

Thesis title:

***The role of social capital in negotiating socio-economic  
needs.***



By

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**Submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the Degree of**

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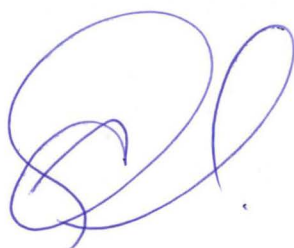
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**Dedication:**

This thesis is dedicated to my family, and also to those educators who have encouraged and enabled me to produce this thesis.

Thank you

## **Abstract:**

This study is an investigation which focuses on the existing body of literature covering the construct of social capital and fundamental human need theories, particularly the need to understand and find meaning. It examines these in relationship to learning, culture and activity theory. The study is a preliminary investigation with limited scope. The thesis establishes an explanatory analysis and accompanying conceptual framework to be tested by further research. A proposed methodology for data collection and analysis is included.

The thesis takes a humanistic approach and proposes that fundamental human need satisfaction is foundational to human well-being and growth within people's varied lifeworlds. The study reveals that human interactions and value systems connect the concepts of social capital, fundamental human need and culture in the form of activities surrounding fundamental human need satisfaction. Regarding the construct of social capital and its elements of shared values, trust, norms, reciprocity and networks, the structural, relational and cognitive dimensions of social capital are proposed and examined.

This thesis suggests that the elements of the social capital construct work together to facilitate human interactions aimed at satisfying fundamental human needs across different socio-cultural systems. It places particular emphasis on the learning process required to negotiate the range of socio-economic need satisfactions across different cultures. The study also discusses theories surrounding communitarian psychology as a precursor to the introduction of activity theory. Activity theory in this thesis is explained as a learning model emphasising human activity aimed at the satisfaction of fundamental

human needs. This thesis further develops the activity theory model to demonstrate the role social capital plays as a resource. A resource, which when accessed, acts as a mediator of human interaction aimed at enabling the satisfaction of fundamental human needs. This model directly links human values to human activity and stresses the link between human values, human action, and the satisfaction of fundamental human needs. The model demonstrates how human values have a direct effect on how a person perceives need-satisfying activities and what resources can be accessed and used in any activity.

This thesis's explanatory analysis and associated conceptual framework give rise to a set of propositions, questions and hypotheses. The thesis underpins and justifies the significance of, and need for, a future cross-cultural study for which a methodology is proposed. This proposed future study places at its centre the importance of human values as a pivotal point around which social capital is generated and maintained.

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This thesis establishes an explanatory analysis and associated conceptual framework which, it is proposed, will be tested through subsequent research. The focus of this thesis is to address and analyse the research problem:

*Do the elements of the social capital construct mediate the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, particularly the human need to understand and find meaning, and if so, why and how?*

The thesis sets out to achieve this objective by undertaking a preliminary study that tests in theoretical form the hypothesis linked to the research problem:

*The elements highlighted by the social capital construct have come into existence, in a co-evolutionary sense, so as to mediate the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, and take on differing forms across diverse cultures.*

Out of this dissertation arises a further research problem that it is proposed to test in a subsequent study. This thesis includes a proposed methodology for subsequent testing.

The thesis explores possible relationships between fundamental human need (see explanations of fundamental human need in section 2.3) satisfaction (eg.: Max-Neef 1986, 1989, 1991, 1992; Thomson 1987; Doyal and Gough 1991), particularly the need to understand, find meaning and the associated activity of learning (eg.: Habermas 1971, 1976, 1984; Freire 1972; Mezirow 1978, 1985, 1991, 1994; Daloz 1986), and the

elements of the social capital construct (eg.: Bourdieu 1986, 1998; Coleman 1988, 1990, 1993a; Putnam 1993a, 1993b, 1995, 1998). The elements of the social capital construct are proposed by this thesis to act as mediators of fundamental human need (FHN) satisfaction within differing socio-cultural contexts in which need satisfaction and activity are embedded. This study takes the view that FHN satisfaction, social capital mediation, and cultural expression, when seen from a cognitive perspective, may be linked through connectivity between people's values systems as they collectively go about satisfying their everyday needs.

The primary focus of the conceptual framework and explanatory analysis is on FHNs, as seen from a humanistic point of view, and the role played by values in the social capital construct in its links to FHN satisfaction. So as to better understand each of the elements of the research problem and hypothesis of this thesis other essential features of human activity systems are considered (Leont'ev 1978; Vygotsky 1978; Luria and Vygotsky 1992; Engeström 1999a, 1999b, 1999c) as set out in Engeström's development of the Vygotskyian activity theory model (Engeström 1999a). Among these other essential features are the elements of the cultural community in which the need-satisfaction activity takes place. It should also be remembered that each person's culture and identity are formed out of historically and collectively derived shared values, norms, laws, standards and policy frameworks, and also on ways of acting in the form of perceptions of the division of labor. The development of the conceptual framework of this thesis takes into account these different perceptions of the different actors or sets of actors who, in some way, influence need-satisfying activities. It is the internal tensions and contradictions of such a system, as stressed by Engeström (1999a), that form part of the motivating force behind change and development in any community and its

associated human need-satisfying activities at all levels of social interaction – micro, meso or macro.

The thesis provides insights about the nature of human need and the mediating role of the elements of social capital in their satisfaction. The theoretical stance of the thesis assumes that both individualistic and collectivistic cultural frameworks are reliable forms of understanding cultural variability within societies as well as across different societies. It is for those reasons that the thesis takes a cross-cultural perspective (eg.: Hall 1976; Hofstede 1981, 1991, 1994, 1998; Triandis 1989, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1999, Gudykunst 1994).

It should be stated at the outset that it is not the aim of this study to employ generalisations in understanding the experiences of people intended to be the subjects of this research report or future proposed research. Nor does it aim to promote a way of thinking that endorses a polarised perspective of collectivistic and individualistic experiences of the subjects, although it is tempting to operate at the poles and to seek generalisations. It is important to recognise that individualism and collectivism should not be viewed as opposites at polar ends of a scale. Rather individualistic and collectivistic tendencies do, according to Gudykunst (1994: 47) “... exist in all cultures and all individuals, but one tends to predominate”, and Triandis (1989: 43) “just as ice and water can coexist, so can individualism and collectivism”.

## **1.1 Reasons for and purpose of the research**

There has been some research focused on the broad aspects of societal levels of social capital theory (macro level), both in terms of its workings and quality particularly in terms of economic activity (eg.: Bourdieu 1986; Putnam 1993, 1995, 1998 and

Woolcock 1998). There appears to be a gap in knowledge concerning the generation and maintenance of social capital at the organisational and community level (meso level) and individual interactions level (micro level) (Falk and Kilpatrick 2000; Kilpatrick 1999). The reasons why social capital might exist, and how it is generated and maintained within a social system, are not made clear in current research writings. One of the prime sources of recent research on social capital, Robert Putnam, has this observation to make concerning the lack of understanding of the workings of social capital at a micro level:

*... we know precious little about how social capital works at a micro-level: what is it about networks of trust and reciprocity that enhance school achievement, make neighbourhood redevelopment stick, or make citizens more resistant to illness (Putnam 1998: vi).*

The study and its planned future research is an attempt to bridge this gap in knowledge.

The study is a preliminary investigation with limited scope. It is intended to act as a springboard to inform a more comprehensive research project in the future. The investigation primarily focuses on the existing body of literature covering the construct of social capital and FHN theories, particularly the need to understand and find meaning, and their relationships to learning, culture and activity theory. A conceptual framework is then established with an accompanying explanatory analysis. Finally the results of this study and its implications for further study are presented with a proposed methodology for data collection and analysis.

The study has grown out of the lifeworld of the author primarily over the last ten years, during which time he has been involved in grassroots community building projects, including adult learning programs in Australia and in Africa. The author has worked at

all levels of community development activities on both continents. It became obvious to the author that when fundamental human needs were being met in a wholistic manner, not only was individual well-being improving, but family and community stability and well-being (cohesion) was also being enhanced. The author noted that fundamental human needs satisfying activities were most often at the heart of large and small group-building practices, and that there were possible links in this to the way social capital was built and used. This view was reinforced through further studies in adult and community/workplace education over the last number of years. Strauss and Corbin argue that personal and professional experience is a valid springboard from which researcher's questions may be derived (Strauss and Corbin 1990: 35-36).

Social capital and its links to FHN satisfaction, particularly the need to understand and learn, could be argued to be of importance in comprehending the factors which affect the overall creation and maintenance of cohesive communities both in Australia as well as elsewhere in the world. Increasingly Australians are conjecturing that some of Australia's global market-related industrially affluent and consumer orientated approaches are in some ways destructive of human well-being and are, at times, morally unsatisfactory and ecologically unsustainable. Many indicators are showing a reduction in the quality of life, especially for people within regional and rural Australia, due to some of these factors.

Therefore further research is necessary to identify and allow us to understand the actions and behaviours of people at a micro/meso level that contribute to the growth or maintenance of social capital, and particularly in a learning environment. Such research would focus on:

- Actions and behaviours that contribute to the development of well-being as counter to those actions and behaviours which diminish the quality of human life.
- Actions and behaviours that create and reinforce mutually defined norms, values, and trust, binding people together and contributing to shared well being within a community, organisation or group, not forgetting the importance of actions and behaviours which link and bridge to other communities, organisations and groups.
- How people through interaction satisfy different fundamental human needs within their own cultural contexts, particularly the need to understand and find meaning..

## **1.2 Outline of this report**

This thesis is structured in the following way:

*Chapter One* has introduced the nature of the study, provided a summary of the aims of the thesis and explained its contents.

*Chapter Two* reviews the literature pertaining to social capital and fundamental human needs theory, and their links to learning and cognition. It also investigates literature based around the concept of culture, particularly culture as a system of values. The review reflects on literature surrounding learning and cognition as part of culture. Attention is given to the conceptualisation of culture using a specific dimension of sociocultural variability, in this case, the individualistic/ collectivistic dimension. The review within these contexts then turns to the wholistic (holistic) meeting of human needs within a learning environment and particularly in relation to human activity in the

form of activity theory. The purpose of this chapter is to provide a foundation on which to build a conceptual framework and resultant explanatory analysis, which is the focus of the next chapter.

*Chapter Three* integrates the concepts and theories presented in the literature review by applying the principles they espouse to the research problem and hypothesis. It focuses on the commonality of values which exist across the concepts of: fundamental human needs and their satisfaction, particularly the need to understand and find meaning through the activity of learning; social capital and its elements and human interaction in terms of culture. The chapter sets up the framework from which a set of statements, hypotheses, propositions, and questions is proposed. This set of statements, hypotheses, propositions and questions is the focus of chapter four.

*Chapter Four* draws this thesis to a close by answering the research question and accompanying hypothesis, with reference to the synthesised literature analysis, the conceptual framework, and explanatory analysis. It states the synthesised outcomes and implications of the study. The chapter proposes a further set of statements, hypotheses, propositions, and questions. In anticipation of further research stemming from this study, the chapter includes the justification and outline of a proposed methodology for subsequent research.

### **1.3 A limitation of this study**

It is difficult to capture the complexities of intercultural research. This is particularly true of research into cross-cultural understandings of such issues as the satisfaction of FHN and the need to understand and find meaning linked to the social capital construct and the activity of learning. This point is made in the literature review chapter.

Intercultural research is informed by many different and varying factors, and therefore presents at first sight what appears to be an overwhelmingly complex area to research. This qualitative study focuses on the importance of context and nuance, as opposed to quantitative research that seeks precision through empirical justifications. In a bid to make sense out of this complexity, the conceptual framework and explanatory analysis of this study is of great importance and acts as the basis of a proposal for further study.

## **1.4 Summary**

This chapter introduced the research problem and its associated hypothesis. It described the aims and goals of this research project, and put forward the reasons behind and purpose of this research. Each of the subsequent chapter's contents was outlined and some of the limitations of cross-cultural research were discussed. The next chapter introduces the literature review, which acts as the spring board from which the balance of this report is constructed.



**2.1 Introduction**

Chapter One introduced the research problem and hypothesis and provided an overview of the value and orientation of this study. The literature review contributes to the thesis by exploring current theoretical understandings surrounding fundamental human need (FHN) and the role played by social capital as a construct in attempting to come to further understandings of human activity aimed at satisfying FHNs. It sets out to inform a framework, set within a dynamic system of social interaction and activity, in which wholistic FHN satisfaction, culture and social capital can all be seen to play interconnected and possibly pivotal parts in attempting to satisfy the FHN to understand and find meaning through associated activities of learning.

This chapter provides an explanation of the nature of human need and the mediating role of the elements of social capital in its satisfaction. The review takes a cross-cultural perspective, focusing on both individualistic and collectivistic cultural value frameworks. The review also sets out to assist in the establishment of a theoretical basis for an understanding of why the elements of social capital may have come to exist in co-evolutionary terms with FHN; and links the use of the social capital elements, in satisfying FHNs, to human value systems.

As a consequence, this literature review attempts to justify the significance of and need for a future cross-cultural study that places at its centre the role of human values, in association with the mediating role of the elements of the social capital construct, in activities aimed at the satisfaction of FHNs. The review stresses the significance of the

above concepts each casts light on understandings on why and how humans go about satisfying their full gamut of fundamental human needs, including the need to understand and find meaning.

This literature review therefore explores the relationship between FHN and the social capital construct and its elements, so as to address the research problem: *Do the elements of the social capital construct mediate the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, particularly the human need to understand and find meaning, and if so, why and how?* It sets out and focuses on certain concepts and theories with the intention of casting light on understandings surrounding the hypothesis: *The elements highlighted by the social capital construct have come into existence, in a co-evolutionary sense, so as to mediate the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, and take on differing forms across diverse cultures.*

There are six sections the chapter. Following the introduction, section two reviews the theoretical concept of social capital (eg.: Bourdieu 1986, 1998; Coleman 1988, 1990, 1993a; Putnam 1993a 1993b, 1995, 1998), and, in particular, the role played by human values in the construct. The third section lays down a non-relativistic and humanistic assumption that the satisfaction of fundamental human needs is foundational to the wholistic development of human well-being and potentiality throughout the life of all human beings. This section of the review focuses on a number of theorists (eg: Max-Neef 1986, 1989, 1991, 1992; Thomson 1987; Doyal and Gough 1991), and in particular on the theories of Max-Neef. Max-Neef's (1991: 197–213) theories are presented as a working model and framework for understanding the concept of FHN and its satisfaction within a socio-cultural context. Section four develops the argument further by placing

activities surrounding human need satisfaction within the context of everyday social activity, and particularly within the construct of culture as an individualistic/collectivistic value paradigm. Section five then discusses the FHN to understand, find meaning, and the activity of learning (eg.: Habermas 1971, 1976, 1984; Freire 1972; Mezirow 1978, 1985, 1991, 1994; Daloz 1986). This major section links activities of learning across cultures to particular cultural value systems with their particular socio-cultural understandings and meaning base, as presented within individualistic/ collectivistic socio-cultural value frameworks (eg.: Hofstede 1981, 1991, 1994, 1998; Triandis 1989, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1999, Gudykunst 1994). The section also places these understandings within a theoretical framework surrounding theories of cognitive tension, and the motivation to act (eg.: Festinger 1957; Weiner 1972; Atkinson and Raynor 1978; Bundura 1995, 1997), including theories concerning the evolution and formation of consciousness and intelligence (eg: Habermas 1971; Humphrey 1992; Axel 1997; Boucouvalas 1997; Bakhurst 1997; Mithen 1996. Each of these theories is proposed as having an effect on the satisfaction of the fundamental need to understand, find meaning, and the activity of learning. Section six puts forward the concept of activity theory (eg: Leont'ev 1978; Vygotsky 1978; Luria and Vygotsky 1992; Engeström 1999a, 1999b, 1999c) as a theory for understanding the elements and outcomes of human activity, interaction and development in terms of people's need-satisfying actions, particularly in a cultural-historical context. Finally section seven draws together the main points of this chapter.

## **2.2 The concept of social capital**

The concept of the social capital is not new. Theories surrounding and connected with the notion have existed within and across disciplines in one form or another for a

number of years, for example Loury (1977), Bourdieu (1986), Coleman (1988), and Putnam (1993a). It is only over the later part of the 1990's that social and educational researchers have made an attempt to develop understandings of the concept. This interest is primarily due to the growing attention being given to the theory by Western governments and their global financial controlling structures such as the World Bank for economic reasons (eg. Woolcock 1998; Narayan 1999).

The primary focus of this new interest stems from recent research findings that lead to understanding possible links between levels of particular forms of human interaction within a society, to that of economic development in that society. Research points to certain types of human interaction as being directly related to what is termed social capital and its interrelated elements, in different societies (for an example see Putman's explanation quoted later in this section).

Consequently, governments of the so-called 'developed' nations, including Australia, are bringing more and more resources to bear on researching and financially supporting the growth of the elements of social capital, such as trust, co-operation in terms of voluntarism, and networking, mostly with economic ends in mind. An example of this growing economic interest can be seen in the following extract taken from a recent Canberra newspaper report:

*The government [ACT] will spend [A]\$15 million over four years to develop its new social capital program. ... Championed by Britain's Prime Minister Tony Blair and the ALP's Mark Latham, the Third Way stresses the key role that social capital (greater co-operation and trust in society) has in enabling an economy to prosper globally (Jackson and Wright 2000).*

This thesis does not take such a view of the value of the social capital construct and its elements. Social capital and its elements are embedded in all forms of human interaction, which take place within the different and varied cultures and societies of the world, not only in economic interactions. This is an approach supported by Flora, Sharp, Flora and Newlon's (1997: 637) research which "suggest[s] that economic development is not something that happens as an isolated community activity but is part of the larger community fabric—is indeed embedded in community norms and relationships". This thesis attempts to take a similar broader explanatory stance by discussing and researching social capital not just in an economic sense, but also from the perspective of social capital's possible wider explanatory role as a mediator of the satisfaction of the range of evolving fundamental human needs through resource-sharing transactions. Mediation of social capital, as used in this context, should be seen as a means of regulating and smoothing human interactions aimed at satisfying the full range of human needs.

Much of the research on social capital has focused on explaining, identifying, describing and analysing the structural and relational aspects of the concept at meso and macro levels in Western like societies. Very few research projects have been aimed at the micro level (Putnam 1998: vi) or at the so-called 'underdeveloped' countries where the great majority of people are born, live and die. This situation has been partially addressed over the last few years through efforts of the World Bank in commissioning a number of well-structured research projects addressing some aspects of this issue, but primarily for economic reasons. The conceptual framework of social capital from one of these research projects (Ktishnamurthy 1999) is a good starting point in addressing the

questions: Just what is social capital? What are its elements? How do these elements interact and support each other?

According to Ktishnamurthy (1999: 1) social capital "... can be examined from [both] a structural perspective and a cognitive perspective". The *structural perspective*, Ktishnamurthy (1999: 1) elaborates, "... makes it possible to look at social capital in visible and tangible forms such as events, relationships, networks and associations". These have two dimensions as they take place in a horizontal and vertical sense: horizontally between those individuals and groups who would consider themselves to be equals or near equals, and vertically between people and groups who have unequal power and/or access to resources. This sense of the horizontal and vertical in relationships is picked up later in this review in the discussion on culture and its relation to values. The *cognitive perspective* views the possible reasons why social capital might exist. Ktishnamurthy (1999: 1) calls this the "driving force" of social capital. This perspective "... refer[s] to the values, perceptions and intentions that underlie the structural aspects of social capital". These reasons may be both positively and negatively intertwined, and are therefore of great importance when it comes to understanding the role of social capital in a mediating sense, chiefly the mediation of the satisfaction of FHNs. The word mediation is used here to explain how human beings use diverse forms of material objects, such as the different forms of capital: economic, human, intellectual etc., as mediating artifacts to modify and regulate their interactions with the material world and each other. These are products of human interaction and consciousness (see section 2.6 for a more detailed explanation).

There is a variety of elements which make up some of the most prevalent present day collective understandings of the concept of social capital, linking into and expanding on the elements of Ktishnamurthy's (1999) definition. Putnam's (1993a) book *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*, is one of the most often quoted pieces of research on social capital and, together with his publication of *Bowling alone: America's declining social capital* (1995), has generated much controversy concerning the concept. Controversy, for instance, centred on "whether social capital is really capital, whether it should be widely or narrowly defined, and whether it can be constructed or is an endowment" (Narayan 1999: 6). In his 1993 research Putnam states that social capital refers to:

*... features of social organization, such as networks, norms and trust, that facilitate coordination and co-operation for mutual benefit. Social capital enhances the benefits of investment in physical and human capital (1993a: 1).*

He uses his research to explain the differences in economic and government performance between Northern and Southern Italy. His research stresses the relationship between interpersonal trust, norms of civic co-operation, policy, and economic performance. Putnam follows Granovetter's (1973) lead in pointing out the importance of weak ties across kinship groups in the above relationships as a possible reason for economic success or failure. As a measure of social capital, Putnam uses the relationship between associational activity and economic growth to support his thesis.

Writing before Putnam, from an educational and sociological perspective, Coleman (1988) argues that the concepts of financial and human capital are limited in explaining human action and interaction. He argues that to these concepts should be added that of

social capital, as each person's actions are shaped by the social context in which their actions take place. According to Coleman (1988; 1990), social capital can be distinguished chiefly in its causes and consequences from human capital.

*As an attribute of the social structure in which a person is embedded, social capital is not the private property of any of the persons who benefit from it (1990: 46).*

Coleman (1990) argues that human capital is a quality of individuals, and while human capital refers to individual ability, social capital refers to possible opportunities available to exercise the use of an individual's human capital in conjunction with others. It is a quality created between people and exists only when it is shared in some way.

'Investments' that create social capital can therefore be seen to be different in fundamental ways from the investments that create human capital, according to Coleman (1990), but can also be said to be intimately connected, as levels of social capital can have a positive or negative effect on the development or utilisation of human capital and financial capital. This premise is also supported by Bourdieu (1986).

Both Coleman (1988) and Bourdieu (1986) locate social capital primarily in families and small communities. Bourdieu (1986) sees it as a resource made available to families and communities so as to ensure that the next generation will keep pace with the family's or community's proper social position; a resource connected to cultural transmission through a system of values being passed on from one generation to the next. For Bourdieu, social capital is a major factor in explaining the reproduction of 'bourgeois' French society, warts and all. Bourdieu (1998) writes of social capital in today's world as the last barrier against, and the source of resistance to, the complete domination of the values of neo-liberalism, with its individualised cultural emphasis at the expense of



anything that might constitute a collective or social project. Bourdieu's argument has implications for understanding the diminishment of social capital in many individualistically-oriented societies.

Portes and Sensenbrenner's (1993) definition of social capital supports and develops both Coleman's and Bourdieu's concepts of social capital as being structurally and interpersonally embedded at a meso and micro level of society. They define social capital as:

*those expectations for action within a collectivity that affect the economic goals and goal-seeking behaviour of its members, even if those expectations are not oriented toward the economic sphere (1993: 1323).*

This way of understanding the concept of social capital, and its *embeddedness* at the micro and meso levels, is supported by Flora, Sharp, Flora and Newlon's (1997) research on economically successful rural communities in the USA. Woolcock (1998) takes this a step further, and links the micro, meso and the macro firmly together in terms of social capital. By using the terms *embeddedness* and *autonomy* he links all the levels. He stresses that at a micro and meso level embeddedness is about how the local community, through their day-to-day activities, go about strengthening ties within the local community—this has a shared values and cultural emphasis encouraging bonding to take place. Linked to this theory is the concept that these local communities also have an element of autonomy in how they connect to form networks outside of the bonded group. Here the terms embeddedness and autonomy take on a descriptive role in terms of state-society relations and institutional capacity and credibility. According to Narayan (1999: 12): “The important contribution of Woolcock's framework is its emphasis on

linkages outside the community, and linkages between communities and the state”.

Gittel and Vidal (1998) support this argument and emphasise the significance of cooperation and collaboration between communities and government agencies. They argue the importance of strong horizontal relationships within communities in identifying community problems, and the vertical relationships to government agencies in designing meaningful interventions.

These concepts are in accordance with Ktishnamurthy’s (1999) horizontal and vertical elements of the structural perspective of social capital, or in Narayan’s (1999) terms, bonding and bridging social capital. They are essential concepts for understanding the role of social capital’s importance across any society at a structural level. But still, according to Engeström (1999a: 30), it should not be forgotten that:

*The fundamental societal relations and contradictions of the given socio-economic formation—and thus the potential for qualitative change—are present in each and every local activity of that society.*

He goes on to point out that “the mightiest, most impersonal societal structures can be seen as consisting of local activities carried out by concrete human beings” (1999a: 30). No matter where those activities take place, whether in high political offices and corporate boardrooms instead of factory floors and street-corners, they are still activities centred on and around human interactions. It is here that the building blocks of social capital are centred, in local human activity. Building blocks such as shared values, norms, trust, and reciprocity all are essential to the growth of human potential

Coleman (1990), like Putnam, refers to the importance of the trust and norms embedded in civic-minded activities in understanding the social capital concept. He writes that

“authority relations, relations of trust, and consensual allocations of rights that establish norms” (1990: 300–301) can be viewed as resources for individuals, noting that Loury (1977) introduced the term *social capital* to describe these resources at an individual level. Flora, Sharp, Flora and Newlon (1997: 624) also make this same point, and cite Coleman (1993b) as arguing that informal norms, which are related to aspects of social capital, are dependent on close relationships that have evolved over time, and is about individuals interacting and co-operating with other individuals. This is similar to Engeström’s (1999b) concept of a local activity system (see section 2.6).

Therefore it can be said that, “social capital thrives when individuals within a social system interact with one another in multiple roles over a period of time” (Flora, Sharp, Flora and Newlon 1997: 624). It is within this time-related interaction that trust builds up and becomes a norm, available to all interacting or being allowed to act within the system or *in-group* (Bourdieu 1986). This then reduces the costs of interpersonal transactions and allows for reciprocated actions. Trust is also the theme of Fukuyama’s work (1995), in which he asserts its importance in making social capital work as an integral part of transactions taking place over whole societies and cultures. The element of trust is further developed later in this section. Bourdieu (1986) makes the assertion that the above embeddedness of trust and the possible time-related qualities of social capital, as part of interactivity of the in-group, can be problematic. Bourdieu (1986) believes this happens when social capital is used to maintain a group’s privileges, by maintaining intergenerational access to resources through the transfer of social and cultural capital to their children, and this may reduce the efficiency of other types of capital in the wider society. Narayan (1999:3) supports and expands this view stating that:

*because of the inherent power asymmetry between social groups, social capital leads to negative as well as positive outcomes, ranging from social exclusion, corruption, and co-option of the state to conflict and violence.*

Like Bourdieu (1986), a number of writers have postulated that social capital contains sets of resources embedded in relationships (Loury 1977; Burt 1992; Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1997; Falk and Harrison 1998). Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) have developed a comprehensive resource-based embedded concept of social capital. They propose that social capital contains sets of knowledge and identity resources which reside in individuals and communities, and that these resources are activated and shared through social interaction.

*Knowledge resources*, as defined by Falk and Kilpatrick (2000: 99), are “where interactions draw on the resource of common understandings related to knowledge of people, places, ideas and relationships”. These knowledge resources, argue Falk and Kilpatrick (2000: 99), are accessed not only internally with local communities of interaction, but also externally from those communities to which individuals have weak ties.

