belonging and an environment where adolescents can freely express their emotions and creativity. The link to depression, self-harming behaviour and suicidal tendencies is an alarming aspect of the Emo youth subculture and indicates a serious need for further research. Youth subcultures play an imperative role in the adolescents' development as they spend more and more time with their peers. Since new subcultures are developing constantly it is important to have current knowledge regarding existing youth subcultures, because of the vulnerability of early adolescents in their search for identity.

CHAPTER 3

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study explored adolescent boys' perception of the Emo youth subculture in order to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the subculture through the eyes of a group in a vulnerable developmental phase. A number of controversial articles exist in the media regarding the Emo youth subculture, but little scientific research has been done. As peer groups play an important role in the development of early adolescents, their need to belong to a group /subculture increases. It was quite exciting to explore how early adolescent boys perceive this controversial youth subculture. As stated by Definis-Gojanovic et al. (2009) the Emo youth subculture is either a serious behavioural problem of early adolescents in puberty or just another fictional public opinion.

The Emo youth subculture is linked to “emotionally hard-core” punk music (Scott & Chur-Hassen, 2008:359-362) and the adolescent who identify with this group has a specific preference in clothes — generally black and tight-fitting pants — behaviour and music (Reevy, Malamud & Iro, 2010). The findings of this study revealed that the Emo youth subculture provides security and a sense of belonging to identity seeking adolescents, but norms and practices that are associated with it gives reason for concern: one of the main characteristics of an Emo adolescent is shown to be depression. As early adolescents' needs to become part of a group increase, they sometimes lose themselves in the bonds of the expected behaviour of the subculture. The price adolescents pay for their desire to fit in often is the loss of their individuality (Munteanu et al, 2011). The lack of emotional support increases the desire to fit in. If a group member are deprived of the opportunity to develop individual traits, integration is hampered and moving to the next phase prevented. An intervention programme needs to be introduced to address these concerns caused by the subculture and to support and guide adolescents without inhibiting their freedom of expression or their originality.

Recommendations of this Study

The findings indicated that the Emo youth subculture has norms and values that cause concern. Depression, self-harming and suicidal tendencies that are linked to the subculture needs to be addressed. The vulnerability caused by the lack of emotional support from family and peers is evident in findings. Seganti and Smahel (2011) allude that Emo adolescents seem to experience constant tension between their need to be valued for their uniqueness, and their need to communicate their struggle and inability to relate and connect with peers and family. These concerns need to be examined and programmes and intervention strategies developed and instituted in order to provide the necessary support for these adolescents to be able to integrate and move on to the next phase of their life.

Recommendations Concerning Intervention Strategies

Intervention programmes that need to be instituted at schools should inform and guide teachers and other professionals who work with adolescents on how to provide them with much-needed support. An awareness

programme regarding bullying needs be implemented at schools. Parent guidance programmes should be made available so that parents can be guided in supporting their children.

Recommendations Concerning Research Practice

Little scientific research exists regarding the Emo and other youth subcultures in South Africa. Since the unique and important role of the Emo subculture is evident from this study, further research could focus on the support and guidance of Emo adolescents as well as on the impact of this and other subcultures on the development of the adolescent.

Limitations of the Study

- Only English-speaking participants from a school for boys in Tshwane south took part in the study. Because all the participants were boys, together with the relatively small sample size, the research findings can neither be generalised nor applied to other populations.
- The study was restricted to individuals living in the south of Tshwane and the focus was specifically on the Emo youth subculture. The findings, therefore, are not representative of South African society as a whole and do not reflect the views of other cultures or communities.

Contributions of the Study

The research confirmed that the Emo youth subculture provides a sense of belonging and security to sensitive and emotional adolescents. The norms that are associated with the subculture can possibly inhibit an adolescent to integrate and move on to the next developmental phase. The present study contributed to the literature regarding the Emo youth subculture in that it provides an idea of the possible needs of adolescents belonging to this subculture.

Final Word

Youth subcultures is a growing phenomenon and play an increasing role in the development of the early adolescent. It is imperative, therefore, that scientific research should be garnered to provide the adolescent with much-needed support and guidance.

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Authors Guidelines

The Social Work Practitioner-Researcher

Die Maatskaplikewerk Navorser-Praktisyn

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Hosted by the Department of Social Work, University of Johannesburg

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Notes for Contributors

Editorial Scope

The *Social Work Practitioner-Researcher* is a refereed interdisciplinary journal for social workers and social service professionals concerned with the advancement of the theory and practice of social work and social development in Africa and in a changing global world. The purpose of the journal is to promote research and innovation in the practice of helping individuals, families, groups, organisations and communities to promote development and human well-being in society. The journal is committed to the creation of empowered, humane, just and democratic societies.

