

CAPACITY BUILDING FOR GENERAL ASSISTANTS

by

MMABATHO RAESETJA CATHERINE SEKGOTA

Submitted in part fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of

**MASTER OF ARTS IN SOCIAL SCIENCE (MENTAL HEALTH)
IN THE DEPARTMENT OF
SOCIAL WORK**

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

SUPERVISOR: DR K J COLLINS

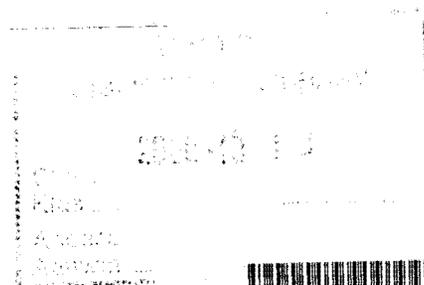
NOVEMBER 1999

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

My sincerest gratitude to the following:

- My parents for having brought me up, with special reference to my mother, Dipuo Tryphosa Rampola, who always, though sickly, encouraged me to study hard. All my brothers and sisters and their families for their support during hardship times.
- My beloved late husband, Mphaka Samson Sekgota, for his unconditional support and generally taking care of the children throughout my studies and for his concern about my studies during his critical moments in hospital.
- Our two precious daughters, Khomotšo Rathete and Thabo Lebogang for having sacrificed their parental time for my studies.
- My beloved Godparents, pastor M.C. and Mrs Mminele for having laid the best foundation for this dissertation.
- Dr. K.J. Collins for having been a good supervisor and to all my colleagues.
- Above all, I thank THE ALMIGHTY GOD FOR ALL THE BLESSINGS.

305.42096825 SEKG



0001761466

SUMMARY

A study was conducted to explore the impact on change which a process of participatory research has on capacity building for the general assistants within the Northern Province in terms of the mission statement of the Office on the Status of Women between July 1997 and September 1998. The mission of the office is as follows: "...to establish mechanisms and procedures that will move the province towards gender equality, thereby empowering women to have equal access to opportunities and resources which will enhance their quality of life".

The target group for Office on the Status of Women is women within the government service irrespective of race and socio-political status. These general assistants were said to be the "left behind" group when issues affecting women like National and International Women's Days are celebrated. Themes of concern were identified and addressed.

- KEY CONCEPTS:**
- Office on Status of Women
 - Participatory research
 - Role of participation
 - Empowerment or capacity building
 - General assistants
 - Policy for Women's Empowerment
 - Process of empowerment

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE	
CHAPTER 1		
1.1	Background information of the study	1
1.2	Objectives of the study	1
1.3	Research question	1
1.4	Personal motivation for the study	2
1.5	Research methodology	3
1.6	Details of the community	3
1.7	Stakeholders	4
1.8	Literature review	5
1.9	Findings	5
1.10	Limitations	6
1.11	Conclusion	7
CHAPTER 2 : LITERATURE REVIEW		
2.1	Introduction	8
2.2	Theoretical framework	8
2.3	Views on PR	10
2.4	The goal of PR	11
2.5	Characteristics of PR	12
2.6	Basic assumptions of PR	13
2.7	Reasons for choice of PR	13
2.8	Participation: Defined	14
2.9	Researcher's role in participation	15
2.10	Process of participatory research	16
2.11	Empowerment	17
2.11.1	Process of empowerment	19
2.12	Background information on OSW as an organization	20
2.12.1	OSW mission statement	21
2.12.2	OSW target group	22

	PAGE
2.12.3 Brief outline of functions of the Office on the Status of Women	22
2.13 Principle of National Women's Empowerment	23
2.14 General assistants	23
2.15 The community development process	24
2.16 Conclusion	29

CHAPTER 3 : CASE STUDY OF THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS OF CAPACITY-BUILDING IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCE

3.1 Introduction	30
3.2 First phase: making contact	30
3.2.1 Theory	31
3.2.2 Objectives	31
3.2.3 Method	32
3.2.4 Post-planning and emerging themes	33
3.3 Second phase: Need identification	34
3.3.1 Theory	34
3.3.2 Objectives	34
3.3.3 Method	34
3.3.4 Emerging themes	37
3.3.5 Post planning	37
3.4 Third phase: Prioritization of needs and resource identification	37
3.4.1 Theory	37
3.4.2 Objectives	37
3.4.3 Method	38
3.4.3 Emerging themes	38
3.4.5 Post-planning	39
3.5 Fourth phase: Planning	39
3.6 Fifth phase: Implementation	39
3.6.1 First meeting	39
3.6.2 Theory	40

	PAGE
3.6.3 Objectives	40
3.6.4 Method	40
3.6.5 Emerging themes	41
3.6.6 Post-planning	41
3.7 Second meeting: Mini workshop by Legislature	41
3.7.1 Theory	41
3.7.2 Objectives	42
3.7.3 Method	42
3.7.4 Emerging themes	43
3.7.5 Post-planning	44
3.8 Third meeting held at the Legislature office	44
3.8.1 Objectives	44
3.8.2 Emerging themes	45
3.9 Fourth meeting: Mini-workshop conducted by Labour Relations and personnel sub-divisions of the Premier's office	46
3.9.1 Theory	46
3.9.2 Objectives	46
3.9.3 Method	46
3.9.4 Emerging themes	48
3.9.5 Post-planning	49
3.10 Presentation by office on status of women about their mission and functions	49
3.10.1 Theory	49
3.10.2 Objectives	49
3.10.3 Method	49
3.10.4 Emerging themes	50
3.10.5 Post-planning	50
3.11 Fifth meeting: National Women's Day	50
3.11.1 Theory	50
3.11.2 Objectives	51
3.11.3 Method	51

	PAGE
3.11.4 Emerging themes	52
3.11.5 Post-planning	52
3.12 Sixth meeting: Discussion about uniform which are working tools	52
3.12.1 Theory	52
3.12.2 Objectives	53
3.12.3 Method	53
3.12.4 Emerging themes	54
3.12.5 Post-planning	54
3.13 Conclusion	55

CHAPTER 4 : CONCLUSION

4.1 Introduction	56
4.2 Evaluation of the PR process	56
4.2.1 Objectives of the study	56
4.2.2 Research question	57
4.2.3 The OSW mission	58
4.3 Major findings	58
4.4 Conclusion	62
4.5 Recommendations	63
4.6 Future planning	63
4.7 Final Reflection	64

BIBLIOGRAPHY	65
---------------------	-----------

FIGURES:

1.
 - Posters on women issues on the OSW boardroom wall:
 - OSW general assistant holding a file on newspaper cutting about issues affecting women.
2. Some of the issues related to the National Women's Day.