*Identity resources* are accessed “where interactions draw on internal and external resources of common understandings related to personal, individual and collective identities, values, beliefs and visions” (Falk and Kilpatrick 2000: 100). Identity resources, according to the Falk and Kilpatrick (2000), build a sense of ‘belonging’ and encourage participation, as well as providing the framework for people to re-orient their views of self and others in order to be ‘willing to act’ in new ways.

Falk and Kilpatrick (2000) argue that these resources are open to change over time as social capital is accessed dynamically through social interaction. This has the potential to affect the *lifeworld* (see Habermas section 2.5.1) understanding of people acting within a given social system; for example, their relationships, values, beliefs, attitudes, skills, and identities are all open to be changed or challenged over time.

The discussion to this point suggests that the concept of social capital is not a simple one, but is rather complex, made up of a manifold web of interconnected elements all acting in a complex cause and effect manner within a particular social context. A web of complexity, in Nahapiet and Ghoshal's (1997: 36) words, "... affecting social ties, trusting relationships and value systems that facilitate actions of individuals located within that [social] context". Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1997), similarly to Ktishnamurthy (1999), argue that these aspects of social capital can be seen in the context of three dimensions: the structural, the relational, and the cognitive.

The *structural dimension*, according to Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1997), includes social interaction, where individuals of a particular system using social capital have certain opportunities open to them through and due to their network of contacts both in and out of the system. These opportunities, embedded in systems of interaction, enable individuals to gain information, access needed resources and get work (Bourdieu 1986; Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1997). Narayan's (1999: 6) definition of social capital underwrites this embeddedness when she defines social capital in a structural sense "as the norms and social relations embedded in the social structures of society that enable people to co-ordinate action and to achieve desired goals". Flora, Sharp, Flora and Newlon's research (1997) supports the importance of this embeddedness of social capital.

The *relational dimension* (Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1997) refers to the embedded nature of some elements of the social capital construct such as embedded trust and reciprocity. This embeddedness means that if a person is considered to be part of a social capital using social system then they will be considered to be trustworthy. These elements act as control mechanisms within a particular social capital-using web of human interaction. Embedded trust, for instance, allows for the achievement of mutual goals with little thought of mistrust, thereby speeding up and smoothing out transaction completion between individuals and groups (Fukuyama 1995). These trusting relationships evolve out of successful social interactions over time, according to Gabarro (1978), Gulati (1995), and Granovetter (1985), all cited in Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998).

Faith in some societies can also be seen as being embedded in this way, and is another element that can be placed into this relational dimension. Shared faith, in the in-group sense, can also act in a similar fashion to trust embedded in relationships, but while this may be true of some societies, Seligman (1997: 45) argues that:

*while both faith and trust share the attribute of unconditionality,  
the object of this unconditional belief is very different in each  
case: in the one, God; in the other, man ...*

Seligman (1997: 45) emphasises that “it is precisely in relation to this “otherness” of the human other, rather than a transcendent entity, that trust differentiates itself from faith.” He also argues that over time in the West, and in other societies affected by secularisation, faith has been replaced with trust “or rather, the search for faith with the search for trust”. A new form of relationship between persons has emerged, involving trust unmediated by the third party, God (Seligman 1997: 49). He goes on to put a further spin on the concept of trust when he argues that trust, as opposed to faith, is

something that enters into social relations when there is role negotiability, in what he terms the “open spaces” of roles and role expectations. He explains that these ‘open spaces’ are at the “interstices of system, or at system limit, when for one reason or another systemically defined role expectations are no longer viable”. Here Seligman (1997) is clearly not arguing about embedded trust, but rather trust in the making, or at the starting points of new interactions where person-to-person interactions are taking place. Here trust cannot be confused with faith, which Seligman (1997) points out is closely related to embedded forms of trust within a system and linked rather to confidence in the fulfilment of role expectations. So to follow Seligman’s argument further, trust in this non-embedded form can be seen rather as a cognitive element of the individual interacting with another individual, often at the very beginning of person-to-person-interactivity. Trust in this form can then be seen to have a cognitive dimension.

The *cognitive dimension* is to do with shared values, norms, and proper ways of acting, as well as the above explained individual-to-individual level of trust. All these underpin common understandings of achieving collective goals and visions. They can be seen as a resource held particularly by individuals within the social web (Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993). Values in this dimension make up an essential part of everything that is inside any system of human interactivity. According to Ekins and Max-Neef (1992:84)

*... values cannot be separated out and then called upon at distinct times as needed. The co-evolutionary view emphasizes how knowledge, social organization, technology and even the environment have long coevolved with human values. In this sense, values are embedded in everything with which we work.*

These shared, common or congruent values, as well as common vision and goals held between people, help create the cognitive dimension of social capital and are the “major manifestations of the cognitive dimension of social capital” (Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998: 245). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) go on to argue that this has special significance for large, complex organisations or groups, as these elements frame individual and group actions. This in turn has a positive effect on the whole social capital-using system, by encouraging trusting and embedded trust relationships. They cite Ouchi (1981: 138), who asserts that “common values and beliefs provide the harmony of interests that erase the possibility of opportunistic behaviour”, as well as Sitkin and Roth (1993: 368) who “maintain that trusting relationships are rooted in value congruence—the compatibility of individuals’ values with an organisation’s values”.

Value sharing and congruence are possible bases on which the elements of social capital creation, generation and maintenance rest. In other words, without shared or congruent values the other elements of the social capital construct, such as trust and reciprocity, have nothing to be built upon.

Most sociologists see values of some kind or other as the fundamental building blocks of society. This will become evident from the following discussion on culture in this thesis and is supported by most group dynamics theorist’s and researcher’s writings of the micro level of interactions (Napier and Gershenfeld 1993: 241–242). Values are not only related to meaning but also to the full gambit of human interaction. They are therefore fundamental to all successful FHN satisfying outcomes (Sites 1990: 18; Doyal and Gough 1991). Doyal and Gough (1991: 89) argue that



*the success of a form of social life will be predicated on the health and autonomy of its members, assuming, of course, that they share roughly the same central values concerning what is expected of them.*

Social capital in these terms can be argued as being built on a values base. A values base which begins at a micro level of interaction within families and other communities of interaction, and continues up through the social strata to the macro levels. Engeström (1999b: 378) suggests that “the mightiest, most impersonal societal structures can be seen as consisting of local activities carried out by concrete human beings”.

It is the elements of the social capital construct, such as shared values, past successful transactions (historicity), trust, and reciprocity, which hold society together; they are the vital essences of social living. Crucially, in terms of institutions and moral imperatives, they also appear to the casual observer in time to be objective and unchanging, but they are not external objects that remain static throughout time. They are internal, they have been learned at a micro level, and they help constitute the human person who acts at each level of a society, be it micro, meso or macro. Here it should also be noted that each objectified culture is not value free, nor does it operate in a neutral manner; it always tends to favour those who already exercise power within it, whether they are merely the existing members of a group or whether they are the power elite of society (Bourdieu 1986; Narayan 1999).

Social capital then, can be seen as having many different dimensions and elements, each of which make up its nature. In terms of this thesis, it is a useful concept that can be used to explain how individuals and groups of people go about their activities which satisfy the FHNs of their lives. The elements of social capital hold together and strengthen the

threads of people's interactions, making possible successful transactions at all levels of society. But as with most resources, social capital can be used for the good of wider society or can be used against society, depending on the goals and objectives of the people making use of its very powerful elements.

In this first section the concept of social capital was introduced and fundamental human needs were referred to. In the next section, understandings concerning the concept of fundamental human needs are examined, so as to develop the main arguments of this thesis linking social capital to the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, values and human interaction.

### **2.3 Fundamental human need theory**

This part of the review focuses on FHN theory. It attempts to illuminate an understanding of the existence of FHN and its possible meaning for human existence. This section integrates the thoughts and research from a number of writers on human needs and their satisfaction, but primarily focuses on the work of Max-Neef (1986; 1989; 1991; 1992), Thomson (1987) and Doyal and Gough (1991). In doing so, the review assumes a non-relativist approach to the range of possible human needs believed by the author of this current study to be fundamental to human well-being and growth potential. The review endeavours to demonstrate how FHN satisfaction takes place within a dynamic socially interactive process linked to human values. It also shows that FHN satisfaction in the form of their satisfiers is relative to each and every different culture. FHN satisfaction is an interactive social activity, in which needs are satisfied through interpersonal transactions and co-operation between individuals acting within

groups small and large. The purpose of this section is to establish the concept of FHN satisfaction as a prime reason for social activity.

According to Thomson (1987: 31), historical links to the concept of human need go back to the writings of thinkers such as Seneca, Lucretius, Rousseau and Marx in the West. In present times a number of authors have tackled the issue of human needs, among them such writers and researchers as Maslow (1970), Max-Neef (1986; 1989; 1991; 1992), Thomson (1987), Galtung (1990; 1994), Doyal and Gough (1991) and Kamenetzky (1992). Max-Neef argues that FHNs “... have undoubtedly existed since the origins of homo sapiens sapiens” and are “... entwined with the evolution of the species” (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992: 203–204). On researching the literature for this section, there appears to be a tailing off in research and related literature concerning human need concepts in the later 1990s.

The concept of FHN as used in this review is reasonably broad so as to encompass the changes that occur over time, place and culture within different people’s perceptions. It focuses on classes of needs, such as physical, psychological or social needs rather than on specifics which could be confused with wants, desires, drives or intellectually derived demands (Galtung 1990: 305). According to Doyal and Gough (1991: 119) examples of this form of thinking are found in the writings of Habermas (1971) and Rawls (1972). Doyal and Gough (1991: 119) argue that, in the broad sense, both Habermas and Rawls “... incorporate into their theoretical perspectives a conception of objective and universal human need”. Both ground notions of individual rights in what Habermas calls ‘generalisable interests’ and what Rawls refers to as ‘primary goods’.

Doyal and Gough (1991), in taking a cross-cultural perspective in their work on human need, reject relativist approaches to basic human need theory by arguing that basic needs, such as physical health and individual autonomy amongst others, are necessary for effective involvement in any society. The authors not only argue that optimal satisfaction of basic human needs is a fundamental right of all human beings, but also that not meeting these needs can, and will, lead to moral and political disablement. However the review begins with Galtung's (1990) understanding of the meaning of the term *fundamental human need*.

In describing FHN, Galtung (1990) notes that it is necessary to describe the meaning of each of the words in the phrase. The word *fundamental* is used in the term to describe need satisfaction as being foundational and linked intimately to *human* well-being and growth towards one's full human potential. It is foundational in terms of *need* in the sense that if a FHN is not satisfied, serious harm will be caused to an individual's ability to act and interact to achieve their full human potential (Doyal and Gough 1991: 50). Conversely, by satisfying their FHNs, individuals are better able to achieve their human potential. Maslow (1970), Thomson (1987), Galtung (1990), Doyal and Gough (1991), and Ekins and Max-Neef (1992) all have similar understandings of FHN in this context. Thomson points out that if serious harm is caused to an individual's ability to act or interact to achieve their full human potential when any of the FHNs are not being met in some way, then FHNs are normative and not goal-specific or dependent. This means that the needs may be satisfied through a wide range of different activities and goal achievements. Thomson (1987) continues this argument by pointing out that the presence of FHNs is not only dependent on lack of satisfaction, but also on the fact that even when the need is being satisfied, the need is still present and so can be said to be

fundamental and necessary to continued human well-being. Galtung (1990) follows a similar train of thought in his approach to human need satisfaction.

Maslow's (1970) hierarchy of needs, has been a central concept in humanistic psychology, and the most quoted across disciplines, argues that need satisfaction is based on a hierarchical progression. The highest order need is the need to self-actualise and fully realise one's potential. Maslow's approach takes need satisfaction to be a drive or motivation, especially his concept of self-actualisation, by which he meant the full use of a person's talents, capabilities, and potentialities. Maslow explained the complex subject of human needs and their satisfaction in terms of motivation and behaviour, by suggesting that human needs be ranked in a ladder-like hierarchical structure.

Maslow theorises in his early work that the emergence of needs is dependant on the prior satisfaction of a more basic need. Therefore, the emergence of higher needs is dependent on the satisfaction of the more basic needs. At the bottom of this hierarchical structure is the need for survival, which is satisfied by food, clothing and water. According to Maslow (1970) only once these are gratified does a person begin to experience or feel the drive to satisfy the need for safety. Similarly, once the safety needs are met and an individual feels secure from attack and destruction, the need for belongingness and love emerges through human relations. Thereafter the need for esteem arises, and is expressed within the desire for personal strength in the sense of achievement, adequacy, mastery and competence. This is followed finally by the need for self-fulfilment or what Maslow calls self-actualisation. According to his theory, this is a typical pattern that operates most of the time in a progressive and instinctive manner.

Thomson (1987), Galtung (1990), Doyal and Gough (1991), Ekins and Max-Neef (1992), and Jarvis (1992) do not support this instinctive drive-related approach. Nor do they see human need satisfaction taking place in a hierarchical and progressive manner, other than the need for subsistence with its physiological centeredness and necessity. Successful subsistence satisfaction, they argue, is integral to all needs being satisfied. However, there is good argument that for adequate subsistence satisfaction, simultaneous satisfaction of the other needs is also a requirement (Ekins and Max-Neef 1992). Thomson (1987) and Doyal and Gough (1991) point out that FHNs are not drives to explain the initiation of behaviour as in the manner Maslow (1970) described it, but rather are to do with justification of behaviour.

FHNs and their satisfaction, according to Thomson (1987), are linked to human value systems and to justifiable reasons for actions, rather than to drives or motivation forces. Kluckhohn (1951), as cited in Sites (1990: 19), supports this view in defining a human value as

*... a conception, explicit or implicit, distinctive of an individual or characteristic of a group, of the desirable which influences the selection from available modes, means and ends of action.*

Black (1984) defines values as the shared standards by which the members of a society judge what is considered to be desirable (that is, what is right, true, or beautiful). This same understanding of human values is also underpinned by Parsons (1951). Doyal and Gough (1991: 99) argue that values are intimately linked to needs and need-satisfying behaviour. They quote Dworkin (1988: 20) on the intrinsic link between human values and autonomy, where

*... autonomy is conceived as a second-order capacity of persons to reflect critically upon their first-order preferences, desires, wishes, and so forth and the capacity to accept or attempt to change these in light of higher-order preferences and values. By exercising such a capacity, persons define their nature, give meaning and coherence to their lives and take responsibility for the kind of person they are.*

For example, what young people are taught and how they are taught depends on the type of adults desired in that society. Prevailing social values in contemporary society, including values about the proper place of the children of working-class parents, of ethnic minority parents, and of course, about the proper place of women, will determine answers to the following: What should young people accept as food or as appropriate personal habits? What should they accept as legitimate authority? What skills and interests should they acquire? What attitudes should they bring to the workplace? What forms of work are held in high esteem and what forms of work are not?

Napier and Gershenfeld (1993) argue that from the perspective of many group dynamics theorists, people have a committed willingness to entrust themselves to those activities that reflect goals and visions which they have participated in forming out of their own value systems. Habermas (1984) also refers to this value-based premise concerning human action, when he describes part of his second form of action—*normatively regulated action*—where people act rationally according to their values. According to Doyal and Gough (1991), Habermas also points to the dangers associated with this type of action, in terms of unequal power relations within societies where values are used to justify inequality and social systems associated with inequality. This theme of value-

driven action is discussed further in the review section dealing with culture and, in particular, the construct of individualism/collectivism (see section 2.4.2).

If FHNs are value driven, and therefore linked to people's values system for their satisfaction rather than instinctual drives, then it is possible for FHNs to go unnoticed by an individual and therefore go unsatisfied (Thomson 1987). As inferred above, FHNs provide reasons or values on which action could or could not take place. But it must also be noted that reasons or values can also be overridden by the individual, dependent on the nature of the situation (Thomson 1987), and on their cultural orientation (Triandis 1999).

According to the authors mentioned so far, FHNs can be linked to human nature and so are inescapable; as human beings we cannot ignore our FHNs once we become conscious of them. This theme of consciousness formation is another to which this review will later return (section 2.5.2.2), as it is a concept used in one form or other in many writings on human need. In particular, the FHN to *understand, find meaning and its associated activity of learning* are intimately linked to consciousness formation and can be associated with the tensions a newly-found consciousness may bring about in the learning environment. Suffice to say at this point:

*In self-reflection, knowledge for the sake of knowledge comes to coincide with the interest in autonomy and responsibility. For the pursuit of reflection knows itself as a movement of emancipation (Habermas 1971: 197–198).*

Returning to the theme of satisfaction of FHNs, harm through deprivation need not be felt by a person; and therefore if a person is not aware of deprivation they may not seek satisfiers of that need. But still, a person will suffer serious harm if that need is not being



satisfied in some manner (Doyal and Gough 1991), and deprivation or poverty in terms of that need will result. Where more than one need is not being fulfilled “poverties” will develop (Max-Neef 1989). Max-Neef expands our understanding of deprivation as being not only linked to material poverty, but also to the possible poverties of a psychological and socio-cultural need nature in the form of FHNs such as affection, understanding, identity, participation, and freedom. Thomson (1987: 38) cites the need for friendship and the possible lack thereof as an example of harm/poverty. One can therefore conclude that FHNs, according to Thomson, also include needs other than the biophysical and their possible poverties. It could then be postulated that FHNs extend beyond the material to our emotional and social nature, and possibly even beyond this to humankind’s inner nature, which transcends our animal nature. It could also be argued that when any of these needs are not being met in a satisfying manner, poverty or poverties will result, leading to the possible development of pathologies.

Most writers on human need note that, once an individual becomes conscious of a need, activity aimed at FHN is unavoidable. It is this element of ‘inescapability’ that links FHNs and their satisfaction to our human value system. We cannot ignore our conscious needs. We must seek what we need, but we can choose the satisfier or satisfiers of that need. This means that our value system can be changed to justify the satisfier of that need according to Thomson (1987: 27–37). Max-Neef (1992: 205–210) supports this premise in pointing out that often we choose to satisfy a need in a false or temporary fashion through what he calls pseudo or false satisfiers. This leads to pathologies developing within the life of the person, and possibly collectively in the life of a community or even a society. Lutz and Lux (1988: 10) argue that people try to simultaneously satisfy their deficiency and self-actualisation needs, and where these

needs conflict, choice based on some ethical system is necessary. It is here that the socio-cultural orientation of the person comes into play.

Once a person becomes conscious of a FHN, or number of needs, and is able to articulate the need or needs, the person can then move to satisfy those needs in a culturally specific manner. It is these new-found understandings and meanings that then act as key instigators for further action, leading to behaviours either biological or psychological in nature. Consciousness can be said to be intrinsically related, then, to motivation to act within a given set of circumstances (Max-Neef 1989; Sites 1990; Kamenetsky 1992; Rahman 1992). Where and when a need is perceived, a tension comes into being, and this tension has to be addressed to bring about some semblance of balance or equilibrium. When a person becomes aware of any changes in their environment he or she has a tendency to attempt to influence the new environment, or to change themselves to fit into the new environment and so restore balance and “... become competent within it” (Boyle 1981: 146). Satisfiers of needs are therefore sought, and often in an interrelated fashion, in the sense of trying to satisfy more than one need at a time.

According to Max-Neef (1989; 1992), all FHNs are in some way interrelated and interactive in relationship to their satisfaction. They can be perceived as part of a whole interactive and interrelated system of cause and effect, in which satisfaction of one or more needs may in some way be either truly or falsely traded off, or even complemented by other needs being satisfied in some way (Max-Neef 1992). Davidson (1995: 189) argues that FHNs have an objective reality for “by virtue of their biological,

psychological, and social functions people have actual needs”. He goes on, citing Soper, (1981), to point out that

*Clearly, the way in which these objective needs are experienced, expressed, and satisfied within the context of particular productive and social relations is profoundly influenced by a multitude of social and historical forces. (Davidson 1995: 189).*

This point is taken up further in the discussion on culture and the FHN to understand, find meaning, and to learn in the following two sections. Max-Neef’s FHN theory has an objective focus, and like Davidson (1995), suggests a wide social, psychological, cultural and historically situated approach to FHNs and their satisfaction.

In 1985–86 Max-Neef (1986; 1989; 1991; 1992) came together with a number of other South American experts from the fields of economics, sociology, psychology, philosophy, political science, anthropology, geography, engineering and law, seeking a new approach to understanding human FHN and development. After much deliberation, the group proposed a model that takes a wholistic approach by integrating nine universal classes of FHNs. FHNs which, when met in a balanced and simultaneous manner, result in individuals and their societies moving towards “wholeness”, and on their way to becoming more self-fulfilled within their own cultural contexts (Hope and Timmel 1995). Together the group meeting in 1985–86, with Max-Neef, put forward the idea of fundamental human needs existing as an integrated system, and stressed that when any FHN or group of FHNs are not met in a positive satisfying manner by people of any part of a society, collective pathologies may develop out of false satisfiers which may take the place of genuine FHN satisfiers (Max-Neef 1992). These false satisfiers in many cases lead to the development of situations which give rise to the opposite values of self-

efficacy, or community efficacy, such as conflict, drug abuse, and sexual exploitation (Bandura 1995; 1997).

In Max-Neef's theory the FHN of subsistence does not change from Maslow's five needs-based theory. However, Max-Neef's model puts forward that there are a number of other FHNs, some similar to Maslow's list and others not, which are universal and in the form of psychosocial needs. When these FHNs are not articulated and met simultaneously in an adequate manner, it will not be possible to sustainably meet the subsistence needs of all members of society. He proposes that human development is about people and not about objects, clients or customers. This comes from a partial view of human beings as being only consumers or workers within an economy; people who need only limited competencies, or students to be filled with limited facts and knowledge to fulfil their ordained role in society. This view possibly comes from a materialistic picture of humankind and held by some people in the so-called 'developed' 20 percent of humankind.

Max-Neef does not arrange these nine FHNs in a hierarchical progression, as does Maslow. They are seen as existing and needing to be met simultaneously, and are proposed as being fundamental to all human beings, meaning therefore they are common to all people in all cultures and in all times. Max-Neef (1992: 206–207) lists these needs as:

**Subsistence:**

That which is needed to satisfy the basic physiological needs of a person so as to enable the maintenance of a physiologically healthy body and reproduction. This need is satisfied by adequate food, shelter, clothing, and clean water.

**Protection:**

The need to feel secure from exploitation, physical attack, disease, and infections.

**Affection:**

The need for relationships of a warm, intimate, understanding and respectful nature with other human beings. The need to share, in the sense that humans want others to appreciate their experiences and emotions. It also includes the need to enter into the experiences and emotions of others.

**Understanding:**

The need to understand and find meaning through both awareness and education, both formal and informal. (For a further development of this theme see section five.)

**Participation:**

The need to be involved with and to interact with others in a socio-cultural system by having the choice to participate in deciding and implementing plans and policies, being educated, working, and playing.

**Creation:**

The need to give unique expression to creativity in workmanship, artistry, inventiveness, composition, and ideas.

According to Van der Veen (2000: 43):

*Most authors refer to creativity as something that goes beyond, or rather underlies, rational thinking. For instance, philosophers (such as Früchtl 1996; Habermas 1981) refer to it [creativity] as*

*a shift from instrumental and normative toward aesthetic judgments.*

Wenger (1998) argues that creativity is the experience of meaning, and in their discussion of learning organisations, Bellah et al. (1985), refer to creativeness as being expressive of individualism, a unique core of feeling and intuition.

**Idleness – leisure:**

The need for times that allow for ‘time-out’, rest, relaxation, and reflection.

**Identity:**

The need for individuality as expressed within one’s personal identity (the ‘me’ and the ‘I’) as well as one’s social identity. Social identity refers to certain attributes to which a person ascribes, such as language, shared values, beliefs, knowledge, and skills. This takes place within social systems in which a person:

*... invest[s] their energy and with which they identify themselves  
... [and] ... perceive themselves as resembling other group  
members, sharing with them the most salient features, values,  
meanings, and goals (Camilleri 1997: 48–49).*

Social identity is “.... found within social groups to which the individual belongs such as family and community support systems” (Rader 1990: 219).

**Freedom:**

The personal and individual space in which free choice may be exercised, as far as is possible by an individual, so as to allow their humanity to grow towards its full potential without constraint. This need, when met in a satisfactory manner, enables people to find a greater sense of “identity and autonomy as well as physical

security if they were given the space to develop within their own environments”  
(Rader 1990: 223).

The charter of the United Nations sets this need out quite clearly as a right:

*All people have the right freely to determine, without external interference, their political status and to pursue their political status and to pursue their economic, social, and cultural development .... (Charter of the United Nations 1948).*

According to Max-Neef, FHNs are different from their *satisfiers*. Satisfiers are those artifacts, milieus or states of being, having, doing and interacting that we employ in a particularly cultural way to meet a need. The word artifact here is used in a very broad sense and is not just limited to material evidence of culture; it also includes the socio-cultural and socio-structural aspects of human existence. Max-Neef postulates that FHNs are intricately woven into a fabric of cause and effect, and related to action both within and outside the individual, in the sense of a person’s complete human environment encompassing both the ‘I’ and the ‘we’. In other words, individuals need a community and a community needs individuals.

Some *satisfiers*, according to Max-Neef (1992: 205–210), only satisfy the needs to which they are directed, while others at the same time satisfy other needs as well. Less positively, there are *pseudo-satisfiers* which do satisfy the relevant need for a time; *inhibitors* which satisfy one need but simultaneously inhibit the satisfaction of others; and *violators* which work against the satisfaction even of the need to which they are directed. Examples of these non-satisfiers might be status symbols (which unsuccessfully seek to address the need for identity), over-indulgence in watching television (a leisure pursuit which inhibits creativity), and the arms race (which sought

to give both sides protection but ended up making them both less secure). From this perspective, overemphasis on material consumption is often evidence of a counter-productive fixation with pseudo-satisfiers, inhibitors or even violators.

A person's needs in the foregoing model are not seen by Max-Neef (Max-Neef 1992) as being sought in a self-gratifying, self-actualising or self-centred manner, but rather within a complete matrix of relationships between needs and their satisfiers in connection to four modes of human experience:

**BEING**, where attributes are both personal or collective in the sense of one's values being connected to other human being's need systems.

**HAVING** (which implies having access to) in an individual, as well as collective sense, institutions, values, norms, structures, tools (not only in a material sense), laws, food, shelter and education. Each of these contribute to the satisfaction of a need both personal and collective.

**DOING** in the shape of actions, either personal, or collective in the form of interactions, which satisfy needs.

**INTERACTING** within the wider human environment of place and milieus (as times and spaces).

This matrix of FHNs against being, having, doing and interacting can be seen as human beings acting within a whole and particular socio-cultural environment, where they attempt in some way to satisfy their FHNs. People express themselves through activities formed out of their own understandings and experiences of the culture into which they were born or choose to belong. These actions are based around daily projects aimed at



meeting shared group values and goals (Rader 1990) within an integrated system, where the potential exists for the unfolding of each person's full humanness through social activity.

*Nothing happens in living nature that is not in relation to the whole.*

— Goethe

This now brings us to a point where it is necessary to widen the scope of this study of FHN satisfaction to incorporate an understanding of what is meant by the socio-cultural environment and its implications for both the research problem and hypothesis. To do so I now turn to the literature surrounding understandings of the social environments in which FHNs are satisfied, particularly that of culture, from the perspective of research related to a number of different constructed understandings.