Manuscripts that would be appropriate are: (1) conceptual analyses and theoretical presentations, (2) literature reviews that provide new insights or new research questions, (3) manuscripts that report empirical work. Topics that will be considered include, but are not limited to, the following: lifespan, populations at risk, poverty, livelihoods, anti-discriminatory practice, welfare systems, development management, social security, social policy, human rights, community-based development, social development, comparative health, mental health, education, urban and rural development, civic service, voluntarism, civil society, social movements and social change.

As it is the intention of this journal to maintain a balance between theory and practice, contributors are encouraged to spell out the practical implications of their work for those involved in social work practice and the social services in the African context.

Submissions

A decision to submit an article to this journal means that you will not be able to simultaneously submit the same article to another journal in South Africa or elsewhere.

If there is more than one author, we require a letter stating that all the authors agree to submit the article. If a person has contributed to the research of the article and is not going to be included as a co-author, then that person needs to be acknowledged at the end of the article.

The Reviewing Process

Each manuscript is reviewed by the Editor and Assistant Editor. If it is judged suitable for this journal, it is sent to two reviewers for blind peer-review. Based on their recommendations, the editorial committee decides whether the manuscript should be accepted as is, revised or rejected. If a manuscript is published, the author or their institution will be invoiced for page fees at the rate of R80,00 per page.

Presentation

1. Manuscripts should be submitted as electronic attachments to the journal administrator swjournal@uj.ac.za in Word format. All authors should be shown but the authors should not be identified anywhere in the article.
2. A *minimum length* of 3 500 words and a *maximum length* of 5 000 words (excluding references). No footnotes, endnotes and annexures are allowed.
3. On a separate page, a *title* of not more than ten words should be provided. The author's full name and title, position, institutional affiliation and e-mail address should be supplied.
4. An *abstract* of 150 words plus up to six *keywords*, which encapsulate the principal topics of the paper, must be included. The abstract should summarise the key argument/s of the article and locate the article in its theoretical practice and context. Please note that abstracts are not summaries of research studies. No sub-headings should be used in the abstract.
5. *Headings* must be short, clear and not numbered. Headings should be formatted in capitals and bold, and subheadings in bold only (not underlined or italics). Refer to a copy of the journal.
6. *Figures and tables*:
 - All *figures* (diagrams and line drawings) should be copied and pasted or saved and imported from the origination software into a blank Microsoft Word document and submitted electronically. Figures should be of clear quality, black and white, and numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals. Supply succinct and clear captions for all figures.
 - In the text of the paper the preferred position of all figures should be indicated by typing on a separate line the words "Place figure (No)".
 - *Tables* must be numbered consecutively with Arabic numerals and a brief title should be provided. In the text, typing on a separate line the words "Place Table (No)" should show the position of the table.
 - The maximum width for diagrams, line drawings and tables, should not exceed 104mm for portrait and 164mm for landscape (with a maximum depth of 104mm).
7. *References*:
 - References to other publications must be in modified Harvard style (see below) and checked for completeness, accuracy and consistency. Include all authors' names and initials and give any journal title in full.
 - You should cite publications in the text: (Adams, 1997) or (Mbatha et al., 2005). At the end of the paper a reference list in alphabetical order should be supplied using the following style. Do not use indentation when formatting your references.
 - If a direct quote is used in-text references should include name of author, date and page number. All other references should not include page numbers.

- Ensure that only references cited in the text are included in the final reference list at the end of the article. Please cross check that only references cited in the text are included in the final reference list and that references follow the format set out below.
- *Books:* Last name, Initials. (year). *Title of Book* Place of publication: Publisher.

Swanepoel, H. and De Beer, F. (1996). *Community Capacity Building* Johannesburg: Thomson Publishing.

- *For book chapters:* Last name, Initials. (year). "Chapter Title" in Editor's last name, Initials. (Ed.) *Title of Book* Place of publication: Publisher, Edition, pages

Boult, B.E. (1998). "Adoption" in Bezuidenhout, F.J. (Ed.). *A Reader in Selected Social Issues* Pretoria: van Schaik Publishers, Second Edition, 41-52.

- *For journals:* Last name, Initials. (year). "Title of Article" *Journal name* Volume(number):pages

Mda, C. J. (2004). "Population ageing and survival challenges in rural Ghana" *Journal of Social Development in Africa* 19(2):90-112.

- *For electronic sources:* If available online the full URL should be supplied at the end of the reference.