3. A general assistant from Legislature displaying and explaining how they acquired their uniform.
4. General assistants from other divisions trying to fit the uniform with appreciation.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Background information of the study

A study was conducted to explore the impact of change on capacity building, for the general assistants in the Northern Province South Africa, in terms of the mission statement of Office on the Status of the Women using Participatory Research.

The Office on the Status of Women (OSW) is a sub-division of the Chief Directorate, Programmes and Planning of the Premier's Office. Other divisions are the youth commission, legal services as well as communication services.

1.2 Objectives of the study

- To explore the role that the general assistants can play with regard to issues affecting women and to provide OSW services to its target community.
- To use the results of the study for future programme planning for OSW as well as to make input for policy-making.
- To identify tasks that the general assistants need to be involved in, within the OSW mandate.

1.3 Research question

Empowerment research attempts to ask research questions and employ methods that help participants (as well as researchers and policy-makers) recognize their strengths and gain mastery over the forces that affect their lives. For this reason, methods and measures are preferred that identify and highlight the abilities and skills of those being studied as well as the context in which their capacities can best be realized. Rather than focussing on people's deficits, empowerment research attempts to emphasize their strengths (Rappaport in Reason 1994:53).

The research question reads as follows:

What impact on change does a process of participatory research have on capacity building for the general assistants of the Northern Province, in terms of the Mission of OSW?

1.4 Personal motivation for the study

I personally became interested in conducting participatory research with a group of the general assistants because according to my general observation, when issues affecting women are discussed, for instance, when National and International Women's Day are celebrated, one rarely sees the general assistants being involved like other women. They are normally behind the scenes in their seniors' offices and preparing tea for visitors. When T-shirts about the event are distributed, they are not given and when other women march in the streets celebrating, you would hear them wondering "what is happening".

Another reason that motivated me was to make the OSW activities as accessible as possible to the 'most marginalized' group for purposes of empowerment, according to my personal frame of reference. This is in line with the defining features of the empowerment model, which is concerned with the following:

- Identifying, facilitating or creating context in which heretofore silent and isolated people, those who are "outsiders" in various settings, organizations and communities gain understanding, voice and influence over decisions that affect their lives.

Empowerment is by definition concerned with many who are excluded by the majority of society on the basis of demographic characteristics or of their physical or emotional difficulties experienced either in the past or present (Rappaport in Reason 1994:52). From the empowerment perspective, it is important to close the distance between the researcher and the researched, to "give voice to the participants' definition of reality

(Rappaport in Reason 1990:56) and to help participants gain greater control of their lives through recognizing their strength and abilities”.

1.5 Research methodology

This study is based on Participatory Research (PR) which is described as a methodology for alternate system production rather than a specific research method (Van Rooyen & Gray 1995:87). It is also in line with Collins (1997:48) that the PR method was considered as appropriate as it is a democratic process relevant to current trends in South Africa. PR as a methodology, based on the experience of the research participants, was considered as the most suitable method for data collection.

Freire (1970:77) regards dialogue as “an act of creation, which occurs through reflection and action, and not an act of depositing ideas to another”. Participants meet for reflection and then implement the decisions taken after the meeting. The next time they meet they go through the research process again but then they shall have benefited by having gained the action phase. So, the meeting of reflection is influenced by the action, which is then decided upon at the meeting, which is in turn influenced by reflection. According to Collins (1999:38), action and reflection give rise to each other.

1.6 Details of the community

The participants in this study were twenty-five general assistants employed by all the divisions of the Premier’s Office of the Northern Province. The divisions are OSW, youth commission, communication and legal services. Their average educational level is standard six.

This definition is meaningful to me because the group of the general assistants participating in the participatory research (PR) has some of the above-mentioned elements. Participants in this study do not have the capacity to review the

literature because their average educational level is standard six hence this was my responsibility.

1.7 Stakeholders

Stakeholders are those people not directly involved in the research but who have influence on the situation being researched, and it was important for the researcher to contact them for support. According to Swanepoel (1992:42), the initiator has to be clear on whom to contact and about the purposes of contact.

With my research study, the first stakeholder that I contacted was the OSW Deputy Director as well as the divisional heads of the Premier's Office, namely, the Heads of the Youth Commission, the Communication and the Legal Services.

In my study these stakeholders had mixed feelings about the research, especially since this was the first of its kind. Moreover, the office was also new. My approach to the divisional heads was respectful and I explained the purpose of the research because if they were not approached carefully, they were likely to block the research process and not recognize its value.

Thereafter, I presented my proposal for this research in writing to them indicating the advantages thereof, for instance, that it will assist the OSW in future programme planning and also to distribute services to our target community. During a discussion with the divisional heads, they were given an opportunity to raise whatever concerns they might have concerning the research, and the general feeling was that it would benefit the general assistants. An agreement was reached that every three months I was to update them about how the project had developed. The Head of the OSW Office also granted me permission to get started.

1.8 Literature review

I reviewed literature on definition of the following terms:

- participatory approaches as well as the role of participation as a process that allowed the participants to put themselves at the centre of development, which would assist them in becoming self-reliant and by gaining confidence as well as taking charge in decision making.

- The role played by power as well as the process of empowerment by stakeholders was explored. This is in line with De Koning and Martin (1996) who maintain that power, empowerment and participation are central to the process. The authorities would hold on to the power and wouldn't like to involve the general assistants.

- I also reviewed literature on definition of terms like general assistants, capacity building as well as the whole process of community development.

1.9 Findings

Due to the fact that this office (OSW) was only born in 1997, it is clear that no previous studies were conducted on the subject by the office; hence the research findings would be very useful when programmes are planned. This would also affect policy makers in that they would take issues that affect the general assistants seriously.

The research was an awareness raising campaign on its own and it was a good starting point for distributing OSW services to its target group. It would lay a good foundation for the time when we would be talking about gender equality because the general assistants would be empowered.

1.10 Limitations

Through knowledge that would be gained, the general assistants would become aware of their rights and how to voice their dissatisfaction, should any arise in future. The information gained will not be generalized to the larger community due to the subjective nature of PR.

- Carrying out the new OSW official mandate, which is now a government structure, posed a lot of questions and uncertainties, which contributed to the slowness of the process at the beginning.
- Recruitment of members also was time-consuming and a lot of time was spent trying to make stakeholders understand what the OSW is, as opposed to its previous political mandate.
- Participatory research is time-consuming and demanding in that more time was spent on clarification since this is a new concept, for example, during contact-making, for instance, participants identified needs which added to time consumption as a result of clarification about the purpose of the research.
- Due to the first exposure of participants to the PR process and due to their total lack of knowledge about what needs and resources were as a concept, the process was emotionally draining for the facilitator. A lot of time was spent explaining, even after each plenary session and the OSW would still be requested to arrange the agenda for the following sessions, as participants were not very sure of themselves.
- Due to the newness of the PR approach, some valuable information might have been left out, for instance missing non-verbal cues when using questioning methods.