## **2.4 Culture and the individualistic/collectivistic paradigm**

### **2.4.1 Culture**

This part of the literature review examines key conceptualisations of culture, in particular, the individualistic and collectivistic models (Hofstede 1981, 1991, 1994, 1998; Triandis 1989, 1995a, 1999). In doing so, it provides the foundation for understanding the particular social worlds in which fundamental human needs are satisfied, and casts further light on the social capital construct being embedded in all forms of human interaction. It informs the conceptual framework of this study by focussing on the embedding of social capital in the interaction of the particular value-related lifeworlds of human beings, and by viewing social capital acting as a resource available to mediate FHN satisfaction

Why does the construct of culture constitute a relevant area for this study? Is it of value to attribute significant differences between peoples? How does one's culture affect the satisfaction of FHNs? What possible role does culture play in the creation of social capital, or vice versa for that matter? These are all important questions to confront in this section, as there are some who would put forward the view that the differences that do exist between persons of a different culture are only superficial, and of less significance compared to individual differences. However, others offer the view that culture is pervasive, that all human beings are culturally different in some way or other and that culture, like fundamental human needs, has bearing on all our life activities often in all encompassing and persistent ways, and that many of these ways lie outside of the awareness and conscious control of individuals (Hall 1976).

Little consensus has been reached over the years, within and across disciplines, about what exactly culture is. Doney, Cannon and Mullen (1998) cite Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) as having identified 164 definitions of culture. So the examples listed below are just a few recent possible definitions of culture:

- Namenwirth and Weber (1987: 8) define culture as a “system of ideas” that provide a “design for living”
- Clark (1990: 66), in his review of national character, describes culture “as a distinctive, enduring pattern of behaviour and/or personality characteristics” (cited in Doney, Cannon and Mullen 1998).
- For Hofstede (1994: 21) culture is “the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another”.

- Culture “[is a] system of knowledge” (Gudykunst 1994: 44).
- “Culture imposes a set of lenses for seeing the world.” It “... affects the way in which individuals select, interpret, process and use information” (Triandis 1994: 2).
- Hill (1997: 67) defines culture as “a system of values and norms that are shared among a group of people and that when taken together constitute a design for living”.
- “Culture is communication and communication is culture” (Hall 1976: 169).

This section now expands on some of these definitions. Hall (1959, 1966, 1976) has suggested that culture be viewed as a highly selective screen between the outside world and the individual. This screen determines which external stimuli are absorbed and which are dismissed, and how messages are encoded and decoded by a person. He argues that cultures differ in the amount of importance given to the context of communication, and on this basis arrives at two broad categories of culture: high context cultures and low context cultures.

*High context* cultures give primacy to context ahead of content, where there is little information in the coded, transmitted message and one’s word is not one’s bond (Hall 1976). Persons from high context cultures show a preference for the relational, and therefore pay more attention to the interaction process. In these cultures, the difference between insiders and outsiders is greater. In social capital terms these societies would have strong bonding ties and exhibit strong tendencies towards internality (Narayan 1999). Hall notes that high context communication has strong links to the historicity of

the interaction, thus forming a cohesive force that is slow to change and therefore has a unifying and cohesive function for the group using it.

*Low context* communication on the other hand has less of a unifying role given that it changes rapidly and easily, and also given its relatively easy to understand nature (Hall in Gudykunst and Kim 1984). Low context communication involves messages where “the mass of the information [that provides the meaning for the message] is vested in the explicit code” (Hall 1976: 79). The effect of a lesser unifying role in low-context communication cultures possibly gives rise to greater opportunities for externality and therefore bridging within these cultures. Hall’s (1976) distinction between low and high context communication is of particular importance to social capital theory, in the form of the elements of externality vs internality i.e. bridging vs bonding. So in social capital terms one could postulate that people from low context communication cultures would show signs of stronger externality in their relationships as opposed to weak internality on the part of individuals making up such a group, and vice-versa.

Hall’s basis for seeing culture as communication is grounded in pragmatism: “by treating culture as communication, people’s difficulties with each other can be [traced] to distortions in communication” (Hall 1976: 186–187). A significant amount of research has been conducted over the years to examine the validity of Hall’s conceptual model of culture, and it has, for the larger part, withstood this scrutiny (Bond 1991: 59).

In spite of the large number of definitions of culture, Hall (1976: 16) puts forward that there is broad agreement among anthropologists about the four characteristic features of culture. Culture is:

- not innate but learnt (although there is some recent disagreement being voiced at the present time concerning the totality of this assumption of Hall's, as the parallel role of DNA becomes more widely understood as a carrier of information from one generation to the next);
- dynamic and changes over time;
- made up of interrelated facets, and
- shared and thus defines the boundaries of groups.

Hofstede (1994: 4) sees culture as entailing a large number of assumptions or hidden values. Values are defined as "broad tendencies to prefer certain states of affairs over others", while culture is defined as "the software of the mind" which links to his 1984 definition of culture being "the collective programming of the mind which distinguishes the members of one group from another" (Hofstede 1994: 21). Hofstede's values-centred understanding of culture is supported by Hill (1997: 67) when he defines culture as "a system of values and norms that are shared among a group of people and that when taken together constitute a design for living". This "design for living" also has historical roots according to Ekins and Max-Neef (1992: 8):

*Similarly, the dominance of current patterns of thinking and what are accepted as facts have been selected by the historical dominance of specific values, forms of social organization, types of technologies and characteristics of environments.*

These values are said to remain largely unconscious to their holders, and therefore they are usually not discussed and they are also difficult to observe (Hofstede 1994: 8).

Hofstede (1981: 20) also suggests that any researcher in the area should keep in mind the

difference between desired values (what people actually desire) or desirable values (what people think ought to be desired). Clark (1995: 63) makes the point that our human value systems are very powerful in determining our lifeworld.

Clark (1995: 64) goes on to suggest that “values first of all are culturally determined, and second, emerge from deeper beliefs” and derive from the “less conscious and less articulate sense of how the world is”. We learn this as a child and hold it tacitly throughout our adulthood, unless challenged or conscientised (see the section on Freire’s theories in the next section) to think differently, in the sense that we reflect on our lifeworld and see other choices or options coming into being. It is from this basis that our values and associated behaviours and their activities are derived. One can note here the possible links with the discussion on values in the previous section on FHNs.

Doney, Cannon and Mullen (1998) cite Clark (1990) as identifying three developing areas of research on culture: relation to self; relation to others and relation to risk. All of these are used within Hofstede’s (1991, 1994, 1998) matrix as set out below. Hofstede’s original conceptualisation of culture is the result of a study into the work-related values of individuals employed by a large multinational company working in 40 different countries. He consequently constructed and evolved a four dimensional construct to illustrate the value differences that existed across cultures, and later added a fifth value difference (Hofstede 1994). According to Hofstede (1991, 1994, 1998), cultures differ along the following human value interrelated lines:

- **Power distance**—the level of social inequality, the expected and accepted relationship with authority. Small power distance equates to relative equality and large power distance to extreme inequality.

- **Individualism/collectivism**—the relationship between the individual and the group. Hofstede (1998: 2) defines individualism as

*the extent to which the ties between individuals in a society are loose, so that everyone is expected to look after himself or herself and his or her immediate family only.*

And collectivism as:

*the extent to which people in a society from birth onwards are integrated into strong, cohesive in-groups, which throughout people's lifetime continue to protect them in exchange for unquestioning loyalty.*

- **Concepts of masculinity and femininity**—the social implications of gender roles in terms of being born male or female and the “extent to which social gender roles in a society are clearly distinct”.
- **Uncertainty avoidance**—ways of dealing with uncertainty. In uncertainty-avoiding societies people are more expressive; in uncertainty-tolerating societies the expression of feelings is inhibited.
- **Long/short-term orientation to life**—long-term orientation involves persistence, perseverance and a deferral in the gratification of needs, and a short-term orientation involves risk taking, adventure, creativity and living for the moment.

While the above aspects are of value in coming to understand the meaning of culture, it is also important for this review to note that the cultural boundaries between nations or societies are becoming increasingly blurred with economic integration (Fukuyama 1995), and that there may be significant cultural differences within countries themselves (Triandis 1989, 1995a, 1999; Gudykunst 1994; Fukuyama 1995). So while the above framework is of significance, researchers working in this area need to be aware of

possible contradictions when coming to any assumptions about any nation, society or group of people.

In the next section this review discusses Hofstede's individualistic/collectivistic dimension of values, as this paradigm has received much research attention over the last decade. Hofstede (1994) scores Australia very high on individualism, he ranks it the second highest individualistic country in the world after the United States. By comparison, Indonesia was ranked 47<sup>th</sup> out of a sample of 50 countries, which means it is deemed to be a collectivistic society (Hofstede 1994: 54–55). This individualistic/collectivistic framework could have important implications for understanding the diverse elements of social capital generation and the satisfaction of human need as they link to differing human values systems.

#### **2.4.2 Individualism and collectivism**

The individualism/collectivism concept of culture informs much of the understanding of cultural and social behaviour in cross-cultural psychology and anthropology (Peplau and Taylor 1997). It provides explanations for the differences in social roles, behaviours, values, cognitive styles, the ordering of social relationships, and the organisation of social institutions (Triandis 1989, 1995a, 1995b; 1999, Gudykunst 1994; Peplau and Taylor 1997). Triandis (1999: 128) argues:

*Within each culture there are individuals who are allocentric and think and act like people in collectivist cultures, and also idiocentric, and think and act like people in individualist cultures.*



The validity of this dimension has been reinforced by solidly researched evidence obtained through a series of different multi-method studies over the last decade and a half (Hofstede 1981, 1994; Bond 1991, 1994; Triandis 1989; 1994; 1995a; 1995b; 1999; Brislin and Yoshida 1994; Kitayama et al 1997; Wheeler, Reis and Bond 1997). According to Gudykunst (1994) it is an accurate and useful way in which to understand differences between cultures.

This construct also has usefulness in facilitating an understanding of the role of social capital in the satisfaction of FHNs. It is of particular significance in terms of understanding the differences that exist in people's value systems, and how different cultures go about and structure their human interactions in connection to these values. Possibly social capital as seen from one cultural point of view is not social capital within another culture.

Triandis (1989; 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1999) has conducted extensive research into the differences in the values held by individualistic as well as collectivistic cultures, using both qualitative and quantitative means. He has found the main values in collectivistic cultures to be those of harmony, dependence, obedience to authority, duty, security, and proper action. Triandis (1989: 53, 1999: 128–130) puts forward that a defining characteristic of collectivism is the subordination of individual goals over group goals, which means greater emphasis is placed on:

- the views, needs and goals of the in-group (bonded group) rather than oneself;
- social norms and duty defined by the in-group rather than behaviour to get personal satisfaction or pleasure;

- beliefs shared with the in-group rather than beliefs that distinguish self from the in-group, and
- greater readiness to co-operate with in-group members .

Individualism, on the other hand, is defined as:

*a belief that the individual is an end in himself [or herself], and as such ought to realise his [or her] self and cultivate his [or her] own judgement, notwithstanding the weight of pervasive social pressures in the direction of conformity (Gould and Kolb 1964 in Triandis 1989: 52).*

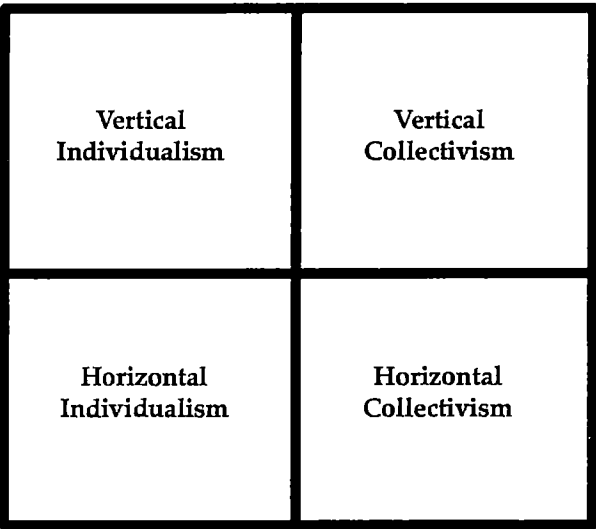
Individualistic cultures, according to Triandis (1989: 46–47, 1999: 128–130), are said to hold the following values: self-reliance, creativity, independence, solitude, and equality. Individualism has also been identified with competitiveness, aggressive creativity, high emotionality, and a strong emphasis on the libidinal aspects of relationships (Hsu 1985) as well as self-development, autonomy, and privacy (Lukes 1973 in Triandis 1989: 54).

Over the last decade Triandis and a number of other researchers from different cross-cultural disciplines have been developing and testing these theories surrounding the constructs of individualism and collectivism, mainly in terms of social, psychological and cognitive implications (cited in Triandis, Chen and Chan 1998: Triandis 1989, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1999; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Brislin 1993; Earley and Erez 1993; 1996; Brislin and Yoshida 1994; Kim et al. 1994; Morris and Peng 1994; Triandis, Dunnette and Hough 1994; Kashima et al. 1995; Bond and Smith 1996; Landis and Bhagat 1996; Sinha 1997). Using more than 20 different research methods around the world, Triandis and others are developing the concept of the individualism/collectivism construct to include a horizontal and vertical element.

According to Triandis, Chen and Chan (1998) and Triandis (1999), this research base is producing reliable and consistent results which show that the horizontal and vertical elements of collectivism and individualism are reliable ways of not only understanding differently orientated cultural communities, but also differences in individuals' perceptions and value systems within communities which are complex and loose, especially those of a multicultural nature such as in Australia and the USA. The following four-part matrix (Figure 1) represents Triandis, Chen and Chan's (1998) horizontal and vertical elements of the collectivism and individualism framework in diagrammatical form.

**Figure 1**

**The horizontal and vertical elements of the individualism/collectivism framework**



Individuals of any society may be given a position in the above matrix depending on how they respond through their values in a given set of social circumstances as “all humans carry all four of the HI [horizontal individualist], VI [vertical individualist], HC [horizontal collectivist], and VC [vertical collectivist] cognitions”, according to

Triandis, Chen and Chan's (1998) research. But as Triandis, Chen and Chan (1998) go on to argue:

*In collectivist cultures ambiguous situations are likely to be converted into collectivist situations; similarly, in individualistic cultures ambiguous situations are likely to be turned into individualistic situations. Thus, across situations, people will tend to sample the cognitions that correspond to the dominant cultural pattern.*

According to Triandis (1989, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1999) and Triandis, Chen and Chan (1998):

**Horizontal collectivists** see themselves as having a part to play in the collective. They have a self-concept that is tied to and interdependent with others in the in-group (family, tribe, co-workers, nation). All members of the in-group are held to be equal and in no way subordinate, consequently the in-group structures are not highly hierarchical. Needs, interests, visions and goals are collectively decided, for example, as in a Kibbutz in Israel.

**Vertical collectivists**, on the other hand, use a definite hierarchy. Individuals would deem themselves to be aspects of the collective. Members of the in-group differ in terms of social status, and inequality is an accepted value. Individuals self-sacrifice their own interests or needs for the hierarchically derived or perceived in-group needs and interests, for example, the people of Indian sub-continent or Middle Eastern villages.

**Horizontal individualists** follow a cultural pattern that is characterised by a self-concept that is autonomous, yet individuals are seen to be equal in status with

others. Self-reliance is a hallmark of horizontal individualists; they 'do their own thing'. They do not necessarily compare themselves or compete with others and they do not want to be distinguished from the wider community. Each individual decides what is in their own interest, but in doing so respects others' choices, and at times the need for some collectivity of interest, for example, as in Sweden and Australia (Feather 1994).

**Vertical individualists** are especially concerned with comparisons with others. They want to be 'the best', always win, and be distinguished from others. They expect inequality and are continually competing. In the extreme these individualists consider that there is no such thing as society any more, only individual consumers. Vertical individualists, for example, are found in middle-class and upper-class USA and many other Western democracies, such as Australia.

These constructs have possible bearing on any research that has as its goal the understanding of social capital as a concept, and its influence in mediating FHNs satisfaction as they affect the foundations on which the concept of social capital is built. If cultural frameworks derived from research based only on a Western capitalistic view of life are used, research findings will at best be limited, and at worst, incorrect.

Here it must be re-noted that one needs to proceed with caution in coming to conclusions about societies, as they are complex and dynamic.

*Obviously individual differences, even within culture need to be examined, and culture cannot be ignored in making generalisations about experimental social psychological*

*findings. Cultures are dynamic, and may reflect historical periods, momentary fads, fashions, and trends (Triandis 1999: 133).*

This study recognises that individualism and collectivism should not be viewed as opposites at polar ends of a scale. But rather, that individualistic and collectivistic tendencies do, according to Gudykunst (1994: 47) "... exist in all cultures and all individuals, but one tends to predominate." As Triandis (1989: 43) notes, "... just as ice and water can coexist, so can individualism and collectivism".

Each culture, with its own values, norms, traditions and beliefs, is shaped over time by powerful ecological forces such as the availability of resources and the geography of the local environment (Triandis 1989, 1999). In a statement that acknowledges the biological nature of culture, Hall states, "[culture] is bio-basic... [and] rooted in biological activities; [thus] representing a continuity between the past and the present" (Hall 1976: 37). Cultural variability, according to Triandis (1989), is driven by these ecological forces, giving either a selective advantage or disadvantage to community living.

Triandis (1999) argues that community living is more advantageous in those societies that are less complex, low food accumulation ones, where the goals of finding adequate food and shelter, and other basic needs, require the resources of the local group. In such a society, values such as obedience, conformity, and interdependency are highly valued. For varying reasons, according to Triandis (1999), the economic advantages of community living diminish as societies become more complex and loose, affluent, geographically mobile, urbanised, and heterogeneous. The rise of individualism has been linked to the coming into being of modern Western culture in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, which

saw the demise of collectives such as the guild, the tribe and the city as the social unit of society, and the emergence of trading activity and the industrialisation of the economic base (Bell 1976 in Triandis 1989: 271). Trading brought about a change in social behaviour with the advent of contracts and a short-term time perspective in relation to financial gain. Relative social affluence, its associated personal freedoms, and increased choices in life are therefore driving forces towards increased individualism in societies (Hofstede 1994; Triandis 1995a).

Present day Australian society, which may be broadly recognised as an information society, depicts what could be only called neo-individualism. This value system can be primarily related to the influence of Anglo-Celtic Australians rather than the Indigenous population who would be primarily collectivists (Partington and McCudden 1993). The increasing emphasis on 'having my space' and 'needing time to myself', suggests that the functionality of the collective in present day Australian society has been eroded in recent times, and this has an effect on individual and family involvement in local community activity. For example Chalke, a social monitor consultant of the AMR: Quantum Harris Australia SCAN group which surveys values of more than 2000 Australians each year, has said that this "do not disturb" trend began to emerge in the late 1980s.

*People are taking control of their own lives and are less likely to respond to pressure to do this and that or to feel an obligation to help everybody else (Chalke 1996).*

The move to increasing disengagement is born out by studies of indicators of levels of social capital in recent years in Australia showing a decrease in group-centred activities. Pleasure, self-actualisation, creativity, leisure, and freedom to exercise choice are

options that can be engaged in independently of the group (Triandis 1989: 70–72), all elements of what Triandis (1999: 129) calls a “complex and loose”, affluent and individualist society. Studies of second generation immigrants to Australia suggest that those from collectivistic cultural backgrounds who moved to live in individualistic societies such as the United States, Canada and Australia, increasingly reflect the individualistic values of their adopted country in their family structure, communication and child care (Partington and McCudden 1993).

The definitions of culture introduced at the start of this section noted its all-pervasive influence. This defining quality of culture as being a dynamic, interrelated configuration of interactive elements is captured within Triandis’s framework. Socialisation practices will vary depending on whether the culture in question is an individualistic culture or a collectivistic culture. The consequences of individualistic socialisation will have a different effect on psychological thought, personality and social behaviour than socialisation practices which are grounded in collectivistic values. For instance, research into the child-raising patterns of collectivists has suggested that dependence of the child on parents or older in-group members is encouraged towards complete obedience. Collectivist children learn behaviours and values that promote group harmony ahead of independence and self-interest. The reverse can be said to be the case of individualist children (Triandis 1989: 73–76). Amongst collectivists, the strongest family bond tends to be the parent-child bond. By contrast, in individualistic cultures the spouse-spouse bond is often the most important one (Hsu 1981, 1985; Roland 1988). These practices, then, have profound implications for understanding the generation of social capital within different and changing socio-cultural contexts.



As implied in the above paragraphs, social behaviour among both individualists and collectivists can be said to be a function of the socialisation practices and personality orientation encouraged by the in-group. In an individualistic society, individuals are encouraged to exercise choice and autonomy in their social behaviours. The primary driving force for individualists is the self's needs and interests. The social behaviour of collectivists, by contrast, is more likely to be shaped by 'what other people think' than 'what I feel', particularly if the 'other people' are members of the in-group. All of these behaviours have a bearing on our understanding of the elements of the social capital construct and the satisfiers of FHNs within differing socio-cultural contexts.

While the above discussion of individualism/collectivism may appear somewhat simplistic, it does hold certain validity for the discussion in this thesis of the elements of social capital acting as mediators of FHN satisfaction. Shared or congruent values within any social grouping, whether individualistic or collectivistic, are pivotal to social cohesion. The reduction of social capital in the USA and Australia may be traced to the continued move towards greater individuality, and the possible fragmentation of collectively held values and norms. It could also be deduced from this discussion that extremes of both individualism and collectivism are detrimental to the functioning of both society and the individual. Cultures and societies which aspire to inculcate an ethos of either communitarian collectivism or communitarian individualism, depending on whether the culture in question has an individualistic or collectivistic foundation, have more of a chance of strengthening social cohesiveness than the extremes of vertical individualism or the possible social control accompanying vertical collectivism (Pareek 1968 and Bond 1988 in Triandis 1989: 106–107).

The next section looks at the implications of the above discussion of FHNs and culture in the context of the FHN to *understand* and its associated activity of learning. Doyal and Gough (1991: 86) make the point that production and reproduction, and so by inference the satisfaction of the FHNs of human beings, is dependent on the successful “... manipulation of the physical [psychological and socio-cultural] environment[s] so that goods and services of particular kinds can be either created or consumed” and that “... sufficient cultural understanding on the part of the members of the social groups involved” is essential. They go on to point out that:

*... both [production and reproduction] must continue to be learned from others in the context of formal and informal education. This will in turn be based on an already existing body of norms, laws, traditions and rituals, which define the predominant cultural values of the form of life involved—the rules by which one form of life is individuated from another (Doyal and Gough 1991: 86).*

The next section of the literature review will explore and expand on this process of knowledge transmission and creation from one generation to the next, as well as from one person to another. It will examine the FHN to understand, and to find meaning, and the relationship of FHNs to the activity of learning.

## 2.5 The fundamental human need to understand, find meaning and the activity of learning

*Human learning is a lifelong process, one which has acquired greater significance as the speed of change in society has increased so that its members are almost compelled to keep learning in order to remain members (Jarvis 1995:1).*

Like Jarvis, a number of writers make the point that the requirement to learn, know, have understanding, and to find meaning is a continuous lifetime activity, and is central to human needs satisfaction, and to human survival (Rogers 1986: 57; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992: 38; Jarvis 1992:53; 1995: 11–13; Woolfolk 1993: 339; Wenger 1998: 8). For most human beings the speed and span of social, economic, and political change has been phenomenal over the last century and into this new one. Due to these changes, the need to be continually open to new understandings, and to learn is becoming even more fundamental to the survival of most human beings and their groups (Boyle 1981: 35–36).

Learning is a natural process, “... an integral part of our everyday lives” (Wenger 1998: 8). Wenger makes the further point that:

*We are social beings. Far from being trivially true, this fact is a central aspect of learning. Knowing is a matter of participating in the pursuit of such enterprises, that is, of active engagement in the world. (Wenger 1998: 4).*

Jarvis makes a similar point, arguing that learning tends to be quite random and centred around one’s activities in satisfying the complexities of one’s everyday needs (Jarvis 1992: 3–16). He states: “Learning, then, is not straightforward but complex and even contradictory” (Jarvis 1992: 4).

The meaning of the word learning is complex. It is beyond the scope of this study to provide an extensive review of all the theoretical perspectives on learning. Therefore, this part of the review will take the form of a focused overview, following a particular line of argument, by keeping in mind the above discussions on social capital, FHN and its satisfaction, and culture from an individualistic/collectivistic values perspective. It will provide a framework that builds on understandings of the social capital concept and the importance of its elements in activities aimed at the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, particularly the need to understand and to find meaning.

### **2.5.1 Learning Theories**

The foregoing and following discussion on learning has links to Max-Neef's (1986, 1989, 1991, 1992) FHN to 'Understand'. But what exactly is learning? As has been said before in many ways 'learning' defies clear and succinct definition, and psychologists and educators are not able to even agree on a definition (Smith 1990). Although this is a valid point, there are some general characteristics underpinning adult learning theories. Knowledge of the way in which we learn as human beings, especially as adults, is of significance to any discussion of FHN satisfaction, culture and values, and to the possible mediating role played by social capital in these human endeavours.

In recent times, a body of literature has been published that attempts to distinguish adult learning from child learning. This literature focuses on the unique ways in which adults learn. Knowles (1980, 1990) was instrumental in developing a theory of how adults learn. He used the term andragogy to mean "the art and science of teaching adults", in contrast to pedagogy, which he described as "the art and science of teaching children" (Knowles 1990: 28). Knowles argues that adults are different from children in terms of

the experience they bring to bear on their learning. According to Knowles (1980: 8) education, which has dominated all formal learning for children and adults alike, is a pedagogical model based on didactic teaching with a focus on content through curriculum. Knowles reacted against the pedagogical model and puts forward the theory that adults are more independent, responsible, and have the need to be self-directed learners. Self-directed learning is seen as the ultimate state of learner autonomy and the process where the learner takes responsibility for planning, implementing, and evaluating his or her learning (Knowles 1990: 174–175). The implication of these assumptions led Knowles to recommend that teachers of adults should be facilitators of learning rather than directors, and that adult learners should take primary responsibility for directing their own learning. This means that adult learners would: identify their own needs for learning; plan strategies to cater for their needs; implement the strategies; and then evaluate them—all all of which are *individualistic* values. The teacher of adults would be a facilitator, a resource person, who would support the learning of individual learners.

The assumptions of Knowles' (1980, 1990) work are from humanistic psychology with its notions of individuals meeting their own needs, and allowing individual learners choice over what and how they will learn (Tennant 1991: 45). While some writers (for example, Jarvis 1983; Tennant 1997) have criticised Knowles for his untested assumptions about how adults learn.

Some authors have endeavoured to compensate for the perceived weaknesses in his theory. For example, Brookfield's (1988) work has gone beyond individualistic humanistic psychological assumptions about adult learning to incorporate issues such as

the importance of social context and critical reflection. He identified a key principle: the need to engage learners in a continuous and alternating process of investigating and exploring, followed by action, then reflection, and so the cycle begins again. In this process, learners learn new skills, apply them in a real situation, and then reflect upon the experience (Brookfield 1988: 102).

Maslow (1970) and Rogers (1969) also placed considerable significance on the individual self: self-actualisation, self-enhancement, and self-concern made up the cornerstones of their theories. According to both Maslow and Rogers, the ‘authentic’ being is the evolving product of a self-centred growth process. In recent times there has been some criticism of this conceptualisation of authenticity, for its failure to consider the impact of self-centredness on human interactions, and ultimately on human relationships, communities and society (Jarvis 1992).