Louisiana State Board of Social Work Examiners. (1998). "Guidelines for Child Custody Evaluations", <http://www.labswe.org/child.htm> (Accessed on 23/08/2006).

8. *Content:*

- Manuscripts should contribute to knowledge development in social work, social welfare or related professions and the practice implications of the research should be spelled out. Sufficient and appropriate recent literature should be cited. Where the study is based on empirical research, the research design and methodology, results, discussion and conclusion should be addressed. All manuscripts should locate the issue within its social context and the conceptual and theoretical framework informing the study should be clearly outlined.
- The journal will consider articles based on research studies but we will not publish articles which are merely a summary of a research report. The article should have a clear focus that contributes to knowledge building or informs policy and/or practice.

Addendum 2: Focus group interview schedule

1. When you think of the Emo youth subculture what comes to mind?
2. What do you think made it necessary for the Emo's to form an Emo subculture?
 - a) What makes them different from other cultures?
 - b) What would make a boy join or not join the group?
- 3) How do you think an Emo boy view the world?
- 4) What do you like best and least about the Emo subculture?
- 5) Is there anything else you would like to add or say which I have not asked or covered?



UMnyango WezeMfundo
Department of Education

Lefapha la Thuto
Departement van Onderwys

Enquiries: Nomvula Ubisi (011)3550488

Date:	20 July 2010
Name of Researcher:	Strauss Eloise
Address of Researcher:	PO Box 72235
	Lynnwood Ridge
	Pretoria 0040
Telephone Number:	0827298331
Fax Number:	N.A.
Research Topic:	EXPLORING THE PHENOMENON OF THE EMO YOUTH SUBCULTURE AS PERCEIVED BY GRADE EIGHT ADOLESCENT BOYS: A GESTALT APPROACH
Number and type of schools:	One [1] secondary school
District/s/HO	Tshwane South

Re: Approval in Respect of Request to Conduct Research

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

Permission has been granted to proceed with the above study subject to the conditions listed below being met, and may be withdrawn should any of these conditions be flouted:

1. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s concerned must be presented with a copy of this letter that would indicate that the said researcher/s has/have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*
2. *The District/Head Office Senior Manager/s must be approached separately, and in writing, for permission to involve District/Head Office Officials in the project.*
3. *A copy of this letter must be forwarded to the school principal and the chairperson of the School Governing Body (SGB) that would indicate that the researcher/s have been granted permission from the Gauteng Department of Education to conduct the research study.*

Office of the Chief Director: Information and Knowledge Management
Room 501, 111 Commissioner Street, Johannesburg, 2000 P.O.Box 7710, Johannesburg, 2000
Tel: (011) 355-0809 Fax: (011) 355-0734

SCHOOL CONSENT TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

Title of the Research: Exploring the phenomenon of the Emo youth subculture as perceived by Grade eight adolescent boys: A Gestalt approach

Grade 8 boys, who experience the Emo youth subculture everyday in [REDACTED], are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Eloise Strauss MDiac (Play Therapy), from the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Studies at Huguenot College at UNISA. The results of this study will be in fulfilment of a MDiac in Play Therapy.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The research goal is to explore adolescent boys experiences of Emo youth subculture during their Grade 8 year. Participants' input will help to contribute to a broader and more realistic understanding of adolescent boys experience of Emo youth subculture.

2. PROCEDURES

The Grade 8 boys, who have volunteered to participate in this study, will be asked to participate in a focus group interview and to draw a picture of their Emo youth experience which will help enhance the researcher's understanding of grade 8 adolescent boys experiences of the Emo youth subculture. The fginterview and drawing of their picture will last about hour and a half. Participants will be asked to tell their story and draw a picture of how they experience the Emo youth subculture. All focus group interviews and drawing will be videotaped, transcribed, and all data will be stored in a safe place and will only be accessible to the researcher. In addition, feedback will be provided on request.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Participants will not be exposed to any unnecessary risk. The study will be using focus groups and their drawing to explore the participants' experiences of Emo youth subculture. This may cause some discomfort when sharing information, but it is each participant's choice what to share with the interviewer and the focus group participants. If a participant feels uncomfortable during the focus group interview because of emotional pain the interview will be stopped. Participants do not have to answer all of the questions and may choose to stop participating in the research at any time. The researcher will be available to address any queries, issues, concerns and provide participants with necessary support in the form of recommendations, information or referrals.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no immediate direct benefits expected from this research. However, by investigating adolescent experiences of Emo youth subculture, a more realistic understanding of grade 8 boys support preferences and needs can be discovered.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

The participants and [REDACTED] will not be paid for participating in this study neither will a payment be required to participate in this study.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with [REDACTED] will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with the school's permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of using pseudo names for each participant for the duration of the study to ensure that they are not identifiable. All data will be labelled with pseudo codes and stored in a locked filing cabinet or on the researchers PC that is protected by a password only known by the researcher. The researcher's supervisor will have access to the information and the university that the researcher is associated with, however no identities of the research participants will be revealed. fginterviews with the participants are to be video-taped, for reference purposes and will be destroyed once the research is complete. The participants have the right to review/edit the tapes.