1.11 Conclusion

PR has been found to be most suitable in this study because it assisted participants and also challenged them to break the culture of silence and promoted communication among the participants. Through the process of PR, participants were also able to evaluate themselves at the end of the project.

The layout of the dissertation will be as follows:

Chapter 1 contained the background information about the participatory research that was undertaken. Chapter 2 will review the literature on the definition of various terms, which are relevant to the study, as well as the literature on the process of community development. Chapter 3 will outline the participatory research process as it unfolded and lastly Chapter 4 will give the evaluation of the process indicating whether objectives set in the beginning were achieved as well as finding answers to the research question.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

The literature review in this study deals with participatory research, capacity building, empowerment and lastly the community development process. The first section focuses on participatory research (PR), the second section focuses on capacity building-empowerment and the last section on the process of community development. Relevant concepts for the study are defined and an overview of PR provided.

2.2 Theoretical framework

- Without consistent theory the agency/worker runs the risk of strengthening the very forces responsible for the conditions of suffering and injustice. Korten (1991 : 113 in Schenck and Louw 1995 : 81) gives the following reasons for the importance of theory for development which was applicable to my PR project.
 - Theory gives explanations to certain phenomena
 - Theory directs action
 - A consistent theory enables the agency/worker to facilitate development and change instead of just being an assistance agency/worker.

The person-centred approach places people as central, that is, valuing and respecting the people, their values, perceptions, needs and abilities. It will be applied throughout the process. The person-centred approach regards people as creative and with a capacity to act in order to bring about a positive change in themselves if the right climate is created. Rogers (in Schenck 1996) alleges that there has to be communication within individuals in the community to establish what they perceive as needs, problems and possible solutions.

Argyris and Schon's (in Anderson 1994) model suggests that there's a theory consistent with what people say and a theory consistent with what they do and that the distinction is not between "theory and action" but between two different "themes of action" hence the concepts espoused theory and theory-in use. They are explained as follows:

Espoused Theory: The world view and values people believe their behaviour is based on.

Theory-in use: The world view and values implied by their behaviour or maps they use to take action – people might not be aware of this congruence between Theory-in-use and Espoused theory for action to take place as planned (Argyris (in Anderson 1994).

This model of conceptualization is developed for the purpose of helping people to be able to make more informed choices about the action they design and implement. It is illustrated as follows:

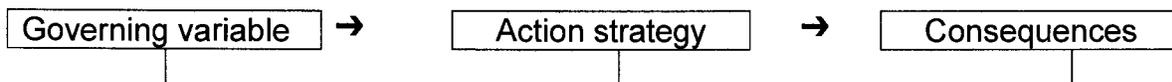


Fig. 1 Model explaining the process of developing themes in use.

- Governing variables (in use present) are values which the person is trying to keep in governing values (espoused – they are wishes or interactions (what you intend to do in response within some acceptable range. (e.g. the general assistants have values of identity, respect and recognition). The governing variables are many and therefore any situation may trigger a trade off among governing variables.
- Action strategies are plans or processes used by individuals to apply on values within acceptable range. They are reaction – what you actually do. When the consequences of the strategy employed are as the person intends, then there is a match between intention and outcome. Therefore the theory in use is confirmed.

- *Consequences*: The strategies will have consequences which are both intended – those the actor believes will result – and unintended. The consequences may be unintended, and counterproductive to satisfying their governing variable. Argyris and Schon's (in Anderson 1994) theory indicates a number of elements which help us explain how we link our thoughts and actions and the elements are:
 - Governing variables (values)
 - Action strategies
 - Intended and unintended consequences for self
 - Intended and unintended consequences for other
 - Action strategy effectiveness.

2.3 Views on PR

Collins (1997:98) views PR as a “subjective research which describes the process as it occurs from the viewpoint of participants in the process”. Hall (1981:14) views PR as an integrated process of investigation, education and action. “Recurring value themes include equitable distribution of resources, empowering people, increasing self-reliance and transforming social structure into more equitable societies”.

Gaventa (1991:19) defines PR as an attempt to “breakdown the distinction between the researched, the subjects and objects of knowledge production. The participation of the people of gaining and creating is not only seen as a process of creating knowledge, but simultaneously as education and development of consciousness and the mobilization of action”.

Fals-Borda & Rahman (1991:4) defines PR as “The final aims of this liberating knowledge and political power within a continuous process of life and work”. These are:

- “to enable the oppressed groups and classes to acquire sufficient creative and transforming leverage as oppressed in specific projects, acts and struggle”,
- “to produce and develop socio-political processes with which popular masses can identify”.

According to Van Rooyen and Gray (1995:88), the participatory research network defines PR as “an approach to research which supports and contributes to the efforts of individuals, groups and movements which challenge social inequality and work to eliminate exploitation”.

From these descriptions of PR, it is clear that participatory research seeks to reduce the distinction between the researcher and the researched by bringing them into “collaborative efforts of knowledge creation that will lead to betterment”. For the purpose of this study, Gaventa’s (1991:19) definition of PR is most relevant because he defines PR as a methodology which attempts to reduce the researcher as “expert” and the researched as passive participants. Both are collaborators in the participatory research process, active participants in the creation and production of knowledge, which will lead to education, the development of consciousness and the mobilization of action.

2.4 The goal of PR

De Koning and Martin (1996:222) view the goal of PR as empowerment of the people to take initiatives to improve their conditions. Hall (1981:11) regards the work of PR as “the mobilization of the oppressed to act on their own behalf”, as well as the creation of popular knowledge by the individuals in their own reality.

In general, all the researchers emphasize critical reflection and empowerment as the main goal of PR. In line with these views, the purpose of this study supports this view with regard to participants, as they have to become critical of their reality in order to act and to become empowered.

Van Rooyen and Gray (1995:89) identified three principal aims of PR.

They are:

- the development of critical consciousness
- improvement of the lives of those involved in the PR process
- transforming social relationships and societal structures.

These researchers saw these aims as being achieved through intrinsically linked, interrelated processes which stress the following:

- The collective investigation of problems involving active participation of those affected by them;
- The collective analysis of data to determine the nature and extent of problems;
- The collective decision-making by participants about the action to be taken.

Emphasis is placed on collective processes by researchers. The research participants can best attend to their concerns when they act collectively as one.

2.5 Characteristics of PR

De Koning & Martin (1996:31) maintain that PR is a process of “knowing and acting”, people engaged in PR “simultaneously enhance their understanding and knowledge of a particular situation as well as take action to change their situation for their benefit”.

PR is a collective education process for all those who are involved in the collaborative analysis of the causes of the problem. PR is aimed at empowering people. It draws on participants’ experience and creates a context where participants are able to develop self-awareness (Collins 1997:98). In short, the most important elements are the development of critical awareness and mobilization of the oppressed to act on their behalf and empowerment.