Jarvis argues that “the fundamental fact of human existence is [hu]man with [hu]man” (Jarvis 1992: 104). Jarvis proposes a conceptualisation of an “alternative authentic being” which is one who is deeply concerned for and with the humanity of others, and engages in reflective learning as a means of growth as part of a community of other humans. Despite these challenges, the fundamental tenets of humanistic psychology remain individually centred and focused on the right of the individual to autonomy, self-actualisation and achievement. The rights and needs of the individual are therefore given primacy over the rights and needs of the broader group.

There are some indications that Knowles did not totally ignore the role of the social context: “maturity, includes linkages with life, personal growth but within a social context” (Knowles 1980 in Beder 1989: 43). For the greater part, however, Knowles and

many other Western theorists have adopted an individualistic perspective, with the centring of key concepts and themes around individual learners.

There has been inference in the above discussion that self-directed learning theory sits more comfortably within individualistic rather than collectivistic sets of values. The key self-directed learning values are obviously derived from individualistic values such as autonomy, freedom, independence, and self-reliance. However, some self-directed learning values are also reflective of collectivistic principles, in particular, the significant value placed on human relationships within the context of co-operation and collaboration in the learning process, and the recognition extended towards the interconnectedness of the emotional, physical, and spiritual dimensions of learning and living. According to Boud and Walker (1993: 79):

- *Collectivists accord significant value to the interpersonal relationships, therefore it is inevitable that the interpersonal assumes importance for those of this inclination;*
- *As learning is a social and cultural process, the interpersonal relationship cannot be ignored in any learning transaction.*

Marshall and Reason (1993) have linked successful research, and by inference understanding and learning, to the establishment of learning communities, a concept that is similar to Brookfield's research finding that self-directed learners felt that they belonged to a fellowship of learning (Brookfield 1990: 54–55). "Research is not an impersonal, external and solely intellectual endeavour but rather a complex, personal and social process" (Marshall and Reason 1993: 118). They go on to argue:

*Good research cannot be done alone, we each need to be included, to be with others who can support and challenge our*

*work, to be affirmed as inquiring persons and to know where we stand in relation to others (Marshall and Reason 1993: 122).*

This constitutes a challenge to traditional research/learning paradigms that are largely reflective of positivist values.

The literature on self-directed learning is supportive of the philosophy underlying the above statement by acknowledging the importance of the ‘person/situation’ variable in self-directed learning. “Self-directedness is not a quality that inheres in a person independent of the situation or in the situation independent of the person” (Candy 1991: 31). Habermas (1976: 9) claims that socialisation processes “shape the members of the system into subjects capable of speaking and action”. The earlier parts of this thesis discussed in some detail, the central tenet of collectivism, the self-collective bond and the unmistakable link between self and group. A logical extension of this is that some common values link the subculture of research, and by inference the activity of learning and the FHN to understand, to a culture of collectivism, and that many of the values of both are in-line with the communitarian values of self-directed learning.

This discussion now leaves its direct focus on self-directed learning and turns to other and possibly more salient theorists for informing the aims and goals of this thesis. Not considered as a seminal work in the area of self-directed learning, Mezirow’s (1985) theory of transformative learning is nevertheless a significant theory of adult learning that has influenced some aspects of self-directed learning theory. Transformative learning has been described by Mezirow as “a process of examining, questioning, validating and revising [meaning perspectives] perceptions” (Mezirow 1994: 223). Mezirow describes adults as having meaning perspectives that are by definition, frames



of references or sets of expectations (Mezirow 1985: 21–22). Past interpersonal experiences and cultural socialisation are just two examples of factors that shape and influence these meaning perspectives. Mezirow distinguishes between three meaning perspectives all centred within communicative interaction:

- **Epistemic meaning perspectives**, which are related to how knowledge is conceptualised and used.
- **Socio-linguistic meaning perspectives**, which are based on values, social norms, cultural expectations, religious beliefs, and family rules among others.
- **Psychological meaning perspectives**, which are concerned with the way individuals perceive themselves, for example, self-concept.

Mezirow's concepts can be said to be grounded in the notion that in the development of adult understanding, an essential kind of learning involves "how we are caught up in our own history and are reliving it" (Mezirow 1978: 101), or in Habermas's terms, our *lifeworld* which is different and even unique for each person (see explanation of Habermas's *lifeworld* concept later in this section). According to Hiemstra (1991), Mezirow, in forming his theories has been influenced by people such as Habermas (1971), Freire (1972), and Gould (1978). Hiemstra (1991: 9) notes Mezirow's suggestion that

*learning is more than the accumulation of new knowledge added on to existing knowledge; it is a process where many basic values and assumptions by which we operate are changed through our learning processes.*

In relation to Mezirow's theories, Jarvis (1992: 66) postulates that: "This approach to communicative interaction is similar to but not the same as Habermas's (1984) theory of communicative action". Jarvis goes on to point out that it could be construed that Habermas's position is possibly closer to the idea of the universality of hermeneutics than to emancipation. According to Habermas, learning as an activity is grounded in and is part of our everyday lives with all its restrictions and, in accordance with Mezirow's theory, is strongly influenced by each person's own *meaning perspective*; a framework built up within the particular culture in which the learner lives and has their being. It is also important to note that these meaning perspectives are open to be challenged and changed, according to both Habermas and Mezirow.

Meaning, as used in the above context, can be linked with learning and the need to understand because it is "... a way of talking about our [changing] ability—individually and collectively ..." (Wenger 1998: 5) and this is associated with "... our ability to experience the world and our engagement with it as meaningful ... [and] ... is ultimately what learning is to produce" (Wenger 1998: 4). As has been pointed out before in this review, as we seek to find meaning through learning, and satisfy our need to understand, our personal human value systems are often challenged. Because of this, the learning activity is not always pleasurable, as it could involve an inner struggle which may cause feelings of discomfort. Learning, then, can be seen as a process by which our sense of dissatisfaction expresses itself through activity placed within the limitations of our limited understandings of our environment.

Habermas's (1971) theory of 'knowledge constitutive interests' maintains that knowledge or cognition is produced by interests that shape the way knowledge is made.

According to Habermas (1971: 308–317), there are three types of human interests or human understandings or learning needs:

- **Technical interest** acquires knowledge that brings about technical control over natural objects.
- **Practical interest** focuses on meaning rather than scientific observation.
- **Emancipatory interest** goes beyond the goal of practical meaning to be involved in self-reflection and self understanding, so that distorted meanings can be transformed thus enabling the person to grow in potential and sense of well-being.

Relating Habermas's theory of knowledge to learning, Rogers (1986: 55–56) contends that *technical learning* refers to how we manipulate the environment and involves learning new skills and knowledge needed to control our natural lifeworld. *Practical learning* is concerned with being able to interpret practical situations of a social and interpersonal nature. The final type of learning, *emancipatory learning*, involves transformations of personal and socio-cultural assumptions held by people (Rogers 1986: 56). In other words, emancipatory learning involves becoming conscious of factors that may constrain and shape the way people perceive themselves and their surroundings. Each of these understandings can be linked to how learning plays a pivotal role in the satisfaction of our FHNs. Emancipatory learning theory, for instance, could have implications for FHN theory in terms of its obvious similarities to the theory of consciousness formation in relation to human need satisfaction.

According to Mezirow (1991: 69), Habermas's *lifeworld* "is the symbolically pre-structured world of everyday life and is a culturally transmitted and linguistically organized stock of interpretive patterns or perspectives". It contains many "unquestioned assumptions and shared cultural convictions", which include different codes, norms, roles, social practices, psychological patterns of dealing with others, and individual skills. This is where learning takes place according to both Mezirow and Habermas. Knowledge and understanding in terms of Habermas's lifeworld is primarily passed on through language, and it provides learners with a basis from which to begin to negotiate common understandings and meanings.

Following on from Habermas's argument, different types of learning in this lifeworld lend themselves to particular types of situations. For example, learning a routine skill (technical learning) may not require a person to challenge her or his basic values, meaning perspective, or associated belief system. On the other hand, a high school trained teacher, in learning to teach illiterate adults how to read and write via an alternative adult-centred method within a community setting, may be tremendously challenged in her or his sense of self and professionalism. This may, in fact, involve emancipatory learning; that is, meaning perspective transformation or even perspective transcendence on the part of the teacher to successfully teach within the new environment, as it could challenge the teacher's basic assumptions, values and beliefs about education. Rogers (1986: 57) argues that:

*Learning through life is rather an active engagement with our environment and with ourselves, a struggle that may actually increase tension, a process in which we seek to alter both our*

*environment and ourselves in the constant search for something better, some ideal to better meet our needs.*

The foregoing quote from Rogers encompasses all of Habermas's three domains of learning, as it is concerned with wanting to control the environment, to understand ourselves, and to be transformed into new realms of being. From Rogers' quote, it may be inferred that learning is a process that involves interaction within a person's whole environment in the search to satisfy the person's needs, together with the need to 'understand' and find meaning within the activity of learning. These processes, then, have the potential to lead the learner into a new suite of 'meaning perspectives' related to new or expanded forms of consciousness. This consciousness formation could also include an awakening to or awareness of FHNs of which the person had not been conscious prior to the learning experience. For example, through the learning process, and change in consciousness, a person could become aware of restrictive cultural practices in relation to the *division of labor* in his or her society or culture, for instance in relation to becoming an engineer or seamstress. Here the person goes through a process of consciousness formation concerning the FHN of freedom, so enabling him or her to make choices concerning his or her future life.

Interestingly, Habermas's theory of *knowledge constitutive interests* has close links to recent theories concerning the evolution of the mind and cognition. Mithen (1996) postulates that the human mind is a product of evolution over millions of years. He writes that this evolutionary process has led to five domains of intelligence coming into being within the human mind. Based on his own work as well as a wide range of cross-discipline theorists and research in the areas of cognition, psychology, archaeology, philosophy, neurology and anthropology, Mithen (1996) proposes these behavioural

domains to be made up of social, linguistic, technical, natural history, and general intelligences.

Framing much of his argument for the *social function of intellect* on Humphrey's (1976, 1984, 1992, 1993) writings, Mithen (1996: 52) proposes that social intelligence and the capacity, or even necessity, of humans to be connected to and stay active as part of a group, are interrelated. It is a person's social intelligence that enables an entering into

*... a diverse set of co-operative, competitive and mutualistic relationships, [as] individuals with an ability to predict the behaviour of others will achieve the greatest reproductive success (Mithen 1996: 52).*

He adds to this by pointing out that in terms of having social forethought and understanding, "social flexibility is at the heart of social intelligence" (Mithen 1996: 134). Mithen continues by arguing that social intelligence is essential for maintaining social cohesion so that practical knowledge, used for production and survival purposes, may be successfully passed on to following generations. This is the same point referred to earlier by Doyal and Gough (1991: 86).

Mithen (1996: 82–83) argues that the two centrepieces of social intelligence are:

*... the possession of extensive social knowledge about other individuals, in terms of knowing who allies and friends are, and the ability to infer the mental states of those individuals.*

These points made by Mithen about human intelligences have links to Habermas's and Mezirow's theories concerning the FHN to understand and learn, and as will be seen

next in this review, to the theme of the evolution, formation and transformation of consciousness.

There are also implications for social capital theory and reasons for the existence of its elements. Mithen proposes that the domain of human social intelligence was the first to emerge millions of years ago, coming into being after that of general intelligence and before the other intelligences arose within the human mind. So the suite of elements that make up the social capital construct may have been a part of human activity for rather a long time, smoothing or shaping the success or failure of millions of generations of human beings. These understandings surrounding social intelligence could play an essential part in shedding light on understanding the role of social capital in the satisfaction of FHNs.

### **2.5.2 Cognitive tension, the motivation to act and consciousness formation**

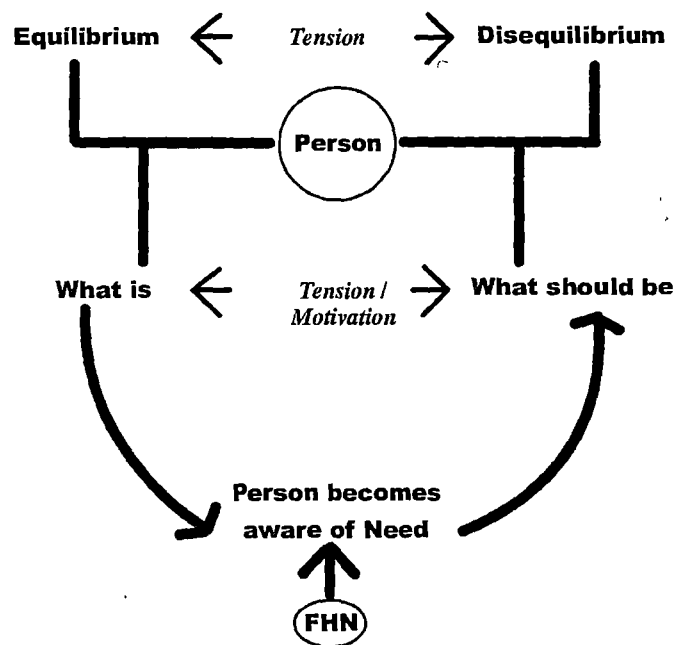
This section will attempt to inform our understanding of some of the internal processes going on in the mind of an individual confronted with a learning situation or, for that matter, any activity aimed at changing an object whose outcomes are intended to satisfy a FHN or needs. These sections discuss cognitive tension, motivation and its links with emotion and consciousness formation, as they relate to the need to understand, find meaning, and to learn. These links between emotion, motivation to act and consciousness have further implications for this thesis in terms of understanding how we go about satisfying our FHNs.

#### ***2.5.2.1 Cognitive tension and the motivation to act***

Motivation and its links with emotion, in relation to learning, may be directly associated with what could be termed as cognitive tension. Sites (1990) argues emotion as a key

instigator for need-satisfying actions and associated behaviours, both from a biological and psychological point of view. According to Boyle (1981: 156) cognitive tension is intrinsically related to the motivation to act within a perceived state of disequilibrium—for instance where the lack of the satisfaction of a conscious FHN can be seen as creating a tension between ‘what is’ and ‘what should or could be’ (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2**  
**Cognitive tension and the motivation to act**



Source: Adapted by the author from Boyle 1981: 143.

The above figure represents this tension or lack of satisfaction of a particular need. The tension represents an imbalance, calling for an adjustment within the situation or state of being, and gives rise to action leading to a new or changed set of conditions/perception/meaning which is assumed to be more desirable. This gap, or state of tension, which is sensed by the person, has the effect of contributing to the creation of



a state of disequilibrium that leads to motivation to set in motion actions and behaviours seeking to restore equilibrium (Festinger 1957; Tennant 1997: 64). In his discussion of learning need, Boyle (1981) quoting Weiner (1972), puts forward that an adult's needs system is one constantly seeking equilibrium. "Equilibrium is seen as a natural state toward which a person strives, both physiologically and psychologically" (Boyle, 1981: 144). Weiner (1972: 293) states that:

*...cognitive balance is postulated as a principle of motivation because imbalance corresponds to a state of disequilibrium, is unpleasant, and produces behaviours instrumental to the attainment of a balanced state.*

Tennant (1997: 64) argues this same point with reference to Piaget: "... all states of equilibrium are not equal from a cognitive point of view, ... cognitive development proceeds from *less* to *more* adequate states of equilibrium". Tennant (1997) goes on to point out that Piaget calls this process *equilibration*, which is a search for a better form of equilibrium, and is a tendency inherent to all healthy organisms. Tennant (1997) also argues that there are inbuilt dangers in this state of cognitive tension which, if continued for too long a period, could lead to the development of pathologies. He underlines the above point by referring to Piaget in noting that "... for Piaget durable disequilibrium constitutes pathological organic or mental states" (Tennant 1997: 64). This ties in with Max-Neef's (1992) theory of pseudo or false satisfiers of FHN leading, over time, to pathologies of an individual or collective nature by not truly satisfying needs. In these situations, cognitive tension is not relieved and so pathologies develop.

It can be postulated that in attempting to satisfy our conscious FHNs, certain internal energies come into being which enable a person to seek ways (for instance learn new

skills or gain further knowledge) to go about satisfying those perceived needs, including the need to understand, and find meaning, through the activity of learning. This internal state is one of motivation, which enables activities aimed at achieving goals whose outcomes satisfy those needs.

Motivation, it can be seen here, plays a significant role in the initiation and maintenance of effort toward learning and the achievement of a person's understanding, learning goals, and meaning attainment in a given situation. Motivation is generated out of our seeking to satisfy our FHNs at all levels of being, having, doing and interacting, and can be directly situated within one's view of one's lifeworld and associated cultural values.

The process of selecting goals and intentions, and deciding to participate in learning activities, for instance, establishes what Garrison (1997: 27) refers to as an "entering motivational state". This motivational 'activation energy' continues to fuel ongoing motivation to achieve, provided the learner has some form of control over the learning outcomes (Garrison 1997: 27). People seeking to enter into a learning environment will have a higher entering motivational state if they perceive that learning goals meet their immediate and consciously formed needs, especially if they are achievable and match the learner's present values and meaning perspectives, and therefore, cultural imperatives. Garrison states that this process of linking needs to learning goals and the resultant success, contributes to the self-efficacy of the learner, and to learning self-direction development (Garrison 1997: 28).

In a more formal sense, motivation can be defined as "an internal state that arouses, directs, and maintains behaviour" (Woolfolk 1993: 336). Rogers (1986: 62) defines

motivation “as those factors that energise and direct behavioural patterns organised around a goal”.

Although much of the argument in this thesis stems from a humanistic view of human need and motivation, it also draws on theory from both the cognitive and social learning approaches to motivation, and in doing so involves concepts of both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. These two concepts have direct implications for people who come from either collectivistic or individualistic value orientations, as is discussed below.

Woolfolk (1993: 339) states that, “Equilibrium is based on the need to assimilate new information and make it fit cognitive schemes”: in other words the need to understand and find meaning within the framework of their lifeworld. He goes on to point out that the need to understand motivates people’s activity and behaviour in seeking to satisfy their learning needs and, by inference, their other FHNs. His theory emphasises intrinsic motivation as an underlying element of needs-satisfaction activities.

Intrinsic motivations are those motivations which stem from a person’s own resources, such as interest or curiosity, and can be directly linked to the person’s fundamental needs as well as their desires and wants. Woolfolk (1993) argues that intrinsic motivation is essential for meaningful and worthwhile learning from an individual learning point of view, and for achieving quality educational outcomes, particularly in a culturally individualistically-oriented learning environment. He makes the point that personal interest and intrinsic motivation in this type of environment are likely to foster a deep approach to learning, and an active search for personal meaning, laying foundations leading to responsible and continuous learning—plainly an individualistic approach. Extrinsic motivation, from within this individualistically-centred perspective,

stems then from those forces that exist beyond the person and within the environment in which the person is participating. It is primarily based on, for example, earning rewards or avoiding punishments according to Woolfolk (1993: 337) and Rogers (1986: 62).

The above approach to motivation can be seen in action when described within Weiner's *attribution theory* as cited in Woolfolk (1993), which takes a cognitive individualistic approach to motivation. Attribution theories assume that as human beings we are constantly asking ourselves the question "why?", especially in the context of our needs satisfaction. In this theory an individual's prime motivation is affected by how they explain, justify and excuse themselves, stemming out of their own past experiences and interactions (both positive or negative) with and within their own particular environments or lifeworlds; that is individuals attribute causes to their learning successes and failures. Weiner (1972: 353–355) argues that people ascribe most of their successes and failures to three elements:

- **Location** of the cause, as in whether it can be attributed to internal or external influences. This element is said to have a positive or negative effect on self-esteem when attributed to internal factors. Here success in the activity leads to increased motivation, and failure leads to a diminished motivation.
- **Stability** in terms of whether the cause may in some way change, or be changed or not be changed by the individual. This factor then affects the person's view of the future in terms of satisfying his or her needs. Success or failure associated with stable factors increases or decreases motivation accordingly.
- **Responsibility**, meaning how much control the person has over the cause. This element of responsibility gives rise to possible emotional responses, such as

anger, shame or guilt, which can either motivate or not. In this framework stable, uncontrollable causes are the greatest threat to motivation, as they can lead to a learned sense of helplessness in meeting a need.

A person's conscious FHNs will lead to activity that will attempt to satisfy that need. Therefore he or she could possibly turn to false satisfiers of the need so as to bring about a semblance of equilibrium once more. For example, a person who has had negative learning experiences in the past, especially in childhood, may have gained a sense of helplessness in the area of formal education. Their motivation will be very low to return to formal education so as to satisfy the need to *understand*. Motivations to seek other satisfiers then come into play, sometimes in the form of informal learning, thereby gathering the needed knowledge and skills, and in turn having a positive or possibly even a negative effect on the satisfaction of the need to understand or of other needs such as 'participation', 'creativity' or 'subsistence'.

This review now turns its attention to one more motivation theory, that of Atkinson. His expectancy x values theory is cited in Atkinson and Raynor (1978). This is a theory that stems out of social learning approaches to motivation and can be better related to collectivistically-orientated individuals. Expectancy x value theory puts forward that motivation is the product of an individual's expectancy of possible goal achievement and the value that goal has for the person in a given environment/situation (Atkinson and Raynor 1978: 12). If either of these two factors has a value of zero, then there is no motivation to achieve that goal. For motivation to be generated, both of these factors need to exist in some positive manner as the stronger the motive to succeed, the higher the need for achievement—the more rewarding the success in achieving the task. This

brings about a personal sense of self-efficacy. Self-efficacy (Bandura 1995, 1997) refers to our beliefs about our personal competence in a given set of circumstances and, where this is high, leads to expectations of future success. Boyle (1981: 145) underwrites the importance of self-efficacy in adult learning when he cites White:

*... the existence of an "independent energy" source for the ego, not connected to "libidinal" forces, which he calls "effictance." ... Effictance is a prompting to explore the properties of the environment; it leads to an accumulating knowledge of what can and cannot be done with the environment; its biological significance lies in this very property of developing competence.*

Bandura (1995, 1997) argues that self-efficacy is not only an attribute of individuals but also of communities, and that the theory has a cross-cultural significance and application. One of these implications is that an individual's rights/freedoms are intimately intertwined with individual responsibilities in terms of the communities in which they live and interact (Illich 1973; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Galtung 1994; Bandura 1995, 1997; Bakhurst 1997; Boucouvalas 1997). The well-being of communities depends on how individuals respond to the needs of others in that community, and the reverse also holds true.

The notions of self-efficacy and motivation are intimately linked to consciousness and all its implications. So this is a good stage at which to introduce the concept of the consciousness, its formation and transformation. If we as human beings and communities of interaction are not conscious of a particular need(s), or social structural constraint(s), such as the division of labor, or different rules for different people in the

satisfaction our FHNs in a given set of circumstances, then it is unlikely that the motivation to act will be present.

#### ***2.5.2.2 Consciousness formation***

According to Boucouvalas (1997: 57), “Most adult educators writing on transformational learning seem to agree that a transformation of consciousness is involved” and for all the writers in this area of adult education research “transformation in learning involves a process of becoming more aware”. This is an important understanding for this thesis, as much of the foregoing argument concerning FHNs and their satisfaction presupposes that a person or persons seeks only to satisfy those FHNs of which they are conscious. Understanding the concept of consciousness, its formation and its transformation, is a very important element of this journey to understanding social capital as the mediator of human need satisfaction. To begin, I will first return to Mithen’s work concerning the evolution of the human mind and the evolution of human consciousness.

At a fundamental level, Mithen (1996: 185–194) relates the broad concept of human consciousness to social intelligence, as played out through an evolutionary process. He argues that it is within this evolutionary process that linguistic intelligence evolves as an integral part and result of collective human interaction. Mithen builds on Humphrey’s (1976, 1984, 1992, 1993) theories when he argues:

*At some stage in our evolutionary past we became able to interrogate our own thoughts and feelings, asking ourselves how we would behave in some imagined situation. In other words, consciousness evolved as part of social intelligence (Mithen 1996: 147).*

Mithen places this very human capacity for self-reflection in the realm of the individual, but always within an individual acting within a social context:

*Social life is about building and testing hypotheses ... In effect we explore our own mind and use it as the best model we have for the mind of another individual. We reflect on how we would feel and behave in a particular context and assume that another individual will do likewise. This is a very powerful argument for the evolution of reflexive consciousness (Mithen 1996 :84).*

According to Mithen (1996: 188), only in the last 100 000 years or so have humans been able to achieve cognitive fluidity. He describes cognitive fluidity as the use of skills and knowledge from each of the domains of intelligence (social, linguistic, technical, natural history, and general) across all the domains of intelligence, and links this ability to the development consciousness. Mithen argues that with the evolution of linguistic capability, as an integral part of social activity, came the ability for cognitive fluidity and its associated *reflexive consciousness*.

Mithen describes *reflexive consciousness* as a person's ability for reasoning and reflection about his or her own and other's mental states. Mithen (1996: 188) cites Rozin (1976: 262) in support of this argument of a concept of an *advanced intelligence* as being "the bringing to consciousness of the knowledge which was already in the human mind but located within the *cognitive unconsciousness*". In a sense our human consciousness is related in some way to what we are aware of within our unconscious mind. A possible implication of this is that as human beings we may know unconsciously of our FHNs and their associated potential for well-being. This could have been laid down in the sense of socio-cultural memory through selective



evolutionary processes of what is best for survival within uncertain environments over multitudes of generations. Also there is a strong possibility that memory and knowledge may be collected and passed on in some manner through our DNA/genetic structure—there are reports of scientific evidence underpinning this notion—as well as through socio-cultural transmission, but maybe this second point is speculation at this point in the literature review. This section will now consider theories of consciousness formation and transformation as they relate to learning, and their links to human need, mainly the need to understand and find meaning, and to possible implications for understanding the role of the elements of social capital in a given socio-cultural environment.

In evolutionary terms Boucouvalas (1997: 57) agrees with Mithen's stance that "governed by the principle of survival ..." over the last 100 000 years or so, and across many generations, human beings have grouped together and adapted through a newly-formed cognitive fluidity and its associated consciousness. This has enabled integrated learning to take place by using all the forms of intelligence to solve problems associated with many varying, changing, and new environments. Supporting Mithen's stance, Boucouvalas (1997) notes that these adaptations have primarily come about through changes taking place in the area of human consciousness, which have strengthened humankind's ability to problem solve. These relatively newly-formed human problem solving skills, many of them social in nature (Mithen 1996: 135), have been associated by some Palaeolithic archaeologists with the developing skill of *Homo Sapiens Sapiens* to successfully network socially both within and outside the social 'in-group'.