The final research report, using pseudo names, will be published at Huguenot College

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

The selected grade 8 boys can choose whether to be in this study or not. If they choose to be part of this study, they may withdraw at any time without any consequences. They may also refuse to answer any questions and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw a participant from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Eloise Strauss (student) by telephone (0827298331) or email (eloise Strauss@yahoo.com), or Colleen Potgieter (study leader) by telephone (0823385900).

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

The selected grade 8 boys may withdraw their consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. They are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of their participation in this research study. If they have questions regarding their rights as a research participant, contact Dr Retha Bloem head at the Institute for Child, Youth and Family studies at Huguenot College on 021 864 1470/2 or 021 864 1480

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to [me / the subject/ the participant] by Eloise Strauss in English and [*I am/the subject is/the participant is*] in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to [*me/him/her*]. [*I/the participant/the subject*] was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to [*my/his/her*] satisfaction.

[*I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study/I hereby consent that the subject/participant may participate in this study.*] I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Subject/Participant

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the subject/participant*] and/or [his/her] representative _____ [*name of the representative*]. [*He/she*] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English and [*no translator was used/this conversation was translated into* _____ by _____].

Signature of Investigator

Date

PARENTAL CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of the Research: Exploring the phenomenon of the Emo youth subculture as perceived by Grade eight adolescent boys: A Gestalt approach

Grade 8 boys, who experience the Emo youth subculture everyday in [REDACTED], are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Eloise Strauss MDiac (Play Therapy), from the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Studies at Huguenot College at UNISA. The results of this study will be in fulfilment of a MDiac in Play Therapy.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The research goal is to explore adolescent boys experiences of Emo youth subculture during their Grade 8 year. Participants' input will help to contribute to a broader and more realistic understanding of adolescent boys experience of Emo youth subculture.

2. PROCEDURES

Your child has been selected to participate in this study and should he choose to participate, he would be asked to participate in a focus group and create a drawing which will help the researcher gain a broader and more realistic understanding of your child's experiences of the Emo youth subculture. The focus group will occur during an agreed upon time. The focus group and drawing will take an hour and a half to complete and will take place at Pretoria Boys High School, be videotaped with your child's permission, and transcribed. All data (information obtained from the interview) will be stored in a safe place and will only be accessible to the researcher. During the focus group your child will be asked to tell his story of how he experience Emo youth subculture. Feedback, if requested, will be provided to you and your child before the final report is published.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

Your child will not be exposed to any unnecessary risk if he participates. The study will be using focus group to explore your child's experience of the Emo youth subculture. This may cause your child to feel some discomfort when sharing information, but it will be your child's choice what he does and does not want to tell the interviewer and focus group participants. If your child feels uncomfortable during the interview because of emotional pain the interview will be stopped and the researcher will organize for your child to receive the necessary support. Your child does not have to answer all of the questions and he may choose to stop participating in the research at any time. The researcher will be available to address any queries, issues, concerns and provide your child with necessary support in the form of recommendations, information or referrals.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no immediate direct benefits expected from this research. However, by investigating adolescent experiences of Emo youth subculture, a more realistic understanding of grade 8 boys support preferences and needs, can be discovered. Your child will also be provided with the opportunity to be heard and understood.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

Your child will not be paid for participating in this study, nor will he have to pay anything to participate in the research.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you or your child will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with you and your child's permission or as required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained by means of using pseudo names for each participant to make sure that you and your child's identity is protected. All data will be labelled with pseudo codes and stored in a locked filing cabinet or on the researchers PC that is protected by a password only known by the researcher.

The researcher's supervisor will have access to the information and the university that the researcher is associated with, however no identities of the research participants will be revealed. Interviews with the participants are to be video-taped, for reference purposes and will be destroyed once the research is complete. The participants have the right to review/edit the tapes.