2.6 Basic assumptions of PR

Reason (1994:41) assumes that people are self-determining, therefore research cannot be done on them. People can only study persons when they “are in an active relationship with each other”. Sohng (1996:84) assumes that “people have inherent abilities and the right to be their own agents in knowledge building and action”. I fully support these researcher’s views that people have a potential for self knowledge and that this knowledge needs to be stimulated for them to be actively involved.

2.7 Reasons for choice of PR

Freire (1970:47) places emphasis on trusting people, rather than on performing a thousand actions in their favour without trust. He argues further that the pedagogy of the oppressed “cannot be developed by the oppressor on behalf of the oppressed”. The PR approach emphasizes doing research with and not for individuals.

PR is empowering to those involved in the process. It promotes empowerment through the development of common knowledge and critical awareness as it “involves disenfranchised people as researchers in pursuit of answers to the question of their daily struggle” (Sohng 1996:80).

According to Collins, (1997 : 98) the PR approach is viewed as “creating a context of energy for reflection and action that no questionnaire, interview schedule or observation can create”. The PR is based on the assumption that knowledge is constructed socially. It has the potential of bringing isolated people together around common problems.

Burkey (1993:58) argues that “through collective self-reflection on their experiences and problems, people become aware of the dimensions of their reality and what needs to be done by themselves to improve their reality”. Since there is no single truth but multiple realities, PR has the potential to engage

participants in the process of giving meaning to events in dialogue in order to develop new perspectives.

The reason why I chose PR was that apart from the fact that participants would be involved in the critical awareness of their situation, that is, the concerns that they would be registering, they were also challenged to analyze and evaluate each process in order to come up with emerging themes. This PR process sounds interesting and thought-provoking for both participants and researcher (Vogt & Murrel)

2.8 Participation: Defined

Burkey (1993:59) defines participation as an “organized effort to increase control over resources and regulative institution in given social situations, on the part of the group and movements of those excluded from such control”. He also regards participation as a learning process and a collective effort by people concerned in “an organized framework to pull these efforts together to attain objectives they set for themselves”.

The relation between participation and empowerment is as follows: (Vogt and Murrel 1990 in Schenk 1996 : 31). “True participation brings great empowerment. Yet people’s whole hearted participation is a very difficult thing to get, or to keep – despite all we have heard about how much empowerment will come from it. So many things come between envisioning full participation and actually realizing it. Such challenging, highly person-centred impulses are not common, yet they are crucial to producing the kind of full participation that result in enduring, transforming empowerment”.

According to Chambers (1992:106), people should be seen as the main source of contribution towards the solving of their problems. People are not passive bystanders but as Chambers (1992:106) puts it:

- "They have the expertise and knowledge of themselves and their indigenous technical skills.
- They understand their own position better than anyone else could.
- To exclude them is to deny them human dignity and their right to make their own decisions.
- The denial of people's participation implies an admission that they would not be enthusiastic about what is presented to them".

Participation is a "learn by doing" exercise, since plans are made, action is taken, results studied, lessons learned and then new plans and actions take place. Where there is genuine participation, mistakes will be made, but there will be progress. Genuine participation depends on "the ability of the participants to embrace error" (Korten 1980 : 480).

In my view, the process of PR lies with the inclusion of all those affected by the problem to be researched. It further requires that those affected must take a leading and active role in determining what their problems are and how they can be resolved to improve their lives. The researcher must have faith and trust in the people to lead the process themselves. Participation refers to sharing or working together to get things done but it is also a goal that ultimately all in the community would have an equal opportunity to have a part in the process of making decisions that affect community life.

2.9 Researcher's role in participation

Burkey (1993:55) maintains that as it is not always possible for participation to occur spontaneously, "the researcher should conscientise the people rather than wait passively for action to take place on its own". According to Burkey (1993:55) conscientization is the "simulation of self reflected critical awareness on the part

of the oppressed of their social reality and of their ability to transform reality by their conscious action”.

To sum up, participation does not always occur spontaneously but the facilitator has to start the process. In my study, the general assistants were telling themselves that they do not know anything, but I challenged them to start thinking about issues that concern them most.

2.10 Process of participatory research

According to Reason and Rowan (1981:311) the process of participatory research is a collective attempt to “construct reality”. It brings together parties whose inquiry objectives, research methodologies and conceptual frameworks are different, and the result may be misunderstanding, ambiguity or conflict.

Cornwall and Jewkes (1995 : 1673) indicate that once participation is secured, involvement in the research process is usually neither continuous nor predictable. Commitment and interest waxes and wanes over time. This indicates the dynamic nature of the process.

The general phases that the inquiry follows are indicated by Cornwall and Jewkes (1995 : 1673)

- *Phase one*: This is concerned with gaining entry into the community, in order to establish a relationship by conducting investigations and inviting prospective participants. It is a crucial stage, which sets the tone of the whole process.
- *Phase two*: The problem is critically analyzed by the researcher and co-researcher in order to establish how it affects their lives. This is done through dialogue.

- *Phase three:* The methods and tools are identified by the research group on how to address the identified needs and problems in order to create an awareness and instill the spirit of ownership in the whole process.
- *Phase four:* By being involved in the process, the participants come with action plans which will help them to develop skills and learn how to work on their issues.
- *Phase five:* Both the researchers and participants work collectively to address the issues that have been identified.

2.11 Empowerment

According to Schenck (1996:xiii), empowerment means to enable “people to elicit and increase the ability and capacity they have”. It is an act of skill and confidence-building. Empowerment develops through cooperation, sharing, joining hands and mutual learning. Empowered people feel significant and important, that learning and competence really matter, that they are part of a team or a community and that what they are doing makes a difference to their ability to take decisions that contribute to the control that they have over their own existence.

Empowerment involves redistributing resources so that the voices and visions of persons previously excluded from paradigms and the paradigm building process are included.

- Process of empowerment
Specifically empowerment is the process through which people gain the power and resources necessary to shape our society world and reach our full human potential.

The purpose of empowerment is to “preserve and restore human dignity, to benefit from and celebrate the diversities of humans, and to transform

ourselves and our society into one that welcomes and supports the voices, the potential, the ways of knowing, the energies of us all”.

Egan (in Schenck 1996 : 31) writes about empowerment that “in most cases the power is already there – we merely help clients use it”. The concept of participation and empowerment go hand in hand, since participation implies empowerment.

Vogt and Murrel (in Schenck 1996 : 31) describe empowerment as follows: “in simple definitional terms, the verb to empower means to enable, to allow or to permit and can be conceived as both self initiated and initiated by others. It means to enable people to elicit and increase the power they have by joining hands. In this case, for social change agents, empowering is an act of building, developing and increasing power through cooperation, sharing and working together. So, empowerment does not mean that outsiders give people power. Power is not handed down to them”.