*We networked well, and when times got hard we had kith and kin to run to. The Neanderthals did not. It is like remembering aunties and cousins. We send Christmas cards, but the Neanderthals did not. That doomed them (Gamble 2000).*

This adaptation and ongoing integrated use of cognitive fluidity supported the transformation of consciousness, in terms of individual human potentials, which has continued to develop at a faster and faster pace in many cultures and societies, especially over the last two hundred years or so. Boucouvalas (1997: 57) notes that this adaptation involves humanity being confronted by and undergoing a societal transformation, from agriculture to industrial to information-based societies as the central project of life, in which learning is becoming the “principal business of life” just for survival. This thought of Boucouvalas resonates with the quote from Jarvis (1995) at the beginning of this section:

*Human learning is a lifelong process, one which has acquired greater significance as the speed of change in society has increased so that its members are almost compelled to keep learning in order to remain members (Jarvis 1995: 1).*

Boucouvalas (1997) cites an increasing amount of evidence, in support and explanation of an evolution of consciousness theory, in which the process of consciousness formation is seen to be culturally determined through inter-human co-operation. Each culture has its own “elaborate scheme of rules, regulations, customs developed to guide social behaviour” (Boucouvalas 1997: 57) and regulates much of the framework of understandings and meanings in which individuals interact with others in a given environment (Humphrey 1976, 1984, 1992, 1993; Stringer and Gamble 1993; Gamble 1994; Mithen 1996; Boucouvalas 1997). As modern day evidence Boucouvalas (and

Valle 1989) puts forward work being researched in the field of *transpersonal psychology* which

*deals with that part of the human phenomenon that goes beyond the personal ego as a sole source of motivation and likewise addresses consciousness as a multi-layered, multi-levelled, multi-state phenomenon (Boucouvalas 1997: 57).*

Consciousness formation is framed in a number of ways, one of which is *critical reflection*. Day (1993: 88) argues that while reflection is necessary in the learning process, it is not enough on its own. He notes that “confrontation either by self or others must occur”. According to Van der Veen (2000: 45), “Critical reflection leads to both a better understanding of the complex and dynamic political context and the development of innovative forms of political action”. Brookfield (1988: 102) uses the term critical reflection to mean a healthy scepticism towards learning by adults. In other words, adults should be given opportunities to consider alternative interpretations of their work and lives. Like Daloz. (1986: 101), however, he cautions that if learners were to be challenged by fellow learners and/or the educator, it is vital for a climate of support and trust to prevail.

Illich (1973: 11) uses the term *conviviality* in connection with consciousness formation to mean the “autonomous and creative intercourse among persons, and the intercourse of persons with their environment”, including a sense of value in individual freedom (an essential and fundamental human need). Illich sees this freedom as being linked to interdependence of each person’s unique individuality to his or her neighbour’s. Illich (1973: 12) expresses an understanding of the *convivial society* as one in which social arrangements guarantee for each member the most ample and free access to the

mediating resources of the communities of interaction in which the person interacts, and this freedom is only limited in favour of another person's equal freedom. This dream of Illich's tends to be rather utopian as concepts of freedom are very much situated in reality and deeply connected to one's own, and others', consciousness and value system. One should never neglect the power plays which take place within the *division of labor* at each of the micro, meso and macro levels in any given community or society.

*Paradigm shifts*, whether in individuals (Bridges 1980) or in communities (Kuhn 1970), appear to have a clear pattern. Boucouvalas (1997) points to a number of adult education theorists, including Freire, Mezirow, and Daloz, whose work is of importance in terms of understanding some of these paradigm shifts when it comes to consciousness formation/transformation patterns in a learning environment. This review will now outline some of these theories and work; in particular, it will focus on Freire, Mezirow and Daloz. From each, according to Boucouvalas (1997: 57), "emerges a unique central concept" or pattern which is of significance for informing this thesis. For Freire (1972, 1993, 1994) the paradigm shift is *conscientisation* as the route to critical reflection; for Mezirow (1978, 1991) it is *perspective transformation* and the role of *critical reflectivity*, and for Daloz. (1986) it is the *relationship between people* or *social connectivity* which enables, enriches and encourages the process of understanding and finding meaning.

In the last 40 years Freire (1972, 1993, 1994) has become a seminal thinker in libratory adult education and human development. Over the years he has provided sound basic practical insights into the process and practice of adult learning and development, particularly in the context of social change and consciousness formation. His philosophy

and methodologies have brought about an awakening process within many people and societies to social and cultural constraints concerning the full gambit of human need and their satisfiers, particularly that of *freedom* and *participation* as FHNs. Much of Freire's philosophy and methodologies are concerned with contexts of consciousness and social structural change necessary to satisfy FHNs (that is, empowerment).

According to Haull, in the forward to Freire's (1972) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Freire makes one basic assumption concerning humankind: humanity has an *ontological vocation* to be a *subject* who acts upon and transforms his or her lifeworlds, and in so doing move towards ever new possibilities of a fuller and richer life both individually, and collectively with other individuals.

Freire (1993) uses the term *conscientisation* (the formation of a critical consciousness) to explain the processes necessary for movement toward collective action, which leads to social change. Freire (1993: 65) argues that people should act together to solve problems by analysing their life possibilities, and the potential of alternatives to the social status quo, as well as understanding possible social structural constraints on their lives, in order to develop effective strategies for the transformation of their lifeworlds. He asserts that education should be a mutual learning process entered into by both learners and teacher.

*The role of the teacher/learner [in Freire's terms] is to set up a situation characterised by co-operation and acceptance of interchange ability and mutuality in the roles of teacher and learner (Heaney 1995: 10).*

Both teacher and learner should be open to changes in consciousness through paradigm shifts in their respective meaning perspectives (Freire 1993: 42).

Freire (1993) argues that consciousness formation is an ongoing process in which the learner moves toward critical consciousness—a moment of irreversible transformation in a given set of circumstances. This process is the heart of Freire’s methodology. For Freire, conscientisation means breaking through prevailing mythologies to reach new levels of awareness and in particular, awareness of oppressive constraints, related to being an *object* in a world where only *subjects* have power. This process of conscientisation involves identifying and reflecting on the contradictions of one’s lifeworld experiences in dialogue with others, and then moving on by means of action towards becoming a subject rather than remaining an object, thereby participating in the transformation of the world. Freire calls this reflection/action process *praxis*.

I now turn to Mezirow, the second consciousness formation theorist in Boucouvalas’s list, whose theories are based on research surrounding work with colleagues, students, practitioners as well as self. Mezirow’s (1978, 1991) approach has some similarities to Freire, mainly in terms of consciousness formation, where learning is seen to generate new paradigms. However, Mezirow’s theory of consciousness formation and transformation is different from Freire’s approach as it involves “discourse, self-reflection, and reflective action, but on one’s assumptions” leading to transformation essentially at a personal level (Boucouvalas 1997: 57).

The process argued by Mezirow is based primarily around an individual’s personal transformation. Mezirow’s consciousness transformation as a process is embedded within a self-reflective task-oriented learning situation. It most often is a response to a *disorienting dilemma* (such as divorce), leading to a personal reframing of one’s lifeworld or, in Mezirow’s terms, a *perspective transformation*. During this process

“objective reframing involves task-oriented learning, while subjective reframing involves the self-reflective learning” (Boucoulalas 1997: 58).

Within this framework, the chief aim of the educator is to enable the learner to develop the abilities necessary for entering into a space where “discourse, critical self-reflection on assumptions, and reflective action” (Boucoulalas 1997: 58) can take place. This, of course, presupposes a relationship, particularly that of trust, between the learner and the educator. So it is valuable here to describe Daloz’s (1986) understanding of teaching and the importance of mutual trust in the learner/teacher relationship in the learning environment, thereby encouraging a transformative environment.

Daloz (1986: 237) argues:

*If learning is about growth and growth requires trust, then teaching is about engendering trust about nurturance-caring for growth. Teaching is thus pre-eminently an act of care.*

For Daloz, relationship and especially the element of trust have a catalytic effect that can lead to a deepening awareness on the part of the learner. This is evident in his 1986 work, according to Boucoulalas (1997), as well as in his more recent research (Daloz 1996). Daloz’s view of consciousness formation or transformation is focused on the importance of awareness of interpersonal connectedness as it relates to relationship.

According to Daloz (1986: 212–218), challenge and support within the learning relationship are vital for personal transformation and growth. Although Daloz’s (1986) work referred to the mentoring relationship between teachers of adults and adult learners, his thoughts of challenge and support are relevant to broader issues of consciousness formation.

Boucouvalas (1997: 58) relates Daloz's recent work to her theory of homonomy that "refers to the meaning derived in life by feeling and being parts of greater wholes". *Autonomous* and *homonomous* balance is essential, in Boucouvalas's view, for authentic consciousness transformation to take place. She argues that homonomy should complement autonomy. This is similar to Daloz's more recent work (Daloz 1996) "which concentrates on an individual's relationship with a larger cause" (Boucouvalas 1997: 58). Their work, argues Boucouvalas (1997: 58), "attempts to understand a self grown large enough to identify with and embrace more than the personal ego". So while many other writers in adult education place emphasis on the development of the autonomous aspects of self as an agent of change, rather than on relationships, Daloz "focuses more on consciousness of connectedness" as the prime mover (Boucouvalas 1997: 58).

Following on Daloz's concern with the importance of interactive challenge in transformative learning, it is appropriate to consider the lifeworlds in which learning takes place and their connection to satisfying the full gambit of all our FHNs, particularly the need to *understand and find meaning*. The above attributes of human consciousness, awareness, and inter-human activity, are embedded in each person's lifeworld, particularly in that of culture and social community activity. This lifeworld can essentially be understood as being embedded within a system of values, beliefs and behaviours whereby human beings, through meeting the FHN to understand, create shared meaning through their interactions in satisfying their FHNs. These shared meanings come about within people's own experiential, interactive and situated environments.



According to Gee (1997: 235):

*The claim that thinking and meaning are situated (i.e., that they are dove-tailed to particular purposes and social contexts) is now a popular one and stems from work in a variety of disparate areas, where the meaning of the word situated itself takes on somewhat differently situated meanings.*

It is within these socio-cultural lifeworlds that human consciousness achieves significance in its ability to represent that lifeworld internally within our individual minds, and externally through communicating with others. Culture and our worlds of interaction, as were explored in previous sections of this literature review, are the significant frameworks in which our minds and our thinking become apparent and understandings take place. This is the reference grid in which our FHNs are satisfied; it is where learning takes place as understandings and meanings are expressed and referenced against our experiences with others, becoming historically significant factors of our lifeworld environments. This cultural-historical environment then acts as part of each person's motivational system, leading to further FHN satisfying activities such as learning.

There is a strong body of research that underpins the above concepts of human interaction, and argues that human interaction is the source of all thought in the human mind. This view puts forward that human thinking does not take place inside the human brain but rather is situated externally within social interaction. This body of work is labelled *communitarian psychology* and had its beginnings in the research and theorising of Vygotsky, Leont'ev, Luria, and Ilyenkov (Axel 1997; Bakhurst 1997; Engeström 1999c).

The theories put forward by communitarian psychology have particular significance for an understanding of consciousness as expressed within lifeworld activity. These concepts, as basic notions, have at their heart the development of *human potentials* through realisation of "... the observed, multiple specific organizations of consciousness under particular conditions" (Axel 1997: 135), and have significance for understanding the FHNs as potentials which are open to be satisfied in a myriad of situated ways.

These human potentials of the communitarian tradition, argues Axel (1997), can be understood as the generalised connectivity between human beings and the world in which they live out their lives. This is similar to that of the lifeworld concept of Habermas (1971, 1984). Each lifeworld in these terms has evolved over time through evolutionary processes, and in this tradition "human activity and consciousness are neither instinctually nor genetically driven" (Axel 1997: 135), echoing FHN theory. A human being's problem-solving ability through consciousness formation is deemed to be the prime mover and developmental mechanism for the accumulation of all human experiences and knowledge, overshadowing the dominance of gene selection as the only form of evolutionary progression.

In the communitarian tradition human beings are intrinsically social beings according to Axel (1997: 136).

*Human consciousness itself is socially created. The human being unfolds its individuality through its social activity under social conditions that imply the motives and goals of their activity, their means and modes ... [and a human being] has a potential direction towards the appropriation of motives and goals and*

*unfolding of the emotions and needs based on activities and tools  
evolving in the history of society.*

So in these terms most FHNs, as human potentials, have been in an evolutionary sense, socially created and developed over time through human interactivity, including connectivity to past generational interactivity through cultural transmission, as well as to their wider situated environment. In other words “... we, in some strong sense, owe our very humanity to the communities in which we live our lives” (Bakhurst 1997: 148). For illustrative purposes this is very similar to the African traditional and spiritual concept of *Ubuntu*.

*Ubuntu* is a deeply held African lifeworld and spiritually connected concept, which expresses a form of communitarian humanism and contains elements of what could be construed to be an African form of social capital. Broadly speaking, each person is ideally seen as being experienced through his or her relationships with others and theirs with him or her. This, in turn, recognises and establishes the reality of a person’s own human experience. An African saying goes: “People are made people through other people”. People experience their own worth and the worth of others by participating in community, including their community’s connectedness to past generations and their actions. Participation binds people together and brings life (Louw 1998; Mokgoro 1998).

Returning to the discussion of the communitarian tradition, Axel (1997: 136–138) argues that human activity “is always social and cooperative and occurs within the social division of labour” even when actions are taking place in the absence of other human agents, that is in solitude. All actions are a part of a “social net of processes” arising out of actions performed by oneself and others in the past. “In this way activity mediates

between the cultural and the social on the one hand and the individual on the other” (Axel 1997: 138). According to Axel (1997), the consequence of these theories is that Leont’ev believes that uniqueness, personality difference and the resultant individuality of each human person is the result of human social activity.

Each individual’s meanings base, in these terms then, is socially constructed through activity separated from consciousness to start with, while at the same time becoming conscious of the objective relations through the activity. Sense and meaning become synthesised during the activity as goals and motives are revealed and consciousness is engaged in preparation for future action. It is through activity that we become conscious, in other words.

Thus, as Axel (1997: 139) explains, when activity takes place, knowledge results as needs and interests are satisfied within human interaction. In Leont’ev’s terms:

*Human nature does not determine specific activities, but it does determine the set of possible activities which can be realised. This is because human beings are active social agents who produce objects for the satisfaction of their needs and thereby develop the elements of their psyche and internal relationships.*

Bakhurst (1997: 149) argues the importance of these communitarian concepts of activity by stating:

*Activity, seen in terms of human material interaction, is the ‘key concept’ which explains the ‘nature and origin of human consciousness’. ... Our very humanity then depends on our social connectedness and interactions.*

Bakhurst (1997: 161) concludes that these communitarian concepts are also linked to the theories of Ilyenkov (1974), who argues that the human ability to think is embedded in, as well as part of, the “capacity to act in accordance with the dictates of an enculturised environment”. Bakhurst (1997) notes that Ilyenkov views thinking as a form of action, and action thinking, and in terms of communitarian concepts both are culturally and historically embedded.

The term that is used to describe these concepts in model form is known as cultural-historical activity theory. Cultural-historical activity theory (activity theory for short) is based on communitarian concepts and has over the last 15 years or so gained momentum, with a number of researchers in Europe and America engaging in research in this area. These researchers have added to and expanded on the theory, particularly in the form of a model which can be used to describe learning or knowledge growth activities in the work environment (Engeström 1999c). Therefore, it would be of value now to turn to this model for the last parts of our explorations into the world of the FHN satisfaction and social capital. In this next section we will place the above theories into a learning theory model, that of activity theory.

## **2.6 Activity theory**

Activity theory is a theory for understanding the elements and outcomes of human activity, interaction and development in terms of people’s needs-satisfying actions, particularly in a cultural-historical context. It is based around the proposition that humans and their consciously formed artifacts shape and are shaped by the social and physical environments in which they live, in other words their lifeworlds (Cole 1996: 102–103). Activity theory (Engeström 1987, 1999c; Engeström and Miettinen 1999) is

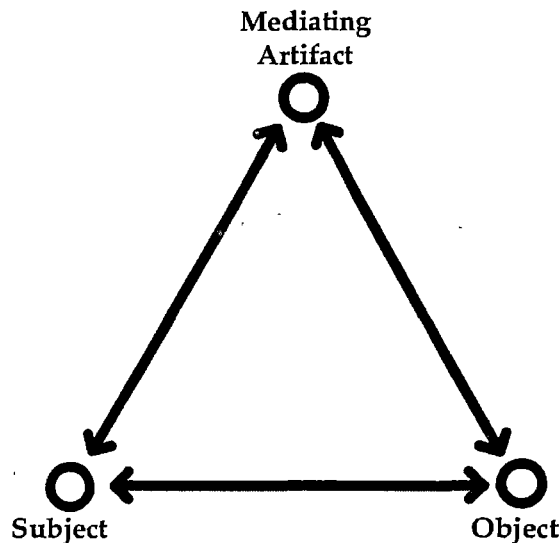
therefore a useful model for understanding the processes of learning, and indeed for understanding any need satisfying activity (Engeström 1999b: 380–381).

Learning in terms of activity theory is interactive and social, and can be examined both in the context of individuals or groups, at a micro level or a meso level of interaction. It is rooted in communitarian psychology and has a great affinity to situated cognition and constructivism theories (Salomon 1993). The theory sets out to describe and understand human activity in terms where people are acknowledged as subjects or agents and not as objects; subjects or agents embedded within collective action such as problem solving or activity aimed towards a particular object. The object of the learning activity always has a conscious and particular human need focus, and is that which the person or persons want to influence or alter in some way (Bannon 1990; Engeström 1999a, 1999b). It is the focus or consciousness of the need that connects the subject or agent to the object and acts as the instigator, motivator or energiser aimed towards an outcome based around goals whose intent is the satisfaction of cognisant or conscious need(s), as they relate to the object (Bannon 1990; Nardi 1996; Engeström 1999a, 1999b). Different actors may also have different views about the object of activity and motive to participate. This need-satisfying behaviour is never static, as it is set over time, changing the person(s)/subject(s) view or understanding of the object, leading eventually to an outcome of some form. The cycle is then free to begin again.

Within this basic Vygotskyian model (Vygotsky 1978: 40) of human activity (see Figure 3), as well as in the case of learning activities, objects and the resultant outcomes are deemed to be mediated by a wide variety of historically, intergenerationally connected, culturally and socially derived artefacts (Pea 1993). These artifacts are to be found in the

form of tools, signs, social structures or ways of being, having, doing and interacting, as in Max-Neef's model of FHN satisfaction.

**Figure 3**  
**Vygotsky's model of a mediated act**



Source: Engeström 1999c: 2.

Engeström and Miettinen (1999: 4), in citing Leont'ev (1981: 208), argue that:

*Only through a relation with other people does man [sic] relate to nature itself, which means that labour appears from the very beginning as a process mediated by tools (in the broad sense) and at the same time mediated socially.*

An artifact here is defined as a component of a thinking system because of its inherent ability to mediate basic bio-cognitive functions of a person/subject or group of persons/subjects (Pea 1993). It is a component of the system that supports the 'bio-cognitive function' of need-satisfying activity. The artifact does this by mediating on the person's or group's behalf, enabling or creating new forms of understanding and meaning for the person/subject or group, and supporting the achievement of an outcome

in relation to the object (Vygotsky 1978; Luria and Vygotsky 1992; Pea 1993; Engeström 1999b, 1999c).

At the basic level an artifact is “a material object that has been modified by human beings as a means of regulating their interactions with the world and each other” (Cole 1999: 90), and is the product of consciousness (Ilyenkov 1977: 94 cited in Cole 1999: 90; Engeström and Miettinen 1999). An example of this basic level would be a hammer or a computer. These tools are derived from “successful adaptations of an earlier time (in the life of the individual who made them or in earlier generations)” (Cole 1999: 90). Cole (1999: 90) expands on this and makes the point that “human beings [also] simultaneously adopt the symbolic resources they embody”, for instance a hammer may be used as a symbol, and the use of language in this context is also seen as a mediating artifact (Cole 1999: 90–91).

Engeström (1999b: 382–383) suggests that mediating artifacts may be divided into four types:

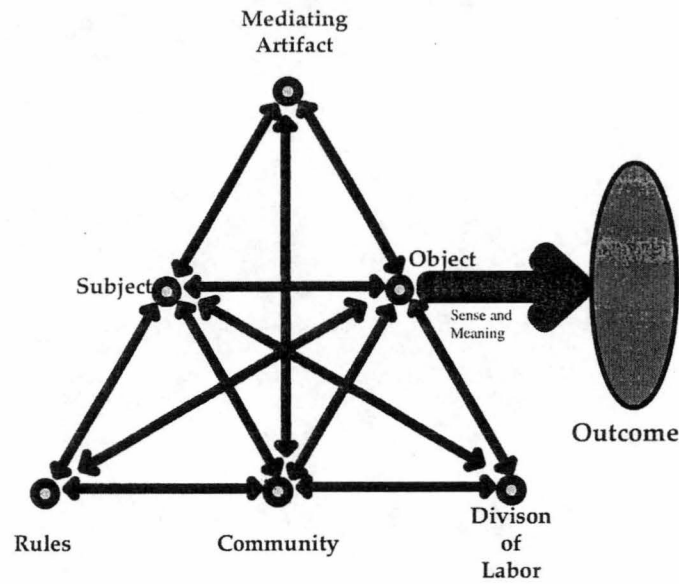
- *What* artifacts are used to identify and describe objects.
- *How* artifacts guide and direct processes and procedures on, within, or between objects.
- *Why* artifacts are used to diagnose and explain the properties and behaviour of objects.
- *Where* artifacts assist in anticipating likely changes to the object in the future, including potential changes to institutions and social systems.



Engeström goes on to make the point that “although certain artifacts are typically used in certain ways, there is nothing inherently fixed in an artifact that would determine that it can only be, for instance, a *why* artifact” (Engeström 1999b: 382). It is in the above contexts of an artifact, particularly in the how, why and where contexts, that there are possible connections with the elements of the social capital construct, such as shared or congruent values, norms, trust, and reciprocity.

Further development of the model by Leont’ev (see Figure 4), according to Engeström (1999c), takes into account that any activity, such as learning, always takes place within a particular community or social environment. Each environment has its own *rules* that are dependent on historically and collectively derived shared values, norms, laws, standards, policies or ways of acting in the form of the *division of labor*. According to Engeström (1999c), this development of the model also should take into account the multi-voicedness of activities in terms of the object and possible outcomes of the activity. It is these “internal tensions and contradictions of such a system that are the motive force of change and development” in the *community* and the activity system at all levels of social interaction—micro, meso or macro (Engeström and Miettinen 1999: 10). Levels of *consciousness*, and therefore related motivators or energisers, are affected by the varied perceptions of the different members of the *community* in which the activity takes place, particularly in how people are divided in defining and influencing the object of learning as defined by their concept of the *division of labor* and the *rules* adhered to in that *community* or society (Engeström 1987; Engeström 1999b; Engeström and Miettinen 1999).

**Figure 4**  
**The structure of a human activity system**

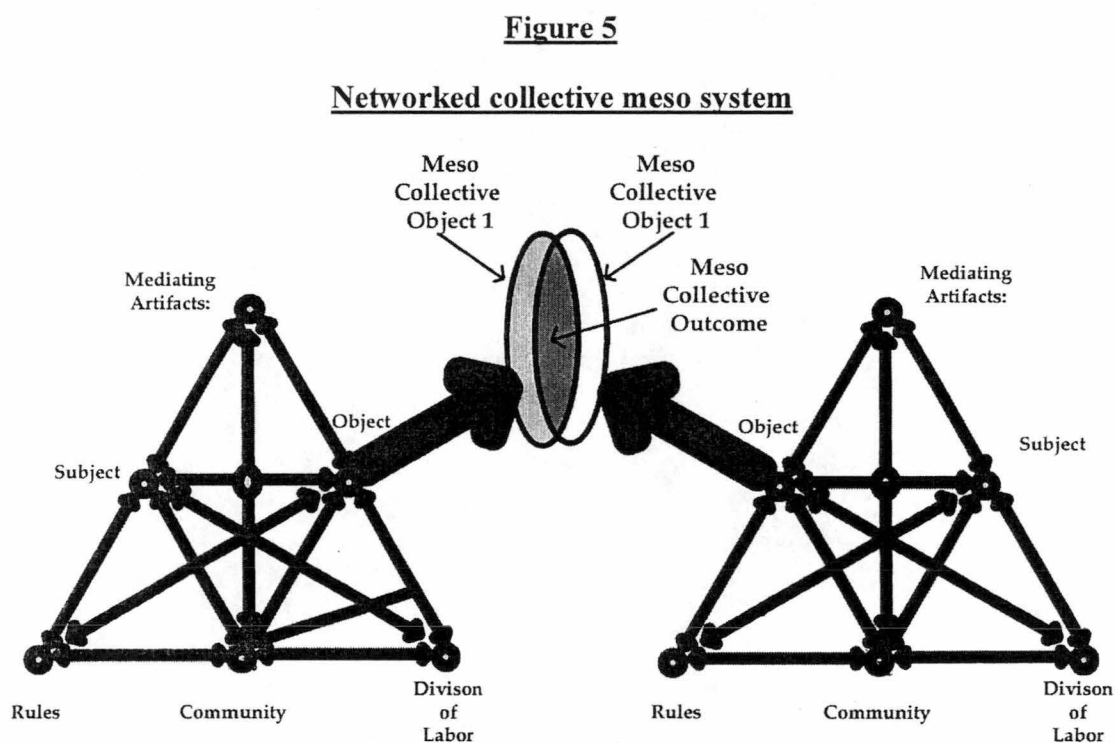


Source: Engeström 1999c: 2

Further expansion of the model has seen the development of a networked meso level of the model (Engeström 1999c). In this third generation of the theory, conceptual tools are being developed to include and “understand dialogue, multiple perspectives, and networks of interacting activity systems” (Engeström 1999c: 3). Here the model now includes, at a minimum, two activity systems interacting around similar objects. According to Engeström (1999c: 4), “the object of activity is a moving target, not reducible to conscious short-term goals”. Here the object becomes *collectively meaningful* and is constructed by the expanded activity system itself, for it is potentially shared or jointly created in a collaborative sense (see Figure 5).

Engeström (1999c) argues that in this third generation model, an activity system should be seen in the context of a network of interconnectedness with other activity systems. The system is multi-voiced in the way that “a system is always a community of multiple points of view, traditions and interests” (Engeström 1999c: 4). Here the *division of*

*labour* takes on particular significance, creating different positions for each actor, each of whom come from a wide range of previous activity experiences. The system here has historical elements woven into its making, thereby creating its own dilemmas and problems through its *multi-layeredness*, in terms of each system being historically engraved in by its own artifacts, rules and ways of doing things. Another element of this third generation is to be found in what Engeström (1999c: 5) calls the contradictions or “historically accumulating structural tensions within and between activity systems”. It is contradictory in the sense that these tensions are also opportunities for creative change in terms of growth, development of new understandings, and meaning frameworks.



Source: Adapted from Engeström 1999c: 4

Each different understanding of activity theory, especially at the third generation level (Figure 5), motivates and supports the place of social capital within the model. The elements of social capital, such as shared values, trust, and networking, in a collective sense enable and smooth the processes whereby FHNs may be satisfied in some manner

through activity aimed at changing a particular object; in other word they are mediating artifacts. Here it can be seen how activity theory helps, informs and maps out understandings of the research problem: *Do the elements of the social capital construct mediate the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, particularly the human need to understand and find meaning, and if so, why and how?* and of the hypothesis: *The elements highlighted by the social capital construct have come into existence, in a co-evolutionary sense, so as to mediate the satisfaction of fundamental human needs, and take on differing forms across diverse cultures.*

## **2.7 Conclusion**

The literature review has demonstrated that striving for the satisfaction of fundamental human needs is intimately intertwined with culture, the activity of learning, and the elements of the social capital construct. Each exerts a strong influence on people's lifeworlds in the form of understanding, meaning frameworks and consciousness formation, as it is embedded in their everyday activities. The literature review has explored the concepts that everyone has fundamental needs, and that these fundamental needs are linked to values, practices and behaviours, each set within a particular cultural environment. Such a cultural environment is never static or a discrete entity, but is composed of interrelated configurations which have evolved over time and are continuing to evolve at an ever-increasing pace as human environments change more and more drastically due to technological change. The review demonstrates the potential role played by the elements of the social capital construct as smoothing and making possible the complex inter-human transactions necessary for the satisfaction of all fundamental human needs, not only economic ones.