The final research report, using pseudo names, will be published at Huguenot College.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Your child can choose whether to be in this study or not. If he chooses to be part of this study, he may withdraw at any time without any consequences. Your child may also refuse to answer any questions and still remain in the study. The researcher may withdraw your child from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Eloise Strauss (student) by telephone (0827298331) or email (eloisestrauss@yahoo.com), or Colleen Potgieter (study leader) by telephone (0823385900).

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

Your child may withdraw his consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. Your child is not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of his/her participation in this research study. If your child has questions regarding his/her rights as a research participant, contact Dr Retha Bloem head at the Institute for Child, Youth and Family studies at Huguenot College on 021 864 1470/2 or 021 864 1480.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to [me / the subject/ the participant] by Eloise Strauss in English and [I am/the subject is/the participant is] in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to [me/him/her]. [I/the participant/the subject] was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to [my/his/her] satisfaction.

[I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study/I hereby consent that the subject/participant may participate in this study.] I have been given a copy of this form.

Name of Subject/Participant

Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the subject/participant*] and/or [*his/her*] representative _____ [*name of the representative*]. [He/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English and [*no translator was used/this conversation was translated into* _____ by _____].

Signature of Investigator

Date

CHILD CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of the Research: Exploring the phenomenon of the Emo youth subculture as perceived by Grade eight adolescent boys: A Gestalt approach

Grade 8 boys, who experience the Emo youth subculture everyday in [REDACTED], are asked to participate in a research study conducted by Eloise Strauss MDiac (Play Therapy), from the Institute for Child, Youth and Family Studies at Huguenot College at UNISA. The results of this study will be in fulfilment of a MDiac in Play Therapy.

1. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The research goal is to explore adolescent boys experiences of Emo youth subculture during their Grade 8 year. Participants' input will help to contribute to a broader and more realistic understanding of adolescent boys experience of Emo youth subculture.

2. PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to participate in a focus group and make a drawing of your experience regarding Emo Youth subculture that will help the researcher gain a better understanding of your experiences of using Emo youth subculture. The focus group and drawing will take place during an agreed upon time. The focus group and drawing will last about an hour and a half and will occur at Pretoria Boys High School, be videotaped with your permission and transcribed (written out). All data (information obtained from the interview) will be stored in a safe place and will only be available to the researcher. During the focus group you will be asked to share your perception of the Emo youth subculture. Feedback, if you want, will be provided to you before the final report is published.

3. POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

The study will be using focus groups to explore your experience of the Emo youth subculture. This may cause you to feel some discomfort when sharing information, but it will be your choice what you do and do not want to tell the interviewer and focus group participants. If you feel uncomfortable during the focus group interview because of emotional pain the interview will be stopped and you will be given the opportunity to get the support and help you need to deal with this pain. You do not have to answer all of the questions and you may choose to stop participating in the research at any time. The researcher will be available to address any queries, issues, concerns and provide you with necessary support in the form of recommendations, information or referrals.

4. POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

There are no immediate direct benefits expected from this research. However the focus group interview and drawings may help others to better understand the Emo youth subculture. It may also make professionals' aware of the potential needs and Grade 8 boys may have. It will give you an opportunity to be heard.

5. PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION

You will not be paid for your participation in this study, nor will you have to pay anything to participate in the research.

6. CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will only be revealed with your permission or as required by law. To keep your identity secret pseudo (fake) names will be used for each participant. All data will be labelled with pseudo codes and stored in a locked filing cabinet or on the researchers PC that is protected by a password only known by the researcher.

Focus group interviews with the participants are to be videotaped with your permission, for reference purposes and will be destroyed once the research is complete. The participants have the right to review/edit the tapes.

The researcher's supervisor and the university that the researcher is studying at will be able to view the information obtained from the study, however no names of the research participants will be revealed/made known.

The final research report, using pseudo names, will be published at Huguenot College.

7. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you do choose to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences. You also do not have to answer questions that you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. If at any stage you feel uncomfortable or change your mind about participating in the research, you may drop out of the study at any stage.

The researcher may remove you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant (demand) doing so.

8. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact Eloise Strauss by telephone (0827298331) or email (eloisestrauss@yahoo.com).

9. RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You can choose to stop participating at any stage of the research without penalty. You are not breaking any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, contact Dr Retha Bloem head at the Institute for Child, Youth and Family studies at Huguenot College on 021 864 1470/2 or 021 864 1480.

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[I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study/I hereby consent that the subject/participant may participate in this study.] I have been given a copy of this form.

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Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

Signature of Subject/Participant or Legal Representative

Date

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

I declare that I explained the information given in this document to _____ [*name of the subject/participant*] and/or [his/her] representative _____ [*name of the representative*]. [He/she] was encouraged and given ample time to ask me any questions. This conversation was conducted in English and [*no translator was used/this conversation was translated into* _____ by _____].