Chambers (in Schenck 1996 : 32) describes powerless (and therefore also voiceless) people as follows: “poor people are rarely met; when they are met, they often do not speak, they are often cautious and deferential, and what they say is often not listened to and brushed aside”. In this study, the general assistants are the voiceless and powerless and downtrodden.

Community development that seems to empower people requires a holistic approach. To give people a say (“voice and choice”) they have to be empowered at every level of their lives. So, empowerment does not simply mean gathering people together in groups and then proceeding to act and take decisions. It means that people in a community should believe in themselves, be enabled to meet their own physical needs, enjoy good health, become less isolated, generate income and status (Chambers in Schenck 1996:).

According to Starke (in Schenck 1996 : 32) power exists in the community. "It is not something we give to them" (that would be patronising), but something that we activate or exploit. The author sees empowerment as part of the process of change or transformation from:

- ignorance to knowledge
- poor image to good self image
- hopelessness to hopefulness
- captivity to freedom
- being controlled to controlling
- being organized to organizing
- receiving to giving.

The implication is that people become empowered through a participatory process.

Capacity-building involves a process of empowerment of self-sustainability and for the purpose of this study, the two terms, "capacity-building" and "empowerment" are used interchangeably.

2.11.1 Process of empowerment

"The defining features of the empowerment model are its concern with the following: identifying, facilitating or creating contents in which heretofore silent and isolated people, those who are outsiders in various settings, organizations and communities, gain understanding, voice and influence over decisions that affect their lives". Empowerment is, by definition, concerned with many who "are excluded by the majority society on the basis of their demographic characteristics or of their physical or emotional difficulties, experienced either in the past or present (Rappaport in Small 1995:945)". The above statements are in agreement with my study. Empowerment research shares most of its epistemological values with action and participatory research.

From the empowerment perspective, “it is important to close the distance between the researcher and researched, to give voice to the participants’ definition of reality”, and to help participants gain greater control of their lives through recognizing their strengths and abilities. Even vocabulary used is chosen carefully to ensure that it is empowering to participants, for example, the term “participants” or co-researchers is usually used in place of the term “subject” (Rappaport in Small 1995: 946).

The following skills are required from a practitioner whose work is guided by the empowerment perspective: (Chambers in Schenck 1996: 32)

- The worker needs skills of empathy and accurate perception of the client;
- The worker should engage the client in the helping process to identify the client’s strengths.

2.12 Background information on OSW as an organization

In 1992 during negotiations at the World Trade Centre in Kempton Park, women and politicians realized that the constitution of equality and transformation should consider women’s special needs, by including a women’s office in the plan for reconstruction and development. The struggle against racial discrimination was about to end, but the struggle against oppression, deprivation and isolation of women was yet to begin. This led to the establishment of the Women Commissions in the country.

In 1994, the Northern Province was the first to open such an office led by a woman as political head and other provinces followed suit. The main focus of the office was the economic empowerment of women within the Northern Province. The Commissioner, as head of the Office, appointed a total of eighteen field workers for the roles as well as administrative staff members. All these employees were appointed on *a temporary basis. The field workers worked closely with rural women especially in the remote areas to kick-start income generating projects.

Women involved with churches and preschools were also encouraged to participate in the Community Structure, Reconstruction and Development Programmes (African National Congress 1994). Funding of projects was also done through line function /departments. The office also played an important role in awareness raising on women's issues like violence against women and collecting inputs for the Beijing Conference. (Mzizi 1998:2).

In 1997 the office was depoliticized and turned into a civil service, thus meant to serve all women of South Africa regardless of colour, political affiliation and status. The name was also changed from the "WOMEN COMMISSION" to the "OFFICE ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN" (OSW) and was officially staffed by civil servants. The staff complement is as follows:

- One Deputy Director - Head of Office
- One Assistant Director - Occupied by myself and deputizing the head
- Five Senior Administrative Officers
- Four Administrative Officers
- Four Chief Administrative Clerks
- Two Typists Grade I
- One Messenger and one (cleaner) General Assistant.

The Deputy Director of OSW reports to the Chief Director of Programmes and Planning within the Premier's Office. The OSW is strategically placed in the Premier's Office for the purpose of reducing the line of command so that it could have quicker access to the highest level of government. Nationally, the OSW is located within the Deputy President's Office and it is headed by a Chief Executive Officer whose mandate is, among others, to ensure that OSW in all the provinces is functional.

2.12.1 OSW mission statement

The Mission statement of OSW reads as follows:

- To establish mechanisms and procedures that will move the province towards gender equality; thereby empowering women to have equal access to opportunities and resources which will enhance their quality of life.

2.12.2 OSW target group

The major group is women within all the nine government departments of the Northern Province. OSW has also to liaise with all non-governmental organizations (NGOs) which deal with women's issues as well as with parastatals and the private sector.

2.12.3 Brief outline of functions of the Office on the Status of Women

The functions are to:

- Advance a National Women's Empowerment Policy;
- Prioritize key concerns and initiate policy and action-oriented research relevant to gender mainstreaming;
- Advise and brief the Premier on all matters pertaining to the empowerment of women;
- Liaise between international bodies, such as the United Nations and the Office of the Deputy President;
- Work with all ministries, departments and all publicly funded bodies in main-streaming gender into all policies and programmes;
- Develop key indicators for measuring national progression towards gender equality;
- Arrange for training in gender analysis and gender sensitization;

- Facilitate awareness raising and confidence building among women at all levels;
- Act as catalyst for affirmative action with respect to gender;
- Initiate and promote cross-sectoral action on cross-cutting issues such as violence against women;
- Provide a coordinating mechanism for structures at the provincial level; and
- Consult and liaise with civil society. (Kornergay 1997:14)

2.13 Principle of National Women's Empowerment

The National Policy for Women's Empowerment maintains that gender equality should be a key objective of all government policies, planning and programmes. This implies that men and women should be treated with equal respect and they should be entitled to their full human potential (Kornergay 1995: 6).

Equality for women and men in political, civil, social, economic and cultural life means that women and men should be given the same benefits and opportunities. This understanding of equality is found in the South African Constitution (1994), as well as international documents such as commitments of the Beijing Platform of Action Document (1995:September).

The above principle is in line with the study and it is one of the major tasks of the Office on Status of Women (OSW), that is, to advocate for the Provincial Women's Empowerment policy.

2.14 General assistants

According to the Personnel Administration Standard (PAS: 1994 April) general assistants are "unskilled and semi-skilled workers who perform low level work

under the supervision of a skilled worker". In the study the general assistants are cleaners, tea makers, responsible for arranging office equipment and they hold the lowest rank within government department. They are expected to do all the manual labour within the office. During the previous homeland administration, the general assistants had to work for five years as temporary labourers before they could be taken permanently to the level of general assistants. This state of affairs deprived them of the benefit that other employees enjoyed.