At the outset, the literature review set out to make known understandings of the construct of social capital and its different elements. Here the structural, relational and cognitive dimensions of social capital were revealed. The cognitive dimensions of social capital are shown to be value driven, acting as the bases for social capital formation. The review reveals the complex nature of the concept of fundamental human need. It has done this by reporting on theories and models of a range of theorists, and by expanding on the work of Max-Neef. Max-Neef's model was used to develop and inform the conceptual framework and explanatory analysis to be presented in chapter three. The literature review showed that fundamental human needs are intimately linked to people's values systems and motivations to act, once they are conscious of them, and that they are foundational to human well-being and growth within their varying lifeworlds. If a need were not being met then the person would be seriously harmed in their growth towards reaching their full potential as a human being. The review also revealed that human interactions and value systems connect the concepts of social capital and fundamental human needs.

The chapter illustrated the complexities underlying studies and theories of culture. Several conceptualisations of culture were examined: Hall's model of culture, communication and context; Hofstede's individualism/collectivism dimension of cultural variability; and Triandis's framework of horizontal and vertical individualism/collectivism values systems. This part of the review stressed culture as a set of values linking to the concepts of social capital and fundamental human needs. These conceptualisations were used to inform the analysis of this study and to design the methodology for future research.

The literature review next examined the FHN to understand, find meaning, and the activity of learning, so as to inform the conceptual framework. It did this by examining key self-directed learning theories, including the philosophical values underpinning these theories. It was argued that self-directed learning theories are strongly influenced by the values of individualism, in particular the importance accorded to self-reliance, autonomy and creativity. However, self-directed learning also reflects collectivistic values such as the importance of collaboration and co-operation, and the significance of interpersonal relationships in teaching-learning transactions. The literature review then moved on to establish a theoretical basis linked to meaning transformation and consciousness formation. This led to the understanding that learning, rather than being an individual activity that one does by and for oneself, is an activity taking place within the motivation and tension of the dilemmas of our situated everyday activities, associated with our value systems. Here the significance of the individualism and collectivism paradigm was interwoven into the discussion. The theories of communitarian psychology were revealed as a precursor to the sections on activity theory. Activity theory was explained as a learning model emphasising the FHN to understand and find meaning, demonstrating that there is a place for the role of social capital in understandings of the model.

As stated at the beginning of this chapter, this part of the thesis has set out to inform, develop and justify a framework in which wholistic FHN satisfaction, culture and the social capital elements can be understood through human values interconnectedness. These values collectively play a pivotal part in satisfying the FHN to understand, find meaning, and the associated activity of learning set within a dynamic system of social interaction and activity. The review also has sought to demonstrate that FHN satisfaction

is one which is best achieved when the full gamut of needs are addressed in some manner within any human activity system, not just one but several needs. In this way people have the chance to develop and grow, and to maximise their potential for understanding and finding meaning in the learning environment.

The theoretical notions and models discussed in this chapter are used in the subsequent chapter, chapter three, to establish a conceptual framework of hypotheses, theoretical principles and themes, linked with an associated explanatory analysis. The conceptual framework and explanatory analysis chapter form the intellectual basis from out of which results and implications are drawn and further research proposed and justified in the final chapter, chapter four.

## Conceptual framework and explanatory analysis

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### 3.1 Introduction

In this study the relationship between FHN and the social capital construct and its elements is explored in theoretical form, so as to address the research problem: *Do the elements of the social capital construct mediate the satisfaction of fundamental human need, particularly the human need to understand and find meaning, if so, how and why?* The thesis set out to achieve this objective by conducting a preliminary study based on a review of the literature. The study tests, in theoretical form, the hypothesis linked to the research problem: *The elements highlighted by the social capital construct have come into existence, in an evolutionary sense, so as to mediate the satisfaction of fundamental human needs and take on differing forms across diverse cultures.* For the purpose of this thesis, the research problem and hypothesis make the assumption that the concept of social capital is a construct that informs the researcher on aspects of human interaction, and has a high level of explanatory power for synthesising different theories from different disciplines.

Turner (1991) argues that *concepts* are the basic building blocks of theory and are speculative elements representing different phenomenon within a field of study. The aim of *theory* is to construct valid frameworks of explanation relevant to natural happenings in the *lifeworlds* of people (Blumer 1970). Theories come into being, according to Homans (1970), when hypotheses are put forward concerning possible relationships which are seen to exist between elements of those lifeworlds, or when explanations emerge depicting a relationship between different *concepts* (Zikmund 1994). A *concept*



or *construct* is a generalised idea about a class of objects, attributes, occurrences or processes, according to Zikmund (1994). They are not sufficient by themselves to constitute a *theory*. *Concepts* are mental images or perceptions which put *reality* into the abstract and are expressed in words that refer to various events or objects (Bailey 1994). *Concepts* are mental images used as a means of summarising and bringing together observations and experiences that seem to have something in common (Babbie 1998). A *concept* is a general idea applicable to a particular instance or example of behaviour (Williamson 1977).

This chapter attempts to integrate the forgoing arguments concerning concepts and theory by applying the principles they espouse to the research problem and hypothesis. What are being looked for in this study are valid approximations of the objects of study, namely the concepts of fundamental human needs and their satisfaction, particularly the need to understand and find meaning through the activity of learning; social capital and its elements; human interaction in terms of culture; and the commonalities which exist across all these concepts. According to Dubin (1978), a wise procedure in conceptualising any topic is to choose definitions that are relatively simple and straightforward. This is what the author of this thesis has attempted to achieve in developing this thesis's conceptual framework and in drawing out possible questions and implications arising from the framework.

According to Babbie (1998), theories begin to gain meaning from the process of *conceptualising* the subject matter. *Conceptualisation* is the mental process whereby *unfocused notions* (concepts) are made more specific and precise, and entails classifying, analysing and then grouping things together (Babbie 1998). Once a specific research

problem has been formulated or identified, conceptualisation becomes both necessary and possible, and involves identifying those concepts or variables that are most appropriate to the research in the questions they raise, as well as specifying the specific sources of data that will be used (Williamson 1977).

Many researchers recommend a conceptual framework that is relatively simple and straightforward in the manner in which it is set out (Williamson 1977). Such a basic conceptual construct is provided by the familiar series of who, what, when, where, how and why (Yin 1994; Zikmund 1994). Yin (1994) argues that field studies are an ideal research approach for using this series of questions. This has implications for developing the questions which are asked of the participants in the field through the interview schedule. Engeström (1999c) also recommends the use of this series in conjunction with research using activity theory as a methodological base. The series has also been found to be particularly useful for theory-building research (Mintzberg 1983). These two points have particular implications for the development of the conceptual framework and explanatory analysis, which follows in the next section. But it should not be forgotten that “... interpretive theory does not reinterpret the actions and experiences of individuals for its own purposes and in terms of its own conceptual framework” (Carr and Kemmis 1986: 92).

Each of the constructs of social capital, FHN, culture, and activity theory underwritten by the review of literature, make known critical theoretical insights. These are taken into account in the following conceptual framework and explanatory analysis, in an attempt to come to understand people’s activities surrounding the satisfaction of FHN and to answer this thesis’s research problem and hypothesis. These critical insights have

particular implications in terms of the dependence of FHN satisfaction on human interaction, with its associated processes and procedures; in other words, on the elements that make up the social capital construct.

## **3.2 Conceptual framework**

The sections that follow lay down a synthesised framework and explanation of integrated concepts and statements arising out of this thesis's literature research in Chapter Two. This framework is set out here to summarise and clarify, in a simplified form, the key concepts on which the explanatory analysis is based. This framework and accompanying explanatory analysis is subsequently used in the following chapter, Chapter Four, to establish the basis for answering the research question, and will also be used as a theoretical model to inform further research, including the justification of future field research concerning the topic.

### **3.2.1 Fundamental human needs:**

- FHNs are those evolving human needs that are essential to human well-being and the development of individual human potential. They continually exist whether they are being satisfied or not (Maslow 1970; Thomson 1987; Galtung 1990; Doyal and Gough 1991; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992).
- Serious harm is caused to a person's growth towards well-being and full human potential if any of the FHNs are not being met in any given moment in time (Maslow 1970; Thomson 1987; Galtung 1990; Doyal and Gough 1991; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Jarvis 1992).

- FHN satisfaction is the prime reason for human, and in particular inter-human, activity (Maslow 1970; Thomson 1987; Galtung 1990; Doyal and Gough 1991; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Jarvis 1992).
- FHNs are linked to and depend on human values, giving rise to justifiable reasons for actions (Kluckhohn 1951; Parsons 1951; Black 1984; Habermas 1984; Thomson 1987; Sites 1990; Doyal and Gough 1991).
- An individual's rights/freedoms are intimately intertwined with that individual's responsibilities in terms of the groups and communities in which they live and interact. The well-being of communities depends on how individuals respond to the needs of others in that community, and the reverse also holds true (Illich 1973; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Galtung 1994; Bandura 1995, 1997; Bakhurst 1997; Boucouvalas 1997).
- FHN-satisfying activity is only directed at those FHNs of which the person is conscious (Habermas 1971; Thomson 1987; Max-Neef 1989, 1992; Doyal and Gough 1991).
- The FHN to understand and find meaning through the activity of learning can be linked to the importance of an evolving consciousness formation, which is the result of human interactive processes over time (Habermas 1971; Freire 1972, 1993, 1994; Ilyenkov 1974; Leont'ev 1978; Mezirow 1978, 1991; Vygotsky 1978; Daloz 1986; Max-Neef 1989; Galtung 1990; Ekins and Max Neef 1992; Gee 1992; Humphrey 1992; Axel 1997; Boucouvalas 1997; Bakhurst 1997; Engeström 1999a; Mithen 1996).

- Once a person is conscious of a particular FHN they will attempt to satisfy that need in some manner (Maslow 1970; Habermas 1984; Thomson 1987; Dworkin 1988; Max-Neef 1989; Galtung 1990; Doyal and Gough 1991; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Jarvis 1992).
- The learning environment in which FHNs are being met can be described as either favouring collective or individualistic value systems (Brookfield 1988, 1990; Jarvis 1992; Boud and Walker 1993; Marshall and Reason 1993).
- FHN satisfying activity takes place within a dynamic, socially-derived and integrated process, linked with human value congruence, matching or change (Thomson 1987; Doyal and Gough 1991; Max-Neef 1989; Galtung 1990; Gough 1994; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Jarvis 1992; Napier and Gershenfeld 1993).
- FHN-satisfying activity can be placed within a specific socio-cultural environment in terms of both space and time. That is, FHN-satisfying activity can be placed within a particular moment of cultural expression where cultural expression can be seen to be constantly changing and made up of value-loaded meanings (Habermas 1971; Freire 1972, 1993, 1994; Ilyenkov 1974; Leont'ev 1978; Mezirow's 1978, 1991; Vygotsky 1978; Hofstede 1981, Daloz 1986; Max-Neef 1989; Triandis 1989, 1995a, 1999; Galtung 1990; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Gee 1992; Humphrey 1992; Mithen 1996; Axel 1997; Boucouvalas 1997; Bakhurst 1997; Engeström 1999a).
- Cultures and their associated societies may be broadly classified as predominantly having either individualistic or collectivistic value systems, which can be further classified into vertical and horizontal forms. (Hofstede 1981, 1991, 1994, 1998; Triandis 1989, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1999; Bond 1991, 1994; Markus and Kitayama

1991; Brislin 1993; Earley and Erez 1993, 1996; Brislin and Yoshida 1994; Gudykunst 1994; Morris and Peng 1994; Kim, Triandis, Kagitcibasi, Choi and Yoon 1994; Triandis, Dunnette and Hough 1994; Kashima et al. 1995; Bond and Smith 1996; Landis and Bhagat 1996; Kitayama et al 1997; Sinha 1997; Chen and Chan 1998).

- It is likely that the individualistic and collectivistic value systems have evolved over time, with each society moving towards forms of individualism as members of that society become more materially independent (Hofstede 1981, 1991, 1994, 1998; Triandis 1989, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 1999; Markus and Kitayama 1991; Brislin and Yoshida 1994; Gudykunst 1994; Triandis, Dunnette and Hough 1994).
- All human activity has particular FHN-satisfying foci, and activities such as learning associated with these foci, can be separated according to the need motives (Leont'ev 1978; Mezirow's 1978, 1991; Vygotsky 1978; Max-Neef 1989; Galtung 1990; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Gee 1992; Mithen 1996; Axel 1997; Bakhurst 1997; Engeström 1999b).
- People who live in collective lifeworlds are likely to be activated by extrinsic motivations, especially when need-satisfying situations are ambiguous. The opposite would be true for people from individualistic lifeworlds, where intrinsic motivation would come into action (Woolfolk 1993; Triandis, Chen and Chan 1998).
- A need motive, such as the FHN for identity, subsistence, freedom, understanding and participation, explains why an activity exists (Leont'ev 1978; Mezirow's 1978, 1991; Vygotsky 1978; Max-Neef 1989; Galtung 1990; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Gee 1992; Mithen 1996; Axel 1997; Bakhurst 1997; Engeström 1999b).

- FHN-satisfying activity, called *satisfiers* by Max-Neef, is best achieved when two or more needs are satisfied at the same time. Some *satisfiers* only satisfy those needs to which they are directed, while others synergistically satisfy other needs as well (Max-Neef 1989; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992).
- Not all FHN-satisfying activity, in the form of *satisfiers*, leads to growth in human well-being and the development of individual human potential (Habermas 1971; Thomson 1987; Max-Neef 1989; Ekins and Max Neef 1992):
  - some *satisfiers* can be said to be *pseudo-satisfiers*, in that they do not actually satisfy the relevant need to which they are directed, but may only appear to, or falsely satisfy, that need in the short term (Max-Neef 1989; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992);
  - some are *inhibitors*, which satisfy one need but simultaneously inhibit the satisfaction of others (Max-Neef 1989; Ekins and Max Neef 1992), and
  - others are *violators*, in that they militate against the satisfaction even of the need to which they are directed (Max-Neef 1989; Ekins and Max Neef 1992).
- Each human being has access to resource pools of *mediating artifacts*. These artifacts enable outcomes to be accomplished through human interaction, by changing the object of a particular need-satisfying activity (Loury 1977; Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988, 1990; Burt 1992; Falk and Harrison 1998; Falk and Kilpatrick 2000).

- A *mediating artifact* is a material object that has been modified by human beings as a means of regulating their interactions with the material world and each other, and is a product of human interaction and consciousness (Ilyenkov 1974; Leont'ev 1978; Vygotsky 1978; Luria and Vygotsky 1992; Cole 1999; Engeström 1999b, 1999c; Engeström and Miettinen 1999).

*Mediating artifacts* may be divided into four types (Engeström 1999b):

- *What* artifacts used to identify and describe objects.
- *How* artifacts enable, guide and direct processes and procedures on, within, or between objects.
- *Why* artifacts are used to diagnose and explain the properties and behaviour of objects.
- *Where* artifacts assist in anticipating likely changes to the object in the future, including potential changes to institutions and social systems.
- A person's *resource pool* of mediating artifacts can be perceived to be of two types: personal and communities of interaction.
  - A *personal resource pool* refers individual levels of consciousness concerning each of the FHNs, and skills and knowledge associated with personnel social, linguistic, technical, natural history and general intelligences (Loury 1977; Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988, Burt 1992; 1990; Mithen 1996; Falk and Harrison 1998; Falk and Kilpatrick 2000).
  - Those resources a person has access to within and through their connectivity to various communities of interaction, and their related collective FHN-satisfying activities, constitutes a person's *communities of*



*interaction* resource pool. Such resources include: social capital, other people's human capital, environmental capital and economic capital (Loury 1977; Bourdieu 1986; Coleman 1988, 1990; Burt 1992; Mithen 1996; Falk and Harrison 1998; Falk and Kilpatrick 2000).

Social knowledge, part of a person's resource pool, describes resources of extensive knowledge about other individuals, in terms of knowing who are allies and friends, and the ability to infer the mental states of those individuals. Social knowledge is of particular importance in accessing the social capital of any group, large or small. This is what links the person's personal resource pool with that person's wider communities of interaction resource pool. For the purpose of this thesis a *community of interaction* is defined as the circumstances of inter-human activity where persons attempt to satisfy their FHNs.

### 3.2.2 Social capital

- For the purpose of this conceptual framework, social capital is defined as an accumulation of accessible cognitive, relational and structural resources, which enable, guide and direct the processes and procedures of human interaction aimed at satisfying fundamental human need.
- The *structural dimension* includes social interaction, where individuals of a particular social capital using system have certain opportunities open to them through and due to their network of contacts both in and out of the system. These opportunities, embedded in systems of interaction, enable individuals to gain and share information, as well as being able to access and share needed resources held

within those systems of interaction. (Bourdieu 1986; Flora, Sharp, Flora and Newlon 1997; Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1997; Ktishnamurthy 1999; Narayan 1999; Falk and Kilpatrick 2000).

- The *relational dimension* refers to the embedded nature of some elements of the social capital construct such as embedded trust, reciprocity and shared faith. This embeddedness means that if a person is considered to be part of a social capital using social system then they will be considered to be trustworthy. These elements act as control mechanisms within a particular social capital-using web of human interaction. (Bourdieu 1986; Fukuyama 1995; Flora, Sharp, Flora and Newlon 1997; Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1997, 1998; Ktishnamurthy 1999; Narayan 1999).
- The *cognitive dimension* is to do with shared or congruent values, norms, and proper ways of acting, including individual-to-individual levels of trust. All of which underpin common understandings of achieving collective goals and visions. They can be seen as a resource held between individuals interacting within the social web (Ouchi 1981; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Napier and Gershenfeld 1993; Portes and Sensenbrenner 1993; Sitkin and Roth 1993; Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998).
- These social capital-related resources are derived from past human interaction and are fundamentally connected to cultural transmission. That is, social capital contributes to the continuance of a value system which ensures continued and sufficient production, reproduction, and protection requirements for any grouping of people such as a family, local community, or society (Ouchi 1981; Bourdieu 1986; Doyal and Gough 1991; Ekins and Max-Neef 1992; Nahapiet and Ghoshal 1998;

Sitkin and Roth 1993; Cole 1999; Engeström 1999b, 1999c; Engeström and Miettinen 1999; Narayan 1999).

- The mediating artifacts which make up the elements of the social capital construct include: shared values, shared faith, norms, trust, reciprocity, networks of embedded trust and reciprocity, and other forms of human networks of interaction and relationship.
- These elements of the social capital construct give rise to the likelihood of a person and/or group being able to access other people's and/or groups' knowledge, skills or resource-accessing structures. This enables and underpins a successful learning environment by encouraging shared vision, goals and objectives, aimed at outcomes surrounding human activity that satisfies FHNs in the present and the future.

The above list of synthesised concepts, in the form of an explanatory analysis, can now be placed within a framework or model of human interaction and learning, namely that of an expanded form of *activity theory*. The next section, the explanatory analysis, demonstrates how the above concepts may be woven into an integrated web of human relationships, giving rise to activities aimed at outcomes focused on satisfying FHNs. Successful human activities are mediated by a wide range of different artifacts, including the elements of the social capital. These activities change objects that lead to outcomes giving rise to sense and meaning and linked to the development of knowledge and human consciousness.

### **3.3 Explanatory analysis**

It is intended that the synthesised concepts derived from this initial study will open areas of empirical inquiry, and direct concrete observations through the future use of different research methods. The current study anticipates opening the door for building further theory linking social capital, FHN satisfaction, and human activity theory. It is hoped that as theory is built, a systematic explanation for observed facts that relate to particular aspects of growth of human potential and well-being, in relation to the wholistic satisfaction of FHN and human interaction, will arise out of the further research proposed in Chapter Four

The literature review and the above list of synthesised concepts reveal that each of the theoretical understandings concerning FHN and social capital have, as a central connecting and pivotal element, the importance of shared or congruent human values. The pivotal nature of the connectedness of human values to both FHN and the elements of the social capital construct, comes from the human need for connectedness to other human beings. In turn, this arises from the need to understand and find meaning, but at the same time, includes the satisfaction of the whole range of other FHNs through human interaction. Similar value systems may smooth the way and allow for human connectedness, which enables people to share activities surrounding the satisfaction of human need within a particular culture or society. As values are shared, people know what is expected of them in terms of their behaviour, and can predict how others will behave in similar situations.

It has been argued through the literature review that the interconnectedness of human values is linked to the construct of culture, where diverse cultures are understood as

being made up of differing systems of shared human values. The literature review has also revealed that cultural value systems, from a cross-cultural perspective, may be broadly termed to be either individualistic or collectivistic in nature. Although it can also be demonstrated that cultures and societies have a mix of both value systems within their structures, one of these value systems usually predominates.

The individualism/collectivism construct, in its expanded form of horizontal and vertical elements, is of significance to the argument of this thesis. The framework sheds light not only on differing value systems, but also on possible power relationships that may exist within the paradigm of human interaction. It is likely that the elements of verticalness and horizontalness, which make up the construct of individualism/collectivism, have evolved over time. They appear to form a broad continuum, moving through forms of collectivism to individualism, as societies become more materially affluent. This is driven by an ever-increasing range of choices of mediating artifacts becoming available to individuals, and reflects a strengthening of factors long at work in our societies that are increasing the autonomy of the individual. It has been demonstrated that individualistic and collectivistic value systems each have a differing effect on how people learn or are expected to learn in a particular culture, depending on the dominant value discourse prevalent in that particular culture or society.

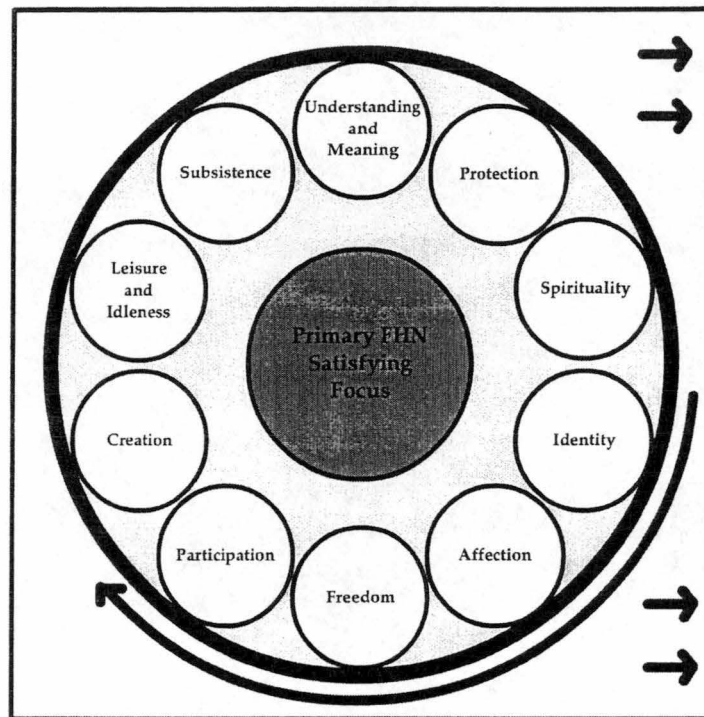
In addition to the above insights, it was also demonstrated that the FHN to understand through the activity of learning is linked to the importance of an evolving consciousness formation, as the result of human interactive processes. This enables activity outcomes that:

- make sense and have meaning and in turn enhance problem-solving abilities;
- lead to ongoing and wholistic development of human well-being and potential throughout life, and
- enable successful cultural transmission, in support of continued and sufficient production, reproduction and protection requirements of each culture and related society, or group of people making up a collectivity of shared, similar or congruent value systems.

This evolving consciousness formation is associated with, and reliant on, continued inter-human activity, and has wider implications for the satisfaction of the full gamut of fundamental human needs at all levels within and across societies and different cultures. To develop and integrate these concepts further, each may be placed within a FHN/human values expanded cultural-historical activity theory (*activity theory* for short) framework or model of human interaction.

In the below model (Figure 6), FHNs are depicted, in the ideal, as being simultaneously met within a whole and culturally-historically-derived and placed human activity system. Here the satisfaction of each need is of equal importance in terms of an individual's well-being, development and growth toward their full human potential. This is illustrated by the arrows which depict time as the wheel moves forward, and the grey shaded area situates FHN satisfiers within a particular culture and society.

**Figure 6**  
**Wheel of FHN**



For the purpose of this framework and explanatory analysis, FHNs additional to those proposed by Max-Neef are included in Figure 6. During the review of the literature it become evident to the author of this thesis that there was an argument for the incorporation of additional FHNs: spirituality, meaning and human interaction.

The FHN for *spirituality*, as an addition, refers to the quest of the human spirit for an experience with that which is beyond the ordinary surface and apparent reality of life. Implicit with this need is a cry for solidarity with that which is outside of human existence. The inclusion of the FHN of spirituality is justified on the bases of theories from transpersonal psychology, where spirituality is seen as an essential part of the road in the evolution of consciousness, which leads to transcendence in each human being's ongoing call to human wholeness (Boucoulalas 1997; Valle 1989). *Meaning*, based on

the arguments of Boucouvalas, Habermas, Mezirow and Mithen surrounding human *meaning's* intimate links with the FHN to *understand*, is included with the FHN to *understand*. The essential nature of *human interaction*, could also be added. Without human interaction the other FHNs cannot be satisfied. This suggests a strong argument for changing the name of the FHN of *participation* to that of *human interaction*, which would include all aspects of *participation*.

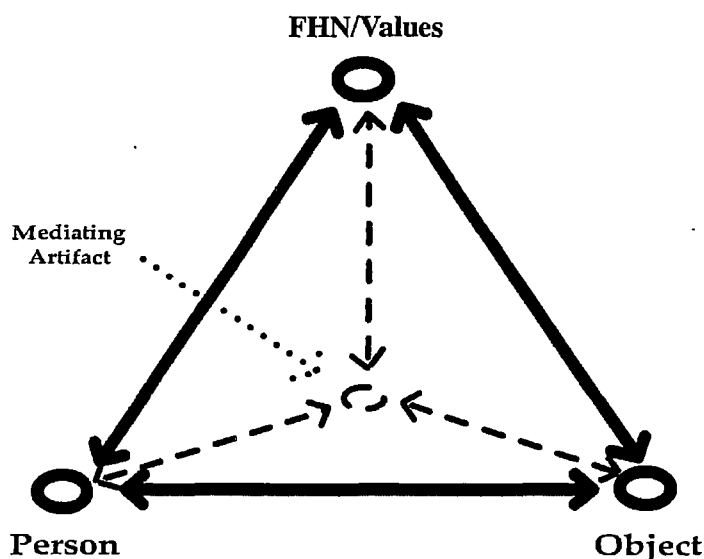
Figure 6, does not exclude the possibility that, in some cases, an activity may take the shape of false or pseudo satisfaction of a need, so that in the end, the need may not be truly satisfied. But even in this case, it is the conscious FHNs which are acting as motivators of the activity. The centre circle of Figure 6 represents the prime FHN-satisfying focus of the individual or group acting to change the *object* of the activity, and at times will often be associated with other FHNs which are also conscious motivators. The size of the circle can be used to represent the amount of time, over an average seven-day cycle, spent by the individual or group of people attempting to satisfy a particular FHN as a primary focus. When incorporated as part of Vygotsky's activity model (see Figure 7 which follows), the conscious FHNs act as motives for action. They take on the focus of enabling a *person* or *group*, or *subject* to use Vygotsky's term, to identify the *object* of the activity. The person or group's conscious FHNs act as cognisant motivators for changing the object in some way. The activity as it develops over time reinforces or changes understandings and meanings, and gives rise to an outcome that attempts to satisfy that need, or preferably needs, in some way. Where more than one need is satisfied at a time, this leads to an enhanced sense of satisfaction.