Signature of Investigator



Date

Focus Group 1 - 13 September - 7 Participants

Researcher		The first question I want to ask you and it's the same as the drawing, <u>when you think of Emo, or ja, the Emo youth subculture what comes to mind?</u> When you think of that... Do you want to start?
Experienced trauma stuck depressed	1/2 as reason for joining emo	Children who have or maybe I don't know older people, like something <u>in life has upset them</u> and like they <u>don't know how to come out of it</u> , <u>could be a death of a parent or broken home or a divorce and they don't understand and it upsets them so they're emo.</u>
R		OK. Alright. What do you think Elvis?
• emotional issue • suicidal	Elvis	I think, uhm, like they have <u>some emotional issue</u> , like 1/2 said, uhm, but, <u>they are suicidal.</u>
R		OK. Lethal?
• self harming • identification mark -> wearing black.	Lethal	Uhm, I just think that <u>guys cutting their wrists</u> , and then, like, <u>people wearing black and stuff.</u>
R		William do you agree?
• Have problem, they need help • Lack of family support	William	Uhm. Yes, but, uhm, no, I.., its just, maybe its <u>not their fault</u> because <u>their parents would see that they need help</u> , so they should <u>send them to get help</u> or something, like the local psychiatrist or something so its <u>also their parents' fault.</u>
R		OK... Shakespeare?
• Have a Problem • Emo as a way to solve it • stuck • Attention seeking /or • fashion statement • stereotyping	Shakespeare	I think that sometimes people, maybe they have a problem, but like when they were <u>in the problem</u> , the problem was going on, <u>they were all depressed</u> , they <u>took to being Emo as a way to solve it</u> , and now that they've solved the problem, they've <u>got so into it</u> , they just kind of <u>using it as an excuse</u> or like to <u>get attention</u> , or like, sometimes its just <u>people dress up and just does a fashion statement</u> , not just to be Emo if you dress in dark clothes, you know, <u>it could just be a fashion statement</u> , so it's kind of <u>stereotyping if you say that they, all people in dark clothes are Emo.</u>
	Elvis	I like wearing black.
	R	OK.
	Lethal	If you like black, you're Goth.
• negative • anti-social • Wearing dark clothes (identification mark)	S	No, but like, they're both, <u>Emo and Goth are both related</u> on the same, well, being <u>negative</u> , uhm, not <u>being anti-social</u> , and not like involving yourself with other people. They both <u>wear dark clothes</u> , like Goth people don't wear pretty, like blue colours.
	L	Goth is more of a fashion statement.
• identification mark • emotionally	R	So you're saying Goth is more a fashion statement? Am I right?
	L	Yeah, <u>Emo is more like emotionally..</u>
	1/2	Hence the name Emo.
• reject contact with society	R	So you would say Emo is emotionally distant, OK.
	1/2	Sometimes people, when its Goth or Emo, like, they're sick and tired of people, you know, talking to them, so they went black, so that <u>people can just stay away..</u>
• mental illness • dangerous	R	Avoid them?
	1/2	.. ja, avoid them, <u>woah, stay away from that kid, he's crazy, he'll kill</u>

Addendum 8:

Drawings

<p><u>Shakespeare!</u></p> 	<p>The pentagram in a way because it can become evil. The anarchy because they call it a religion but it's not and the two faces with the hair as it may be a fashion statement and the hand because people sometimes slit their wrists (fg1p1)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • evil • attention seeking • self-harming
<p><u>William</u></p> 	<p>This drawing is implicating that the Emo thinks that he is cool because he smoke and wears black clothing (fg1p2)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attention seeking • need to be accepted by peer group

PRE-INTERVIEW SURVEY

Please read through and complete this even if you do not want to participate. It will only take between 5 minutes to complete.

Dear Grade 8 learners,

I am Eloise and I am also a student. I study at Huguenot College and I need your help to complete my masters. This survey has been designed to help me select some of you to participate in my study which is titled "Exploring the phenomenon of the Emo youth subculture as perceived by Grade eight adolescent boys: A Gestalt approach". The aim of my study is to explore and describe your views of the Emo subculture. This includes your positive and negative experiences of boys that are part of the Emo subculture, and your opinion of Emo subcultures impact on boys that join the group. I wish to understand the Emo youth subculture and why boys join the subculture.