2.15 The community development process

According to Shriver (1995:453) there are various descriptions and definitions of communities. One of his descriptions is that of a community "as a way of relating". The focus is on the ways members relate to one another and on identification of feelings of membership by community members. The author cites elements that must be present for one to refer to the group of individuals as a community. Some of the cited elements are as follows:

- A shared-ness
- Feeling of connectedness or a sense of "we-ness" or a sense of "community" and a sense of mutual responsibility that is shared by members.

Essential to all the above-defined terms is the application of the research study within the framework of a community development process. I made use of Swanepoel's (1992) framework for the implementation of the community development process. This framework constitutes the following steps: agency analysis, community profile, making contact and exploration of needs, planning, implementation and evaluation.

- Agency analysis

An often forgotten task of community workers is understanding the context of their own agency, regarding community development. The community worker needs to analyze the policies and procedures of his/her agency

before moving into the community, as the agency's policies might limit his/her actions in the community.

- Community Profile

According to Henderson and Thomas, (1980:32) community profile allows the developer to have an outline of the type or nature of local people that she is to be involved with.

- Making contact and getting to know the community

This is one of the most important stages for community workers and action researchers, as it is the start of building relationships and trust. It consists of basically three processes:

- The community worker getting to know the community;
- The community getting to know the community worker;
- The community worker getting to know the community's needs within the community (Swanepoel, 1992:32).

- Exploration of needs

There are many ways of exploring the needs of the community, but the emphasis should be on exploring needs with the community, getting them to take the picture of their situation, not the researcher taking the picture for them.

Hope and Timmel (1984:35) predicate that "one of the keys to discovering the deepest feelings of a local community is listening". They go on to say that when using the Paulo Freire method, the researcher should listen with a clear idea of what they are listening for, "listening for issues which people feel strongly about". Emotion is linked to motivation. Only issues which they feel strongly about will people be prepared to act on. "One needs to

listen and explore what makes people worry, happy, sad, angry, anxious, fearful and hopeful about.

- Planning with the community

Once the community people have identified their needs, they need to explore what needs to be done and how it is to be done. Swanepoel (1994:79) defines planning as “Bringing together three elements-needs, resources, and objectives – and then to relate them to a fourth element, action”.

Furthermore, Swanepoel (1992:80-87) discusses the following important aspect of planning:

- Planning must be incremental: there is no blueprint; it is a continuous learning process;
 - Planning must and can only be short-term: at each meeting planning should be done for the period until the next meeting, and progress is evaluated at each meeting – “only in this way can community development be a learning process for those participating in it”.
 - Objectives should be attainable in a short period: an objective should be able to be achieved within a year. Quick results boost the group’s confidence and enthusiasm to tackle bigger goals;
 - Long-term planning should accompany short-term planning;
 - Planning must be realistic, simple and singular so that it is reachable;
- The planning process should consist of four items: what action must be taken; when the action should take place, who will be responsible for implementing that action; and lastly, how that action should take place;

- Planning should be written down – this can be written on a blackboard or sheet of newsprint and put up somewhere where the whole group can easily have access to it to review their progress and check what still needs to be done. When an action has been completed, it can be erased from the board;
- Planning must involve the whole action group; this is essential for the sustainability of the project and for meeting abstract needs such as to be treated with respect and appreciation for short and long-term objectives.

Feedback of the results of the evaluation is given back to the community, to be discussed and the necessary action taken to address any issue arising from the evaluation.

- Implementation

Once the plans have been formulated, the next phase is the implementation of the plans. This should not be done by the community worker – he or she must only facilitate the process. This process should not only involve the action group, but other members of community should be included as far as possible.

The following suggestions are given by Swanepoel (1994:92) to maintain enthusiasm:

- Make sure that the objective is reachable in a short period and that it will not overtax the group;
- Create interim goals towards the objective so that the group will experience success regularly;
- Try to involve every individual of the group;
- Be enthusiastic yourself as facilitator;

- Be positive, also about setbacks – the group must never experience a setback as a failure;
- Try to anticipate obstacles and problems and prevent or prepare the group for them;
- Give credit for accomplishments and compliment people on achievements;
- Turn the negative result of setbacks and failures into a positive learning experience;
- Remember that throughout, your compassion must be obvious.

The essence of implementation is captured by what Burkey (1993:127) says: “Community development is incremental and leads to further development”.

- Evaluation

Essential for the learning process of the community is ongoing evaluation. Evaluation should not only take place at the end of a project or process but throughout the process. Participatory evaluations assist stakeholders to engage in continuous action and reflection.

Schenck (1996:127) refers to the following guidelines for evaluation from Swanepoel and De Beer:

- Do not evaluate people; evaluate the process. The people should not feel that they have succeeded or failed. Evaluate actions, goals, the learning process;
- Evaluation should be participatory, transparent and honest;
- Keep it as simple as possible;
- The community plans the evaluation with the worker’s assistance;

- Be very sympathetic about mistakes and reformulate them (one **always** learns by one's mistakes);
- Use the evaluation as a learning situation for the community regarding their next project; ✓
- Reformulate negative results as a positive recommendation.

The following needs to be worked out with the community:

- What will be evaluated?
- For whom is the evaluation intended?
- When must the evaluation be done?
- Who will do the evaluation?
- How will the evaluation be done? (Schenck 1996:128).

2.16 Conclusion

This chapter reviewed literature on the definition of various terms, which are relevant to the study, as well as the literature on the process of community development. The next chapter will be a case study of the participatory research process, which took place based on the concepts presented in the literature review.

CHAPTER 3

CASE STUDY OF THE PARTICIPATORY PROCESS OF CAPACITY-BUILDING IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCE

3.1 Introduction

This chapter documents the actual participatory process of capacity building that was conducted with 25 general assistants within the various divisions of the Premier's Office in the Northern Province. The process took place in the context of the various phases of community development process as described in Chapter 2 Section 2.6. Each phase is comprised of meetings and each meeting will be presented separately comprising of the following:

- Theory
- Objectives
- Method
- Emerging themes
- Post planning

An account will be given of the community development process that took place at the Office on the Status of Women's boardroom from May 1997 until November 1998.

3.2 First phase: Making contact

Getting involved with the community for me was starting a new process but I had an advantage of being an employee of the organization as an Assistant Director. Since the OSW's mission statement reads "to establish mechanisms and procedures that will move the province towards gender equality, thereby empowering women to have equal access to opportunities and resources which will enhance their quality of life", this implies that the study was conducted within my official mandate.