FHN satisfaction in the form of human *activity theory* takes place within a dynamic process, linking to people's value systems on the part of the person/subject, and this affects how the person/subject views the object of the activity (see Figure 7). Including human values and FHNs in the Vygotskyian model further develops the mediated act theory, by picking up on the importance of a subject/person's value system as affecting any action taken to change the object in some way. This expanded model forms a pyramidal three-dimensional shape, where the basic system of *subject/person*, *object* and *mediating artifacts* includes the subject/person's values and FHNs. The inclusion of personal values depicts how values have a direct effect on how the person perceives the *object*, as well as affecting the *mediating artifacts* the person chooses or is free to choose for use in changing the object through the activity. This *values/FHN included model* stresses the link between human values, human action, and the satisfaction of FHNs.

**Figure 7**

**Values and FHNs included in Vygotsky's mediated act model**



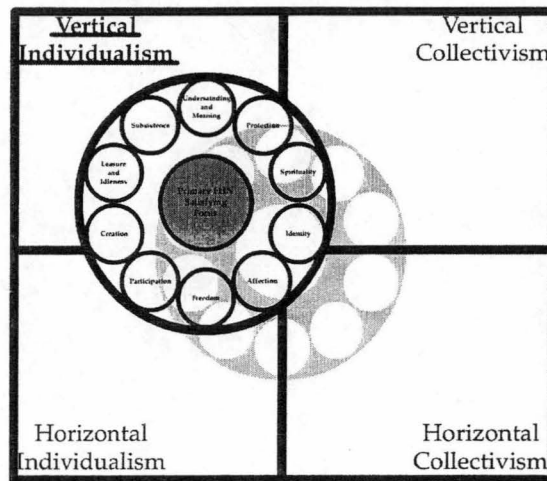
Source: Adapted from Engeström 1999c: 2

FHNs and their satisfaction are directly linked to human value systems and to justifiable reasons for actions leading to the motivation to act when conscious of a particular need or needs. The person's value system orientation within any given FHN-satisfying activity, for the purpose of this argument, is understood to be either oriented vertically collectivist (VC), horizontally collectivist (HC), horizontally individualist (HI) or vertically individualist (VI), in accordance with Triandis and other's theories. Each orientation is deemed to have an effect on the person's or group's perceptions of the object, the mediating artifact, as well as the form of motivation, extrinsic or intrinsic, which leads to the activity. Depending on the circumstances, an individual may act out of different value positions, VC, HC, HI or VI, within different activities, but the dominant orientation of the lifeworld in which the person is immersed will come into play when the situation is ambiguous (Triandis 1995a; Triandis, Chen and Chan 1998).

These individualistic or collectivistic value systems may be depicted, for clarity purposes, within a diagrammatical framework. Below are four diagrams that depict the above orientations and included with each is a list of some of the individual characteristics of that value system.

**Figure 8**

**Vertical individualism value system**

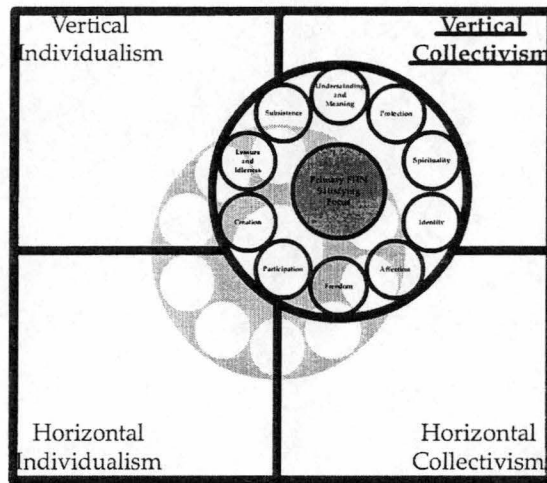


**Characteristics of value system:**

- Especially concerned with comparisons with others.
- Definite hierarchy.
- Want to be the best and win.
- Continually competing.
- Vertical individualists always distinguish themselves from others.
- Inequality is an expected part of any social system and is actively encouraged between people and groups.
- The marketplace is of prime concern, and for vertical individuals there is no such thing as culture or society only individual consumers eg. Thatcherism.

**Figure 9**

**Vertical collectivism value system**

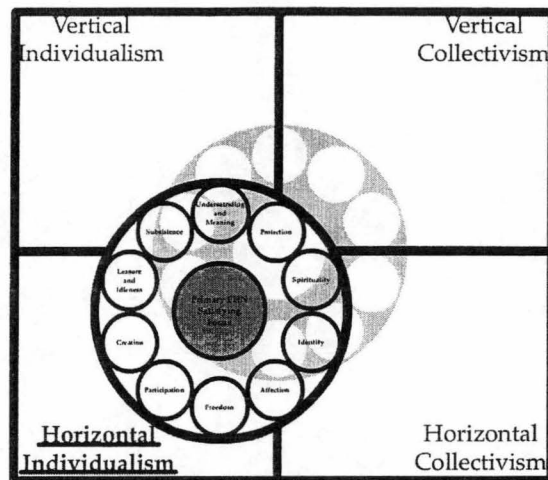


**Characteristics of value system:**

- Vertical collectivists always distinguish themselves from others.
- Definite hierarchy.
- Hierarchy decides goals, visions and objectives.
- Differences in terms of social status.
- Inequality is expected between people and groups.
- Individuals are aspects of the collective.
- Individuals self-sacrifice to the collective.

**Figure 10**

**Horizontal individualism value system**

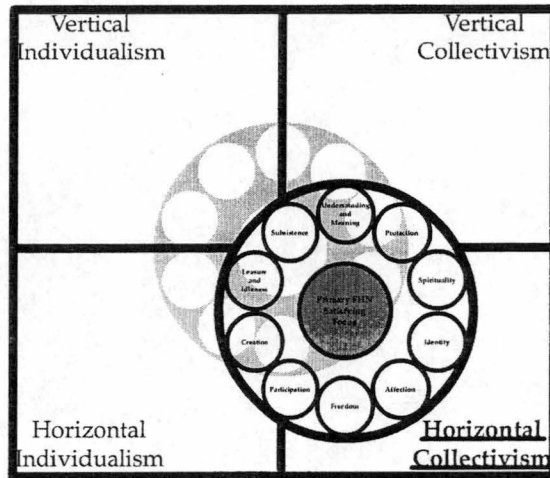


**Characteristics of value system:**

- All individuals play a part in collective activities.
- Self-concept is autonomous.
- Self reliance.
- Spouse relationship emphasised more than child to parent.
- Individuals do not compare themselves or compete with others.
- Each individual is allowed to decide that which is in their own interest.
- Self efficacy can be independent of community efficacy
- Individuals are seen to be equal with others.
- Individuals 'do their own thing'.
- Individuals do not want to be distinguished from the wider community.
- Structures are not hierarchical.
- Collectively-decided goals, visions and objectives in times of mutuality of personal interest.

**Figure 11**

**Horizontal collectivism value system**



**Characteristics of value system:**

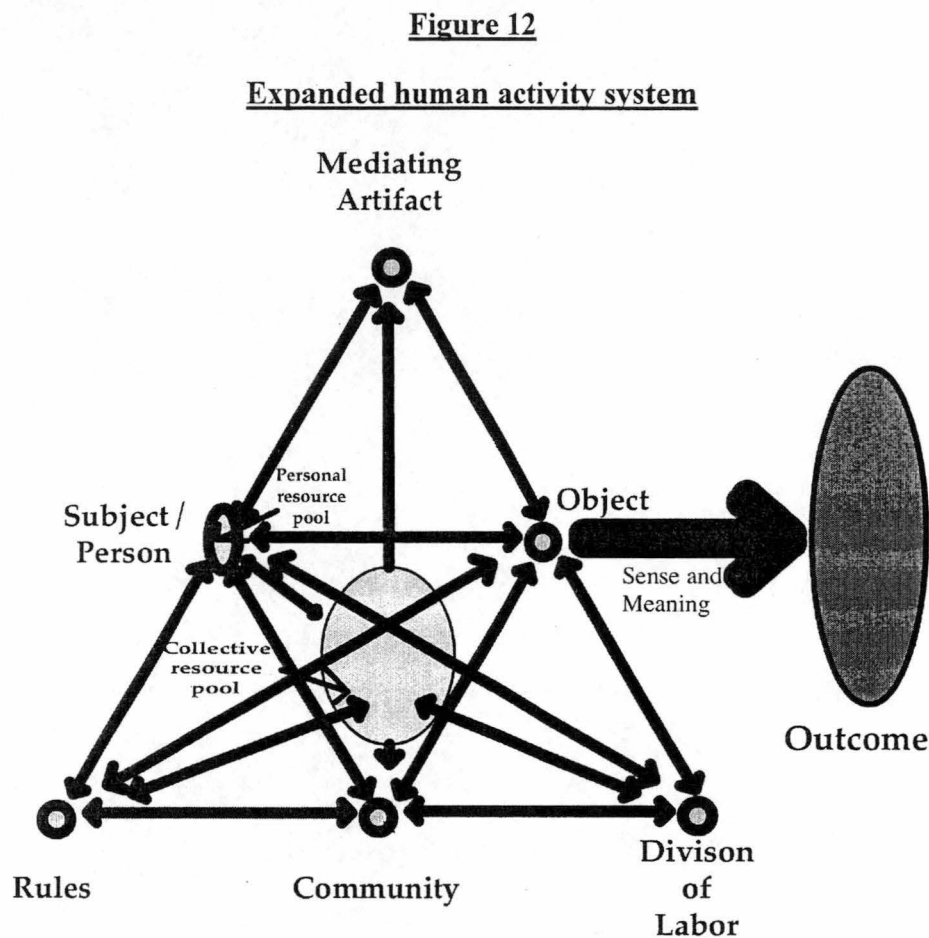
- All individuals play a part in collective activities.
- Self concept - interdependent with others.
- Equality of all members of the in-group.
- Child to parent relationship emphasised more than spouse to spouse.
- Individuals do not compare themselves or compete with others in the in-group.
- Self efficacy related to community efficacy
- Structures are not highly hierarchical.
- Collectively decided goals, visions objectives.

The above sets of value systems can be understood as forming a broad continuum of evolving processes over time, linked to changes in value systems moving from collectivism to individualism. This occurs as each society becomes more materially affluent, leading to greater personal autonomy. The movement of a society towards affluence leads to greater individuality within its culture and its associated society (Triandis, 1995a; Triandis, Chen and Chan 1998).

Each subject/person involved in an activity aimed at satisfying FHNs has a personal or cognitive resource pool (small light coloured oval, Figure 12 below) in the form of mediating artifacts made up of: an individual's unique level of consciousness concerning each of the FHNs, and their knowledge and skills (human capital). Those FHNs of which the person is conscious, act as foci and motivators for action. Their personal knowledge and skills are associated with Mithen's (1996) social, linguistic, technical, natural history and general intelligences, which are accumulated over time by the person from within their own experiences, and from the experience of others, both present and past, in the form of previous generations. In this model (Figure 12), cognition can be said to be the point of interaction between the individuals involved in viewing and changing the object. The ability to change the object is enhanced by the social capital that exists between those interacting.

According to basic communitarian psychological thinking, these cognitive resources mark the uniqueness and individuality of the person. They have accumulated as a result of previous social activity, at a personal experiential level as well as at an historical intergenerational level, both interactional and genetic. This argument is based on the idea that when activity takes place, knowledge results and is stored, as needs and

interests are satisfied as an integral part of human interaction. This personal pool of mediating artifacts has a connectedness to the elements of the social capital construct available within the collective resource pool (large light coloured oval, Figure 12 below), in keeping with the Bourdieu's (1986) and Coleman's (1988, 1990) theories.



Source: Adapted from Engeström 1999c:2

Figure 12, based on Engeström's (1987, 1999c) structure of a human activity system, expands Engeström's model by including both the person's personal resource pool (small light coloured oval), as well as their *community of interaction* resource pool



(large light coloured oval). Communities of interaction are defined in section 3.2.1. Not expressed in Figure 12, but implicit to this argument, is the pivotal presence of FHNs, particularly those of which the person is conscious, and the system of personal and collective values (VI or HI or HC or VC) surrounding the activity. The collective resources of the community of interaction contains mediating artifacts, such as social capital, collective human capital in the form of skills and knowledge, environmental capital and economic capital. They are made available to the subject/person in ways limited by the *rules* and *division of labor* characteristics of that community of interaction.

Following on the lines of Bourdieu's (1986) and Coleman's (1988, 1990) theories accessibility to the *community of interaction's* resource base gives rise to opportunities, on the part of the subject/person, to exercise the use of their personal resources in conjunction with their *community of interaction's* resources. Here the cognitive elements of the social capital construct such as values, trust/faith, and knowledge of available networks are considered to be part of the personal resource pool, and become embedded in the system over time as successful transactions take place. This leads to further accessibility and making available other social capital mediating artifacts which may be present, such as embedded trust, networks of reciprocity, historicity and futuricity. The combination of all these elements enable the subject/person to change the *object* in some way so as to achieve an outcome, thereby satisfying a particular FHN in conjunction with others in the FHN-satisfying system.

The cognitive perspective of social capital as a resource views the possible reasons why social capital might exist—the “driving force” as Ktishnamurthy (1999: 1) puts it. This

perspective “...refer[s] to the values, perceptions and intentions that underlie the structural [*community*] aspects of social capital” (Ktishnamurthy 1999: 1). These reasons may be both positively and negatively intertwined, and are therefore of great importance when it comes to understanding the role of social capital in a mediating sense, chiefly the mediation of the satisfaction of FHNs. Habermas (1971) points to the dangers associated with unequal power relations within societies, where values are used to justify inequality and social systems associated with inequality at a planetary level—a level at which the totality of human well-being is effected. Hence, there are often wider socio-cultural historical influences, chiefly values driven, that limit a person’s/subject’s ability to achieve their full human potential. The *rules* and the *division of labor* change over time as collective consciousness change. These changes in collective consciousness give rise to other ways of doing things, thereby changing cultural value systems. and therefore societies—sometimes for the better but also for the worst.

The *rules*, *community* and *division of labor*, each a part of Engeström’s human activity system, have an influence not only on the person’s/subject’s, *mediating artifacts* or the *object* of the activity, as argued by Engeström, but in this expanded model also influences what FHNs the person/subject becomes conscious of, or is allowed to become conscious of, in the form of how the satisfiers of a FHN are constructed. The *rules*, in the form of shared values, shared faith, norms, laws, standards, policies, or ways of acting, regulate the *division of labor*, which directly influences the *personal values* of the subject/ person in the form of what is thought to be appropriate or not by those members of the community of interaction. This includes access to the mediating elements of the *collective resource pool*, including that of social capital. The *community*,

as shown above, not only includes the people, but also includes the physical environment in which the activity takes place. This includes the relationship that exists between the people and the physical environment, with all its opportunities and limitations, and to past activities which have given rise to shared understanding, meaning and sense.

Each individual's meaning base is culturally, historically and environmentally constructed during an activity, as established consciousness and values are engaged concerning the particular FHN activity focus. Personal values determine which mediating artifacts can or cannot be used in the needs-satisfying activity. As the needs-satisfying activity progresses, it leads to the development and synthesis of sense and meaning in regard to the intentions of changing the object of the activity, and the resultant outcome. Here goals and motives are revealed in terms of the FHNs being satisfied, and further consciousness is possibly engaged. It is through activity that we become conscious of the other dimensions of our lifeworld. The solid, black arrow-headed lines in Figure 12 refer not only to how each element affects another, but also to the varying levels of established consciousness being engaged within the system, so as to change the object. In this model, FHNs are satisfied within an interactive social process, involving interpersonal transactions between individuals acting within the community of interaction.

### **3.4 Conclusion**

The conceptual framework developed in this study has consisted of key concepts and variables, as discussed above. These key concepts and variables were identified through the literature review so as to underpin understandings of FHNs, their satisfaction, and their connection to the construct of social capital through interaction and associated values systems. To understand the meaning inherent in this conceptual framework and explanatory analysis, it is of value to recognise how the environment affects cultural variability, that is, the relative emphasis given to individualism vs collectivism by a society, as well as the physical environment surrounding the activity. All of these factors have an influence on the way social capital is produced and sustained in different cultures and societies.

It is also of value to understand that building interpersonal relationships in the form of trust/faith in a cross-cultural setting, requires the researcher to recognise that the various social cognitive processes that underlie the relationship through trust/faith building are imbued with different meanings from one cultural setting to the next. Each of the elements of the expanded activity theory model has differing relationships, in terms of interactions aimed at changing objects as a means of satisfying FHNs. The purpose of this chapter has been to establish the concept of FHN satisfaction as a prime reason for human activity. The analysis also directly links human values to this activity, and describes the mediating role of the elements of social capital as a resource in achieving this end.

This chapter's conceptual framework and explanatory analysis was undertaken by primarily researching literature concerned with diverse and complex issues. This took

the form of first exploring current writings and research surrounding the theoretical understandings of the social capital construct in relation to FHN and its satisfaction. In particular, this exploration included an examination of theories surrounding the FHN to understand and find meaning through the activity of learning; culture as a system of values, and human interaction as the means of satisfying FHNs. Secondly, the conceptual framework and accompanying explanatory analysis as presented in this chapter has been drawn out of literature review. Finally, in the last chapter, this thesis will put forward the results and implications of this study, and will explore a proposed methodology for researching and examining its statements, hypotheses, propositions, and questions. Chapter Four also sets out to justify future research through setting out possible implications of this study.

### **Results of this study and implications for further study**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this thesis has been to review and integrate literature and research from a number of different fields:

- the social capital construct;
- FHN theory;
- culture as a system of values;
- theories of adult learning linking to the FHN to understand and find meaning;
- cultural-historical activity theory.

The outcome of this integration and review has been to establish a set of statements, hypotheses, propositions, and questions that can be further studied. This chapter draws this study to a close by answering the research question, with reference to the synthesised literature analysis, the conceptual framework, and explanatory analysis, and also states the synthesised outcomes and implications of this study. In anticipation of further research stemming from this study, the chapter includes the outline of a proposed methodology for subsequent research, and makes some closing remarks.

To this point, the purpose of this study has been to establish a framework for future testing. The following section begins this process by proposing some statements, questions and methods for future research.

The research question and hypotheses for this study have been:

*Do the elements of the social capital construct mediate the satisfaction of FHNs, particularly the human need to understand and find meaning, and if so, why and how?*

The study focuses on certain concepts and theories with the intention of casting light on understandings surrounding the related hypothesis:

*The elements highlighted by the social capital construct have come into existence, in a co-evolutionary sense, so as to mediate the satisfaction of FHNs, and take on differing forms across diverse cultures.*

## **4.2 Outcomes and implications of this study**

At its fundamental level, human interaction is about satisfying FHNs and is directly related to consciousness. The elements of the social capital construct enable and smooth out human interaction. FHN satisfaction comes about through humans acting with other humans. Without the mediation of the elements of the social capital construct, activities aimed at satisfying FHN would not be successful.

The construct of social capital provides greater explanatory power as to how human beings go about collectively satisfying their FHNs through interaction. FHNs are all encompassing and are not only to do with economic satisfaction. The social capital construct focuses on all forms of human interaction, and therefore on all activities surrounding the satisfaction of FHNs. Social capital in the literature review has been shown to have crucial implications for the satisfaction of FHNs. Its elements mediate human interaction aimed at changing objects whose outcomes satisfy FHNs. In this regard the products of human interactions are more than the sum of the parts.

Human interactions have always been those points at which objects aimed at satisfying FHNs have been synthesised. It is the point at which any activity evolves and makes available changed objects which contribute to outcomes that satisfy human need. As has

been stated before in this thesis, the elements of the social capital construct hold together and strengthen the threads of people's interactions, making possible successful transactions at all levels of society. But it must always be remembered that FHN satisfiers can be either authentic or pseudo, and can be used for the good of only some individuals or groups of people. Therefore, as with most resources, social capital can be used for the good of wider society or can be used against society, depending on the goals and objectives of the people making use of its elements.

The satisfaction of the FHN to understand and find meaning is a collective activity, where human beings interact together to construct knowledge and shared meanings concerning their lifeworlds. This thesis has supported the premise that knowledge and shared meaning are collectively, historically, and culturally interconnected, and are embedded in particular shared value systems. The importance of shared, congruent or matching value systems has been demonstrated by this study to link all the above fields studied by this thesis.

As societies become more affluent they have access to a wider range of choice of mediating artifacts, which can be used in the process of satisfying FHNs. Accompanying this growth in affluence is also, most often, a change in value systems, from being predominantly collective in nature to ones that are more individualistically based. In many ways this could be a positive step, but a possible danger is that with this new found individualism could also come a fragmented value system, so diminishing opportunities for human interaction and resulting in reduced social cohesion. This has possible implications for the satisfaction of FHNs and, therefore, for human wellbeing and growth of human potential. If consciousness is related to human interaction, then



possibly as collective human interaction gives rise towards more extreme forms of individualism, so consciousness and associated shared meaning bases may diminish, as interaction becomes embedded in individuality rather than responsibility, accountability and connectedness. This could give rise to individual as well as collective pathologies, such as disconnectedness and depression. If this argument is correct, then what is crucial to this study is to test in the field the following propositions and underlining assumptions that stem from it.

### **4.3 Future testable propositions and underlying assumptions**

The most crucial testable propositions would be:

*Shared or congruent human values promote the development of social capital and so underpin its sustainability as a mediator of human action.*

What follows is a list of assumptions and questions arising out of this study that underpin the above proposition:

- FHNs satisfaction is the prime reason for human interaction.
- Social capital has co-evolved with consciousness, out of collective human interaction aimed at satisfying evolving FHNs.
- Having access to social capital is essential to the satisfaction of FHNs.
- Social capital is an accumulation of accessible cognitive, relational and structural resources that enable, guide and direct through mediation, the processes and procedures of human interaction aimed at satisfying FHNs across diverse cultures.
- Human values are integral to the development and sustainability of social capital.

- Activities aimed at satisfying FHNs have at their foundation shared, or congruent human values.
- Shared values at a bounded structural, relational, or cognitive level of social capital can exclude individuals or groups who have a differing set of values from accessing the social capital, and therefore the resources of people, their groups or structures.
- At a fundamental level the difference between collectivism and individualism lays in differing human value systems.
- As societies move from forms of collectivism to forms that are more individualistic in nature, new kinds of social capital-using structures develop. This takes place so as to mediate the satisfaction of FHN's, and these structures are value driven. In other words different *how* mediating artifacts have evolved to suit the changing *values*. Examples include the volunteerism of the late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries in Western cultures, such as Boy and Girl Scouts, Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA), Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), and the Landcare movement in late 20<sup>th</sup> century Australia.
- An aspect of difference between traditional or collectivistic cultures, and individualistic ones, is the number choices available in the form of mediating artifacts, which can be used to change objects that satisfy FHN. The drive or move towards individualism within traditional or collectivistic societies appears to be accompanied by an increase in the availability of individual choices of material mediating artifacts, and is accompanied by changes in human value systems. These changes in access to resources of mediating artifacts, and the accompanying changes

to human values, are likely to be responsible for the shift from more traditional or collective forms of society towards individualistic ones. or to even greater individualism in societies that are already individualistic in nature.

#### **4.4 Some questions arising from this study**

- Does an individualistically orientated learning environment negatively impact on the learning of people of a collectivistic orientation? If so how?
- If culture is so pervasive, and historically and environmentally dependent, then should understanding of the differing elements of the social capital construct, in the form of structures, relationships, and cognitions, take on different and varied forms, and be understood in a different way from one cultural construct to another?
- Do the cognitive and relational aspects of social capital also find different expressions in the form of new *how* and *why* mediating artifacts, as societies change from traditional or collectivistic forms to individualistic or more individualistic cultures?
- Are there fundamental human expressions of human interaction aimed at satisfying human need, that are essential to the formation and sustainability of social capital at a cognitive or relational level (e.g family and extended family, subsistence related human interaction, reflective shared learning activities, identity satisfying activities of people, collective leisure activities, and spiritual communities)?
- Is the perceived diminishing of so called stocks of social capital in increasingly individualistic societies due, at its root, to the fragmentation of human values within those societies?

- If this fragmentation of human values is true and stores of social capital are diminishing in these societies, then have opportunities diminished for the satisfaction of the full gamut of FHNs?
- In the above scenario then, do some individualists deliberately ‘shift-shape’ (Gee 2000), pretend to change or suspend their values and related identity, so as to access resources of communities of interaction, including social capital, for the use of their own ends? For the purpose of this thesis a *community of interaction* has been defined as circumstances of inter-human activity where persons attempt to satisfy their FHNs.

These propositions, underlining assumptions and questions are all to do with human interaction. As cultures and societies have evolved and changed in the past, so new mediating artifacts have come into being at certain levels, aimed at satisfying human need. Human interaction, then, should be the focus of any research methodology aimed at testing these propositions and underlining assumptions. The methodology should also be able to be applied in a cross-cultural manner, so taking in a range of different activities aimed at satisfying FHNs. The next section proposes such a methodology.

#### **4.5 Proposed outline of the future research methodology**

This section proposes a further research study based on the previous model. It is followed by a discussion of the main methodological issues that arise out of a qualitative research approach for testing the sets of statements, hypotheses, propositions, and questions set out in the previous section (Marcus and Fischer 1986; Denzin 1989;

Strauss and Corbin 1990; Silverman 1993; Denzin and Lincoln 1994; Burns 1995; Minichiello et al. 1995; Creswell 1998).

This discussion justifies the use of a qualitative research approach, in particular the use of ethnography (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Denzin 1989; Fetterman 1989; Denzin and Lincoln 1994; Silverman 1993; Marcus 1998) in its multi-sited form (Marcus 1998; Martin 1994). Multi-sited ethnography is proposed as the main qualitative method for data collection and write-up. It is further proposed that this multi-sited ethnographic approach will act in association with a grounded theory methodology for the analysis of the data. (Lincoln and Guba 1985; Patton 1990; Strauss and Corbin 1990; Minichiello et al. 1995)

This proposal also provides a brief discussion of the philosophical orientation of the intended future study. It also sets out a broadly-based proposal of methodological procedures intended for use in the future study, including validity, strengths and limitations, and the cross-cultural implications of this research.

#### **4.5.1 Justification of the research design**

Since the 1960s, there has been a move to a qualitative approach in educational research (Burns 1995: 2) and the legitimacy of qualitative research has, over this time, been established. This is made evident by the large number of journal articles, books and conferences that have focused on these modes of analysis in recent times (Popkewitz 1984: 87). The movement to qualitative research has developed because of a growing awareness of new insights that qualitative methods can bring to investigations that previously had been conducted using quantitative approaches.