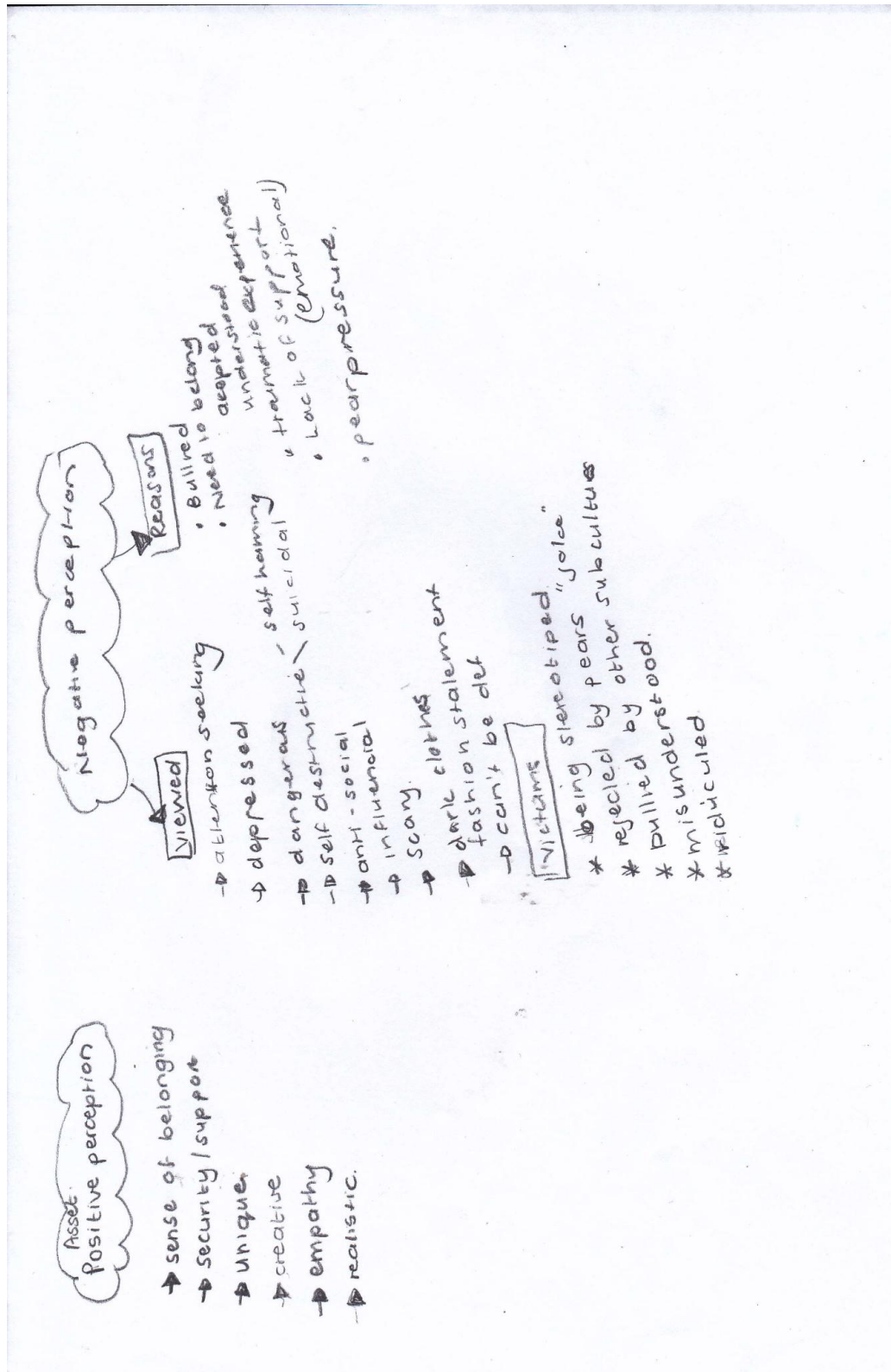
If you choose to participate you will be asked to take part in a focus group of six to nine participants and draw a picture of what you think represents the Emo youth subculture. The drawings will occur before the focus groups and during an agreed upon time in the afternoon. The focus group will last about 1 hour, take place at Pretoria boys High School, and be videotaped with your permission and transcribed (written out). All the participants will be asked to sign a form to commit to confidentiality within the group. All data (information obtained from the drawings and focus groups) will be stored in a safe place and will only be available to the researcher. During the focus group you will be asked to give your views and options regarding the Emo youth subculture. Feedback, if you want, will be provided to you before the final report is published. You can choose whether you would like to participate in this study and you may choose to stop participating at any stage. Please note that the details you give below will remain confidential (private) and are only needed in the beginning stages so that I can contact you if you choose to participate. Pseudo (fake) names will be used throughout the rest of the process so that no one will be able to identify you.