I started first by explaining to the head of the OSW about my intention to conduct PR with a group of general assistants within the various divisions of the Premier's Office for the following reasons:

- I had observed that the general assistants are normally left out when issues affecting women are discussed and I gave as example, National and International Women's Day as well as the AIDS and Cancer awareness campaigns.
- Conducting a PR study with them was also part of disseminating our services to our target community within the government service.
- The outcome of the PR study would also assist the OSW in programme planning as well as in policy formulation in line with Women Empowerment Policy. Permission was granted and I also requested use of the OSW boardroom, to conduct sessions during working hours and also that the OSW general assistant assists me as co-facilitator.

3.2.1 Theory

Rogers (1951) and Burkey's (1993) theory influenced the process of contact making. The general assistants were put at the centre of the process for effective change to take place. According to Rogers' proposition no.2 the researcher understood participants' world through their eyes mainly because they understand their world best. Burkey's theories support these propositions by emphasizing that the researcher should build on what the participants know.

3.2.2 Objectives

The total number was 25 participants. It was indicated in the first chapter that all the stakeholders, namely, the divisional heads of the Premier's Office were contacted to request for permission, which they indeed granted. To neutralize the divisional heads' power, an agreement was reached whereby I was to supply

them with bi-monthly progress reports which would allow them room for clarification of issues.

I also made good use of the only OSW general assistant, who (OSW general assistant) was positive about the research that it was to benefit them as participants through the knowledge to be acquired. She motivated other general assistants to belong to the group. The participant's political background as an activist assisted me as a facilitator as she assumed the position of a co-facilitator.

Participants contracted on the following as their ground rules. They agreed

- that they needed to be punctual as well as respect one another's opinion;
- To be honest with themselves and to one another thereby avoiding negative criticism;
- To use flipcharts for recording;
- That feedback about progress made should be given to their supervisors at least quarterly;
- Lastly, that I would facilitate the process with assistance from the OSW general assistant as co-facilitator.

Objectives were as follows:

- To get to know one another
- To clarify and define our roles (participants and mine).

3.2.3 Method

The introductions were done by pairing people and three minutes was allocated wherein the one person was to tell the partner who she was, where she was working and her feelings about belonging to the project. Thereafter each pair was given the chance to introduce the partner. Group work skills were mainly used in this exercise and according to Egan (1994:155) "effective communication depends on the ability of the facilitator to practice the relevant communication

skills". These skills are essential tools for developing relationships and interacting with people. They are extensions of the kinds of skills people need in everyday interpersonal relationships. I had a belief that these skills would assist participants to participate in self-disclosure as well as feedback.

3.2.4 Post-planning and Emerging Themes

The next meeting was scheduled for need identification.

The following themes emerged from participants:

- The general feeling in the group was that people were excited about the PR process, as almost all of them indicated that it was their first encounter because of:
 - their realization that the OSW was an office for all women irrespective of social status or political affiliation;
 - it equalized the power relations between the researcher and the researched;
 - information sharing and knowledge is power.
- They enjoyed communicating as well as information sharing as a group and almost all of them enjoyed the exercise of introducing their partners to the larger group and claimed that it was learning in a fun-filled way.
- They generally complained of being looked down upon at by their supervisors and everybody at work.
- Those who were aware of the OSW as an office, associated it with "educated women" or women of higher social status. Some did not know about the existence of the Office and also that it falls within the Premier's Office. It was then that they started realizing that they are like a family since they also belong to the Premier's Office, and as such, claimed that the purpose of the meeting was to strengthen their family ties.

3.3 Second phase: Need identification

3.3.1 Theory

Need identification also includes resource identification, prioritization and planning. According to Swanepoel (1992:51), need identification already starts informally during the contact-making phase, and we can therefore say that need identification has a more informal phase during contact-making and a more formal phase when a project has started. This is in line with what happened in the study because as early as during entry, when introductions were done, participants were already mentioning issues which they were worried about.

3.3.2 Objectives

The objectives of the meeting were:

- to come up with clearly identified needs of participants,
- prioritization of the needs and lastly,
- resource identification.

3.3.3 Method

Participants were divided into three groups, two groups of eight members each and the third one of nine members. Each group was allocated an OSW office, given flipcharts for recording their inputs and was also to choose a scribe and someone who would report back on behalf of the group. This process took three sessions, that is, three days spreading over three weeks.

Before they broke into their respective groups, I clarified terms like “needs” and “resources”. From my personal perspective I explained that needs are “issues of concern” and resources are “tools” that they feel and think could be used in order to address their needs. According to Collins (1999:28) themes are “what worries the community or what makes the community unhappy” which is the same as needs. Participants brainstormed and discussed their issues before they could reach consensus claiming that “brainstorming involves us suspending our

judgement by allowing anything related to the focal issue to come into our heads, without criticizing it”.

Brainstorming is rather unstructured and can take a long time as it is possible for issues to be discussed indefinitely, without a conclusion being reached and as such, a time should be set for the discussion and if there’s no conclusion, a vote can be taken. This was the case with the study hence the three weeks allocated to the process and I had to move around the group with the co-facilitator to listen to what they were discussing and also to assist them where they encountered problems in discussion. Participants were not aware of what needs and resources were and how to identify them. Egan’s (1994:155) communication skills also were of help in promoting interpersonal relationships among participants. Skills that were used were active listening to the verbal and non-verbal messages and capturing them with understanding, probing as well as empathy.

- Contents of participants’ discussion

One member selected from each group did a presentation after the whole group had come together in the boardroom. Other group members listened and made additions where they felt necessary. Findings from the three groups were as follows:

Group 1

- Feeling of not being treated equally;
- No working tools like equipment for cleaning or clothes for work;
- No platform for venting their feelings or problem sharing;
- No respect from supervisors;
- There’s a need to meet the Premier and his wife as they only know him from seeing him on television and in newspapers;
- They want to know more about the Premier’s Office, i.e. OSW, Youth, Legal Services, Personnel Divisions and Labour Relations.

Group 2

- They need working tools (clothes and cleaning equipment);
- They need equal and fair treatment from supervisors;
- Need to know more about their leave days as well as general conditions of employment;
- Knowledge needed about legal services and other divisions in the Premier's Office, Legislature, OSW, Personnel and Labour Relations;
- Oppressed because they are illiterate and cannot speak English or Afrikaans and issues are normally discussed in these languages which are foreign to them.
- They want to know their rights;
- They want in-service training courses and induction courses that other government employees receive;
- They need a spokesperson for the cleaners to represent them in Management meetings.

Group 3

- More knowledge needed about their rights;
- They become easily intimidated due to lack of knowledge;
- They need working tools;
- To be treated equally;
- They don't want to be transferred randomly;
- They need to be treated equally by their supervisors.

The above exercise is in line with Freire's (1970 : 50) approach which is based on mutual learning between the researcher and the researched. "Almost do they realize that they, too, know things they have learnt in their relations with the world and with other men. Given the circumstances which have produced their duality, it is only natural that they distrust themselves" He looks at changing the self-depreciation of the oppressed to building up confidence within themselves.