There are many methodologies and theoretical concepts that fall within the field of qualitative research. Merriam and Simpson (1984: 89) note three key methodologies in particular: ethnography, case study, and grounded theory. Patton (1991: 389) identifies the following as some examples of methodologies: phenomenology, ethnomethodology, conversational analysis, symbolic interactionism, interpretive or hermeneutic inquiry, grounded theory, naturalistic inquiry, and ethnography. Each of these approaches has its own evolving history and methods for collecting data (Patton 1991: 389), and so can be distinguished from the others in its justifications, methods, and potential for explanations.

The qualitative model challenges many of the assumptions of the quantitative research tradition, as it looks to replace notions borrowed from science such as prediction, control, objectivity and explanation, with notions such as meaning, action and understanding (Carr and Kemmis 1986: 83). Each of these notions of meaning, action and understanding has particular significance to this thesis as they are seen to be at the heart of this study.

Bogdan and Taylor (1975: 4) referred to qualitative research methodologies as those “which produce descriptive data; people’s own written or spoken words and observable behaviour”. Qualitative research is particularly concerned with understanding the actions of the research participants from their own point of view. Therefore, data collection methods usually involve description, understanding and strategies that provide insights into the reasoning behind those activities (Patton 1991: 391). Methods of data collection and analysis in qualitative research are concerned with processes and wholeness, rather

than consequences and independent variables, as is the case in quantitative research (Bisner in Burns 1995: 12).

Observing a person's actions within qualitative research goes further than describing his or her behaviour; it also requires an interpretation by the researcher of the meaning of the actions of the actor (Carr and Kemmis 1986: 88). Carr and Kemmis (1986: 92) clarify this when they state:

*... the interpretive theory does not reinterpret the actions and experiences of individuals for its own purposes and in terms of its own conceptual framework, but rather provides a deeper, more extensive and systematised knowledge and understanding of the actor's own interpretations of what they are doing.*

Understanding a person's particular way of looking at things is important for understanding that actions have meanings in relation to the person's intention, understandings and values.

Part of the focus of this research is to examine the meaning of interaction between the researcher and the participants, through the means of semi-structured interviews. This is the intended approach so as to gain perceptions of participants experiences of their inter-human FHN-satisfying activities. Therefore, a qualitative, as opposed to a quantitative methodology, is deemed to be most appropriate.

Underlying this qualitative approach is also the assumption that there are multiple realities or discourses; reality is not an object that can be easily measured. Unlike the quantitative approach, the researcher does not remain apart, but is a key person who shares in the world of those being researched. The researcher attempts this by entering

into the perceptions of others and then interpreting what is experienced within that paradigm (Merriam 1991: 49).

The focus of this proposed research will be to investigate the lifeworlds of people rather than resting only on existing theory. Interpretive theories present a perspective in which “individual actors negotiate, regulate and live their lives within the context of the status quo” (Capper 1993: 17–18). Therefore, understanding the actions and meanings attributed to perceptions and activities of those being researched is of great importance. It is intended that this embeddedness in people’s everyday actions and meanings is also interpreted in conjunction with understandings stemming out of the review of literature and theoretical framework, around which interviewees’ stories will also be viewed and compared.

For these reasons the study takes on a multi-sited ethnographic approach. A multi-sited ethnographic methodology develops

*... a strategy or design of research that acknowledges macro-theoretical concepts and narratives of the world system but does not rely on them for the contextual architecture framing a set of subjects (Marcus 1998: 79).*

Creswell (1998: 215) recommends that qualitative researchers “... strongly consider how they plan to substantiate the accuracy of their accounts and employ multiple procedures, even within a tradition of inquiry”. Therefore, it is intended that this multi-sited ethnographic approach be complemented by the use of grounded theory methods in the gathering and analysis of the data (both of these methods are discussed in more detail below).



These two approaches work well together as parts of an evolving research methodology, providing the necessary tools for viewing and understanding the lifeworlds of the interviewees within their own cultural settings, and linking settings through theory. In addition, ethnography is a useful means of studying cultural values, according to Fetterman (1989: 13). Creswell (1998: 114) argues that, “especially in ethnographic research, the investigator tracks norms and values of which participants in the culture may not be aware”. Understanding cultural values is of great importance to this future research.

The fundamental precepts of qualitative research state that reality cannot be captured by a series of numbers and classifications, but that it is multi-dimensional, socially constructed, subjective, and is best captured using holistic analysis (Neuman 1994: 329–331). The main emphasis in qualitative research is on the social context as “... there can be little meaning, impact or quality in an event isolated from the context in which it is found” (Eisner quoted by Burns 1995: 12).

The emphasis given to human values in this future research shows a relational orientation which has obvious connection with the primary position of qualitative research: that the researcher is not a detached person, but is a participant with perceptions and values of his or her own that enter into the process and affect the outcomes of the research results (Fetterman 1989). Qualitative methods are “concerned with organic wholeness rather than independent variables” (Eisner in Burns 1995: 12). This means that qualitative research, like life, can often be complicated and even at times messy. Qualitative research acknowledges that the research process is untidy and complicated, and that it is a reflection of the necessities of life. This holds true for

ethnographic approaches, according to Fetterman (1989: 12): “The reality, however, is that ethnographic work is not always orderly”.

Writing on the study of education in developing countries, Vulliamy, Lewin and Stephens (1990) note, that simply applying a qualitative framework is not enough. The researcher needs to bring a personal dimension to the research methodology that makes it more realistic, and that complements the research techniques he or she will use. They argue that while some issues of research design, execution and analysis may be general, others are more specific to the cultural and political context, and it is imperative that the researcher be aware of contextual forces (Vulliamy, Lewin and Stephens 1990).

There are, of course, limitations when using a qualitative methodology, and these limitations also extend to this research project. Miles and Huberman (1994) suggest that the potential for self-delusion remains high, resulting in the presentation of unreliable and invalid conclusions. Similarly, Neuman (1994) raises the issue of researcher integrity, and concludes that the qualitative researcher has to take particular care not to be influenced by prior beliefs and assumptions if the data analysis is to be worthwhile (Neuman 1994: 334). McCracken (1988) and Minichiello et al. (1995) suggest that the solution to this quality control problem lies in high levels of researcher self-awareness, an issue that is taken up and discussed in the next section.

#### **4.5.2 Orientation of this research**

*... the research methods that we choose say something about our views on what qualifies as valuable knowledge and our perspective on the nature of reality (Glesne and Peshkin 1992: 5).*

Minichiello et al (1995: 73) underline the above view: “Different epistemological and ontological positions generate different methodologies, [that is] different models of reality lead to different propositions about what reality is ...”. Minichiello et al. do not represent the only researchers holding this view, as this premise is repeated by several well-known qualitative researchers such as Miles and Huberman (1994), Neuman (1994, 1997), Patton (1990) and Sarbaugh (1984).

There is a groundswell of support for the view that social science research is not, and cannot be completely objective (Fetterman 1989, Patton 1990; Candy 1991; Burns 1995; Minichiello et al. 1995; Neuman 1997). The entire process of conducting research, including selection and development of the research question, is influenced by the researcher’s worldview, life experiences, ethnic background, and epistemological and ontological position (Minichiello et al. 1995: 179–180). According to Fetterman (1989: 11), “The ethnographer ... begins with biases and preconceived notions about how people behave and what they think—as do researchers in every field”.

In qualitative inquiry, the researcher is most often the primary instrument through which sites are chosen, and data collected, analysed and interpreted (Neuman 1997: 333–334). As a result, it becomes important to acknowledge the researcher’s inherent subjectivity, in particular his or her personal and professional values, including motivation to conduct a piece of research. For instance, Minichiello et al. (1995: 77) note that the “... interview processes are very closely tied to the political and ethical world view of the researcher”.

On a personal level, this research is motivated by a curiosity on the part of this researcher concerning the workings of community building and allied human activities

associated with FHN satisfaction. This includes an interest in FHNs from a humanistic, evolving and universal perspective in the form of classes of needs (Boyle 1981: 141) rather than in specifics which could be confused with wants, desires, drives or intellectually-derived demands, according to Galtung (1990: 305). Wants, desires, drives or intellectually-derived demands can be considered to be situated and relative to a particular place and time (Galtung 1990). The researcher, in these terms, assumes a non-relativist approach to human needs deemed fundamental to human well-being, and growth potential of all human beings from a humanistic point of view.

For many years now the author has been involved with a wide range of different forms of community-building processes, both secular and spiritual, within different cultural and cross-cultural contexts, in some cases very successful communities that have been in operation for many years and have withstood the ravages of time, and at other times communities that have been short lived showing signs only of limited success. Being of the mind that the continued successful future of humankind lays within strong local communities of social relationships based around common values, understandings and meanings, this study takes on a personal importance.

The potential disadvantages of having the researcher's espoused framework of values include the potential of the researcher to focus on selective information in the field and in data analysis, thereby confirming her or his own beliefs and values to the exclusion of views that may have been in conflict with those values. This is not a problem that is unique to this study or to this researcher.

The choice of research topic and research design in this instance was influenced by interplay of personal and professional experiences. While every effort will be made to maintain the integrity of this research, it must be acknowledged that the processes inherent in conducting this kind of study cannot be completely detached, objective or value-free.

#### 4.5.3 Ethnography

*Ethnography is more than a one-day hike through the woods: It is an ambitious journey through the complex world of social interaction (Fetterman 1989: 9).*

An ethnographic design is chosen when one sets out to study the “behaviours of a culture-sharing group” (Creswell 1998: 39). Fetterman (1989: 10) describes “Ethnography ...[as]... the art and science of describing a group or culture”. Both Creswell and Fetterman argue that the ethnographer goes about his or her research in a sustained way by entering into, examining and describing the routine and everyday daily lives of people. From this it can be construed that one of the core objectives of ethnographic research is to reveal the complexities of people’s actions. It is this very nature of ethnography that makes it an appropriate tool for this research project, as exploring understandings of the everyday elements of social interaction is at the heart of finding possible answers to the proposed research problem.

Fetterman (1989: 11) outlines why ethnography is an appropriate tool for researching this thesis: “Before asking the first question in the field, the ethnographer begins with a problem, a theory or model ...” This approach is supported by Silverman (1993). Silverman (1993: 25) argues that, “increasingly ethnography begins with prior

hypotheses and/or prior definitions”. This is the intended methodological approach of this proposal which is based on the conceptual framework and explanatory analysis described in Chapter Three. “Theory is a guide to practice; no study, ethnographic or otherwise, can be conducted without an underlying theory or model (Fetterman 1989: 15).

One problem that does exist in using an ethnographic approach for the proposed research, lays with the cross-cultural situations necessary so as to explore the research problem and hypothesis of this thesis. Traditional ethnographic research, according to Marcus and Fischer (1986), is embedded only in local and regional lifeworlds, but they continue to argue that this problem can be overcome by using a multi-sited ethnographic approach.

This modern-day and developing approach to ethnographic research allow the proposed methodology to take into account the growing realisation of the effect of transnational political, economic, and cultural forces which shape, and have shaped, local cultural contexts (Marcus 1998). Each person has in effect been “touched by the mass media, by alienation, by the economy, by the new family and child-care systems, by the unceasing technologizing of the social world, and by the threat of nuclear annihilation” (Denzin 1989: 139).

Multi-sited forms of ethnography advocate a research “self-consciously embedded in a world system ...”, that “... moves out from the single sites and local situations ... to examine the circulation of cultural meanings, objects, and identities in diffuse time-

space” (Marcus 1998: 79). Marcus further argues that multiple-site ethnographic research is suited to complex objects of study.

In this form, ethnography moves from its traditional single-site location, to multiple sites of observation and participation. Multiple-sited ethnographic research joins together separated realities such as the ‘local’ and the ‘global’, the ‘lifeworld’ and the ‘system’ (Marcus 1998).

This is the strength of a multi-sited ethnography, in that it enables the tracing of complex connections between the different sites and cultures. At the same time it also allows for the ethnographer to be a part of the bounded settings or lifeworlds of people. The resulting ethnographies are therefore set both in and out of the world system. Marcus (1998) highlights Martin’s (1994) work on the immune system in American culture as a prime example of a multi-sited ethnography, which tracks understandings and meanings of health and immunity through multiple sites. Multi-sitedness can also be found in both media research (Radway 1988; Abu-Lughod 1997) and science studies (Heath 1997).

A multi-sited ethnography of human values, underpinning the development and sustainability of social capital acting as a mediating artifact in satisfying FHNs in differing cultural contexts, would concern itself with multi-sited cultural contexts. Here the links between human interaction, the elements of the social capital construct, theory surrounding the satisfaction of FHN, and human values, could be explored. This approach would extend understandings concerning the role of social capital in human interaction and would shed light on and possibly transform existing understandings of FHN.

A multi-sited ethnography enables differing lifeworlds to be analysed in their own terms for the forms of meaning, the shared values, and the specific contextual ways of being which emerge in differing environments. This would happen in this research context by the researcher immersing himself in carefully chosen differing field sites for sustained periods, interacting with informants and building up a richly detailed picture of the ways in which their lifeworld contexts are used to create, and sustain relationships and allow them to meet their full gambit FHNs.

The next steps necessary in any ethnographic research, according to Fetterman (1989: 11), concerns "... a research design, specific data collection techniques, tools for analysis...". This whole chapter concerns the "research design", so we can now turn to describing the nature of the next two steps described by Fetterman, namely "specific data collection techniques" and "tools for analysis".

#### **4.5.4 Data collection**

Fetterman (1989: 12) argues that "fieldwork is the heart of the ethnographic research design", and therefore the choice of data collection methods is of great importance. He goes on to point out that even when the researcher has specific hypotheses to test, data collection takes place inductively in ethnographic research.

There are a number of data collection methods for the researcher who is ethnographically and grounded theory-oriented (Maykut and Morehouse 1994: 46; Creswell 1998: 24). These include in-depth interviews, semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and documentary evidence. Creswell (1998: 59) argues that ethnography



*... as a process, involves prolonged observation of the group, typically through participant observation in which the researcher is immersed in the day-to-day lives of the people or through one-on-one interviews with members of the group.*

For the purpose of this study, participant observation and semi-structured in-depth interviews are intended for use as the prime data collection methods.

Morton-Williams (1988: 28) argues that the choice of data collection is dependent on the research topic, the objectives of the research, the subject matter, and the people who are to be studied. Participant observation and semi-structured interviews fit well into the above framework as the prime data-gathering methods in this project. Due to the open nature of the methodology being based around an evolving ethnographic and grounded theory approach, this does not discount the use of other possible techniques appropriate to the participants' responses and the data set arising out of the interviews. This is a valid approach according to Maykut and Morehouse (1994).

***Participant observation*** has a rich tradition in sociology and education according to Maykut and Morehouse (1994). This approach involves taking the viewpoint of those studied, understanding the situated nature of interaction, and viewing social processes over time, out of which theories are grounded (Silverman 1993). Particularly through participant observation, a researcher studies the meanings in ordinary settings of "behaviour, language, and interactions of the culture-sharing group" (Silverman 1993: 48). Creswell (1998: 59) underwrites this approach when he argues that

*The final product of this effort is a holistic cultural portrait of the social group that incorporates both the views of the actors in*

*the group and the researcher's interpretation of views about human social life in a social science perspective.*

**Interviews** play a central role in data collection in a grounded theory study and are also valid for ethnographic studies, according to Creswell (1998). The primary objective of this research is to conduct research involving the participants' perceptions and life experiences within their particular communities of interaction. Face-to-face interviews in these contexts are considered by the researcher to be a most appropriate means by which to gather data. They allow for the emergence of issues from the participants themselves, which may not have been anticipated by the researcher through participant observation alone. The face-to-face interview also appears to be the most appropriate means of building rapport with the participants so as to facilitate feelings of interpersonal confidence and trust, and the other elements of the social capital construct.

However, it must be acknowledged that there are disadvantages associated with using the interview as one of the prime methodological tools. The interview is not a neutral tool as it is thought to "produce situated understandings grounded in specific interactional episodes" (Denzin and Lincoln 1994: 353). Possibly more than any other qualitative method, the interview is influenced by the personal characteristics of the interviewer including race, class, ethnicity and gender. These are also possible limitations associated with participant observation.

So as to minimise these limitations, an in-depth, semi-structured approach to the interviews is proposed. The purpose of in-depth interviews is to understand the experiences of others and the meanings they attach to those experiences (Seidman 1991: 3). Minichiello et al. (1995: 93) argue that in-depth interviews can be either unstructured

or semi-structured (or sometimes referred to as focused). While unstructured interviews are informal in the sense that the interview resembles a conversation, albeit one loosely related to a research issue, semi-structured interviews are developed around a list of issues or topics such as a conceptual framework (Minichiello et al. 1995: 92). Semi-structured interviews focus on issues within the research area, but the approach used in questioning allows for flexibility of response. Another feature of semi-structured interviews is that they tend to follow an “interview guide” (Minichiello et al. 1995: 92). The interview guide provides flexibility as:

*... the interviewer remains free to build a conversation within a particular subject area, to word questions spontaneously, and to establish a conversational style—but with the focus on a particular subject that has been predetermined (Patton 1990 :283).*

#### **4.5.5 Choice of sites and selection of participants**

A purposive sampling technique is proposed for the use of this research. According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994:44)

*Purposive sampling increases the likelihood that variability common in any social phenomenon will be represented in the data, in contrast to random sampling which tries to achieve variation through the use of random selection and large sample size.*

In keeping with the conceptual framework’s individualistic /collectivistic values focus, it is proposed that a minimum of five sites be used. Each of the sites would be chosen to represent a predominance of one of the individualistic/collectivistic value systems: horizontal individualism, vertical individualism, horizontal collectivism, and vertical

collectivism, as well as a site containing a possible mixed collection of participants' individualistic/collectivistic value systems.

It is further proposed that the sites be made of five differing primary FHN-satisfying communities of interaction or contexts, but always focusing on the activity of learning within that context. For instance, contexts might include a spiritually centred site (spirituality), a workplace (subsistence), a primary or high school (identity, understanding), a health centre of some type (protection), recreation club (leisure), a support or service group (affection), an arts grouping (creativity), a collective identity-centred association or organisation such as one surrounding ethnicity (identity) or a human rights group (freedom).

Another possible approach would be to keep within a particular primary FHN-focused community of interaction, such as five school sites or five spiritually centred sites, but still varying across the four Triandis-based individualistic/collectivistic value systems with one mixed site. This would offer a cross-site connectivity to the satisfaction of a particular FHN, and therefore diminishing the variability of the samples.

Each site would need to be approached for participants, preferably taken from differing positions of the *division of labor* within the site, in keeping with Engeström's expanded activity theory model. The sample should include at least four to five participants giving a total minimum of 20 to 25 interviewees. Creswell (1998) recommends a minimum of 20 to 30 interviews.

#### 4.5.6 Analysis of the Data

One of the challenges that confronts qualitative research is the large quantity of data that can become available. Analysis of data in a methodical way that maintains the data's integrity, is essential. A grounded theory approach has been defined as "a qualitative research method that uses a systematic set of procedures to develop an inductively derived theory about phenomena" (Strauss and Corbin 1990: 24). Fetterman (1989: 13) argues that 'ethnographic research involves all different levels of analysis' including grounded theory (1989: 15–16), an argument supported by Lincoln and Guba (1985: 41).

Strauss and Corbin (1990: 23) stress the importance of "what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge". Several other researchers have also underwritten the practical quality of the grounded theory approach to analysis. Patton suggests that "grounded theory depends on methods that take the researcher into and close to the real world ..." (Patton, 1990: 67). Minichiello et al. (1995: 75) have added to this view by noting that the grounded theory approach takes into account and validates the participant's definition of the situation, which is an important implication for a study taking an ethnographic approach.

It is intended to use Strauss and Corbin's (1990) open coding model of grounded theory "to make sense" of the interviews as a first step. The model consists of the following steps: *labelling phenomena*, *discovering categories*, *naming categories* and finally *developing categories* in terms of their properties and dimensions. *Labelling phenomena* consists of reading through the interview transcripts several times, and subsequently "taking apart an observation, a sentence ... and giving each discrete incident, idea or event, a name" (Strauss and Corbin 1990: 63). This exercise is intended to yield a

proliferation of labels, although in some instances the labels can carry links to each other.

The next phase, *discovering categories*, simplifies the labels into more manageable forms by collapsing some of the different names under the same categories. Bogdan, Bikien and Knopp (1982) refer to this step as “raising concrete happenings observed in a particular setting to a higher level of abstraction” (Bogdan, Bikien and Knopp 1982: 154).

The following phase, *naming categories* is aimed at “... naming a category so that you can remember it, think about it ... and begin to develop it analytically” (Strauss and Corbin, 1990: 67). This phase represents several challenges in that it forces the researcher to sort the data into what is useful or not useful. Essentially, this involves reviewing the categories produced in relation to the original goals of the research inquiry, which came from the conceptual framework developed from the literature.

The final step of *developing categories* in terms of their properties and dimensions involves examining and re-examining the potential for sub-categories. This again calls into use the researcher’s practical and theoretical knowledge.

The coding exercise is then followed by a *cross case or comparative analysis*, the purpose of which is to deepen the researchers’ understanding and to confirm the trustworthiness of the findings. The researcher looks for similarity and difference in the codes and themes and constantly asks the question: are there any the regular patterns emerging from the data? Where single case findings were repeated in a series of cases, the resultant explanations are earmarked to have more value.

#### 4.5.7 Measurements to promote validity and reliability

Validity and reliability are considered to be very important concepts within the realms of quantitative research. Validity is the extent to which a measurement procedure yields the correct answer (Minichiello et al. 1995: 175); in other words, the extent to which the researcher has measured what he/she set out to measure (Neuman 1994). Reliability, on the other hand, refers to the reproducibility of the data when the method is replicated (Minichiello et al 1995: 175).

There has been considerable debate amongst social scientists as to whether or not validity and reliability are applicable to qualitative research or whether these constructs are better suited to the quantitative/experimental (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 218; Denzin and Lincoln 1994: 480). Because of the subjective nature of qualitative data, and the emphasis on contexts, situations, events and interactions which cannot be replicated, qualitative studies have been criticised for not subscribing to the standards of validity and reliability.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that *trustworthiness* and *authenticity* are more appropriate and relevant terms for qualitative research than validity and reliability. They equate trustworthiness with *internal validity* or the correctness of the researcher's understanding of the phenomena being studied, and used authenticity to refer to "the fairness and understanding of other personal constructions" (Lincoln and Guba 1985: 218–219).

Kumar (1987: 6) refers to "hypothesis confirmation bias" where the researcher focuses on preconceived biases and beliefs. Kumar (1987: 8) also cautions against what he terms "consistency bias", which is described as a "premature search for coherence amidst

disparate accounts”. To counteract these biases, the quality of data analysis in this study will need to be determined by the extent to which the researcher captures the real social world of the participants (Neuman 1994: 355–356).

The literature has suggested it is imperative that the researcher has significant background knowledge in the area being studied, along with the necessary insight, awareness and suspicions to probe, to cross check, and to interpret accurately whether the pieces of information “fall into some sort of coherent picture” (Neuman 1994: 356). Another technique, which according to Fetterman (1989: 21) determines the validity captured by the researcher, is to share “drafts of professional papers with informants...”. Fetterman (1989) finds this approach extremely useful and where possible, it will be used in this research.

#### **4.5.8 Limitations**

Most research methodologies have limitations and no one methodology has all of the answers. The following discussion identifies some of the possible difficulties and limitations of this study as a result of using a qualitative methodology.

A problem associated with qualitative research can arise in attempting to present the views of the research participants. The researcher may misrepresent participants’ actual points of view or actions, therefore any analysis should proceed with caution, always cross-checking interpretations with the participants, a strategy proposed for this research.

Glesne and Peshkin (1992: 147) note that “part of demonstrating trustworthiness of your data is to realize the limitations of your study”. A significant limitation of this study, due



to its exploratory nature, will be the small sample size that could preclude any overarching generalisations from being made. The scale of the sample means that laws may not be yielded, nor generalisations able to be made. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the aim of qualitative research is to understand the experiences of participants; it does not profess to generate laws. For this reason, it is believed that this study should not be judged according to the same criteria as quantitative research.

It is also possible, depending on funding available at the time of data collection, that the quality of the data could be compromised as the researcher may not be able to collect all the data himself. Another limitation could be the amount of time the researcher can spend in the field. The more time in the field the deeper and the richer insights into the participants' experiences. Time could be constrained due to limited finances. Glesne and Peshkin (1992: 146) note:

*Time is a major factor in the acquisition of trustworthy data.  
Time at the research site, time spent interviewing, time to build  
sound relationships with participants—all contribute to  
trustworthy data.*

The more multi-sited an ethnography is, the less time is available for the individual sites or the individual connections between the sites. Again, this has implications for this ethnographic inquiry.

It is also important to note the limitation that the cultural boundaries between nations or societies are becoming increasingly blurred with economic integration (Fukuyama 1995), and that there may be significant cultural differences within countries themselves (Triandis 1989, 1995a, 1999; Gudykunst 1994; Fukuyama 1995). So while the

individualistic/collectivistic framework is of significance, as data is gathered and analysed there is a need to be aware of possible contradictions when coming to any assumptions about any nation, society or group of people.

The goal of this study will be reached if the reader obtains coherent and comprehensive understandings of the how social capital mediates FHN satisfaction within different cultural contexts. The goal of qualitative research is reached when the reader of a qualitative study has a furthered understanding of the way the subject sees things (Barritt et al. 1985: 32).

The largely unconscious nature of human values poses a particular challenge for the researcher in this instance. As Hofstede (1994) notes, values from a research point of view are difficult to observe and this researcher also realises that he comes to this research with his own values and assumptions that could also impinge on the analysis of the data.

#### **4.5.9 Conclusion to the proposed methodology**

This section began by providing a justification for the use of qualitative inquiry as a methodological approach for the purpose of testing the sets of statements, hypotheses, propositions, and questions arising out of this study. It then looked at issues that confront a qualitative study. It highlighted the features of qualitative research and also examined and justified the use of an ethnographic approach with a grounded theory-focused methodology for the analysis of the data. The chapter also contained a discussion of the selection process of the relevant data. In this study, participant observation and semi-structured interviews are intended for use in collecting data on participants' experiences and perceptions. The data will be analysed so as to understand

participants' experiences of interactions aimed at changing objects whose outcomes satisfy human need. Particularly the need to understand, find meaning within the activity of learning, and linked to the mediating role played by social capital in the above contexts.

#### **4.6 Concluding remarks**

This study shows how social capital negotiates the satisfaction of FHNs, not only for economic purposes in the form of 'substance'-related activities, but also so as to go about satisfying the full range of human needs necessary on the way to becoming 'fully human'. It is through human interaction we satisfy our human needs.

Social capital embedded in people's relationships is crucial for enabling and smoothing human interaction. The importance of human interaction in satisfying FHN has been demonstrated by the study as being linked to the evolution consciousness, and an evolving consciousness is associated with evolving FHNs. This thesis has proposed that activities surrounding human need satisfaction are an integrated whole in terms of all the FHNs being met in some wholistic manner. Any thriving system of human interaction, and therefore satisfaction of FHNs, progressively requires the smoothing and enabling and mediating presence of the elements of the social capital construct for successful outcomes to be achieved. The study has proposed that thriving systems of human interaction, where FHNs are being met, begin with the potential of shared or congruent values, and as this potential is realised so interpersonal trust begins to form between interacting members. It is proposed that it is in this beginning environment of shared or congruent values that social capital begins to take shape, grow and become productive in

enabling needs to be met. The task now is to test these proposals in the field across different cultures and societies through further research.

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