SURNAME	
FIRST NAME	
TEL NO (H)	(CELL)
EMAIL	
CLASS & TEACHER'S NAME	
Please complete the following questions by ticking the relevant answers. Answer the questions on your own and please be as honest as possible. Remember there are no right or wrong answers.	

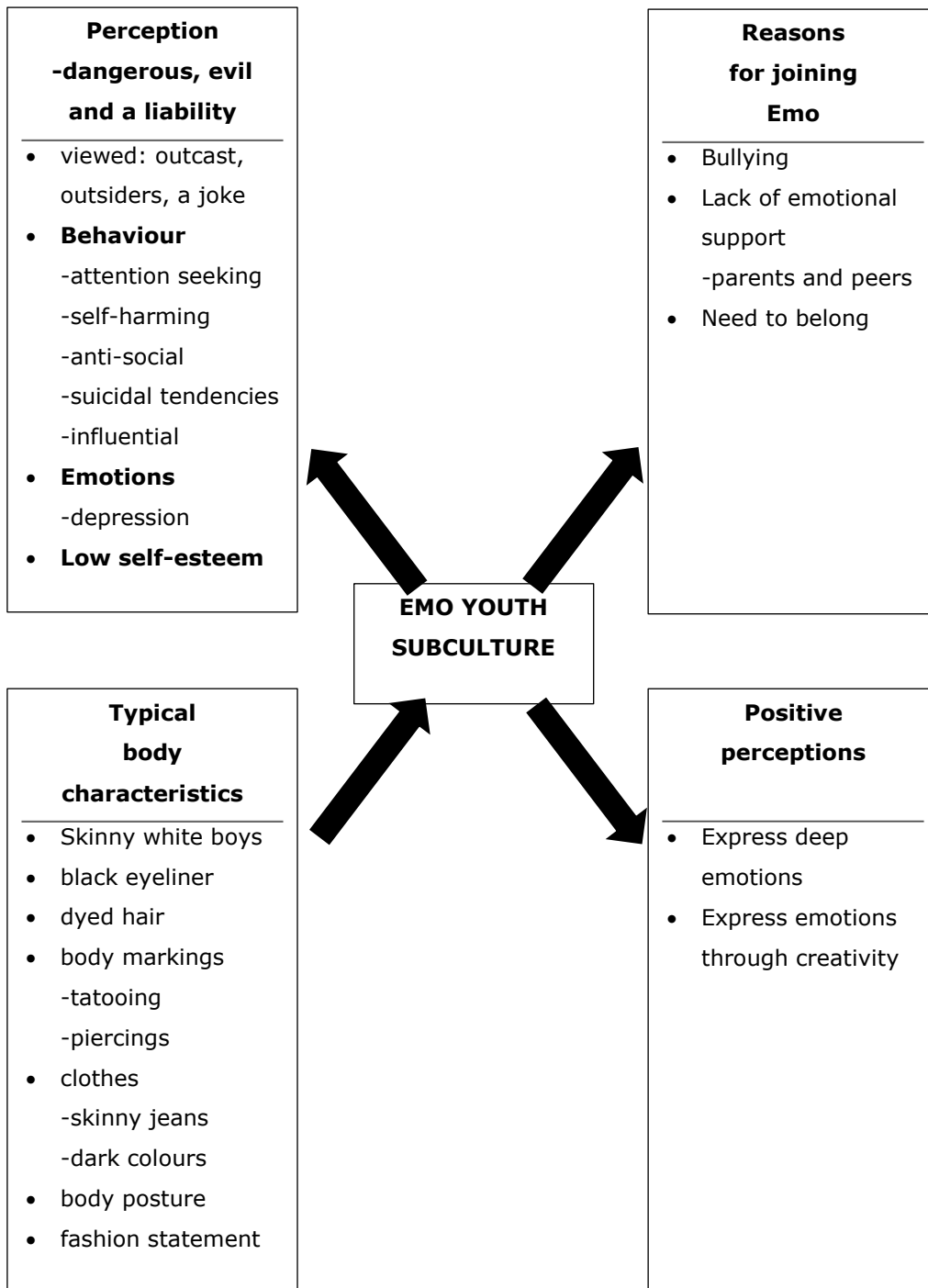
1. Do you know what Emo is?
2. Do you know someone that is involved in the Emo subculture?
3. Would you be willing to take part in this research project?

Yes	No
Yes	No
Yes	No

THANK YOU!



Addendum 11: Searching for initial themes



Addendum 12: Final thematic map with three main themes