3.3.4 Emerging themes

The participants enjoyed the exercise and they were now clear about what was needed. The OSW general assistant always explained issues within their frame of reference and she assisted with translation where I could not find suitable words in vernacular.

Themes that emerged were:

- lack of working tools
- lack of knowledge
- feeling of not being respected.

3.3.5 Post planning

During the need identification stage, participants agreed that the next session would be for prioritization of needs wherein the three groups would meet as one in the boardroom and have a look at the flipcharts, brainstorm and discuss issues in terms of their priority. It was also agreed that I facilitate the prioritization of issues whereas they would be actively engaged in discussions.

3.4 Third phase: Prioritization of needs and resource identification

3.4.1 Theory

According to Swanepoel (1992: 23), one of the main aims of a survey is “to identify resources and also obstacles in the way of their utilization”. Participants worked in groups to identify their needs.

3.4.2 Objectives

This phase came three weeks after need identification.

Objectives were:

- To list the identified needs
- Prioritization of needs
- Resource identification.

3.4.3 Method

The flipcharts from the three groups were put on the boardroom walls, and discussions and brainstorming were done with regard to the issues identified. Consensus was reached as follows:

- Knowledge about resources around them, for example, legislature, labour relations and personnel divisions, OSW, Old Mutual Trust (with regard to the importance of a "will");
- Education – to access in-service training courses;
- Recognition and to be treated with respect and dignity by their supervisors;
- Maintaining their identity and visibility by being supplied with suitable working tools/equipment;
- Recreational needs, that is forming part of National and International Women's Day Celebrations, and all other events throughout the year that are scheduled for women.

3.4.4 Emerging themes

Emerging themes were:

- Participants had more confidence than at the beginning in that:
 - some were aware of their self image and how society treated them which was not fair to them;
 - others, even though were aware of their self image and the fact that they were treated like doormats, had ways of coping with the situation as they felt they did not have control or power over it;
 - still others were not aware of any issues that affected their service delivery and daily lives as women.



Figure 1: Posters on women issues on the OSW boardroom wall.
-OSW general assistant holding a file on newspaper cutting about issues affecting women

- Their self-esteem had improved when I observed them, there was a lot of commitment on their part.

3.4.5 Post-planning

By checking through the OSW boardroom wall, they saw posters of some incidences on Human Rights Day, which had just passed. The group suggested that they need knowledge about Human Rights Day and they requested me to look for someone who could enlighten them on the topic for their next session. Other posters on the wall were about "Violence against women and children", "National and International Women's Day Celebrations". "World AIDS Day", "Speak Out Against Violence". All these served as an orientation to OSW activities.

3.5 Fourth phase: Planning

The group had to plan together during the session for what they needed during the following session. According to Swanepoel (1992:79), planning means bringing together three elements – needs, resources and objectives and then relating them to action, which is the fourth element.

The actual addressing and putting the plans into action of identified needs and issues was to take place during the next meeting.

3.6 Fifth phase: Implementation

This phase gave participants an opportunity to address issues that they had never been exposed to before through meetings.

3.6.1 First meeting:

Presentation by lawyers for human rights about the Human Right's Day, the 21st March. I was earlier on delegated by the group as a facilitator to request the Human Rights office to come and share with them what Human Rights Day means and entails.

3.6.2 Theory

Swanepoel (1952:89) indicates that implementation must come as soon as possible after plan formulation. This is in line with this study since during the previous session planning was done for this session.

3.6.3 Objectives

- To gain more knowledge and understanding about Human Rights Day.
- To actively participate in activities related to it.

3.6.4 Method

The presenter was an employee at the Human Rights Commission Office who used flipcharts to write about the following categories:

- History of Human Rights Day
- What Human Rights are
- Different categories of Human Rights.

It was an informal discussion, which facilitated participation.

During the presentation, which he did step by step using the categories mentioned above which were written on separate flipcharts, the presenter came down to the level of the general assistants and even though he had prepared his talk in English, he interpreted it very well in their mother tongue.

The presentation generated discussion about the "Sharpsville massacre"¹ and members felt that it was necessary to have such types of presentations time and again as knowledge is power. They were hearing about the contents of Human Rights Day for the first time. The presenter also challenged them to go and read chapter two of the Constitution of South Africa, which talks about the "BILL OF RIGHTS". They were promised copies of the constitution in their mother tongue from the OSW.

¹ Shootings and killing of anti-apartheid marchers by the former apartheid regime.

3.6.5 Emerging themes

Emerging themes were:

- They felt empowered with knowledge about what their Human Rights are.
- Knowledge gained also boosted their self-esteem in that, they could share information with other people to empower them;
- The history behind the day was heard for the first time and they indicated that they were going to share the information with other people.
- They strongly felt that such presentations add to their existing knowledge or is new knowledge gained.

3.6.6 Post-planning

After the presentation, participants suggested that a bigger forum for the general assistants is necessary wherein information could be shared. The group also decided they needed to gain more knowledge and understanding about the legislature. As indicated earlier this was their first exposure, and they requested that I contact the Legislature so as to share information about what it is all about. Most of them were not even aware that there is Legislature office in existence.

3.7 Second meeting: Mini workshop by Legislature

3.7.1 Theory

The challenge that was given to participants to go to their communities and check for constituency offices is in line with Rogers' (1987:500) third proposition that "the person responds to his experiential world as an organized whole, where change in one part, will bring about change in another part". The information gained would assist the participants to empower others, both colleagues and friends.

3.7.2 Objectives

The objectives were:

- to provide knowledge about how the Legislature operates and how it accesses people within communities;
- to devise strategies whereby OSW and Legislature could coordinate services for empowerment workshops for the general assistants.

The group should start thinking along those lines for those possibilities and that if they need information about it through workshops, the Legislature would coordinate services with the OSW to address that.

3.7.3 Method

The presenter requested participants to put the tables in a circle so that all would be seated at the same level so participants could see each other face to face. This was to facilitate communication and to make participants feel more comfortable. She was also comfortable as she was seated at their level as opposed to standing like a lecturer. Participants seemed satisfied with the setup.

Contents of participants' discussion

The presenter was the Deputy Speaker of the Legislature, who is a woman and who visited the project on invitation. She expressed her sincerest gratitude for having been invited to come and share information with participants and further commended the OSW for the attention paid to the general assistants, who are, according to her, disempowered as far as developments are concerned.

She indicated three levels of government:

- The Executive Council comprised of the Premier and MEC which meets fortnightly.
- The Legislature whose higher structure is Parliament where issues are debated as motions and then passed as Acts.

- The Justice which is solely responsible for making laws. The Legislature's duty is also to check that the government implements policies and utilizes the budget correctly. She indicated that this is done through Parliamentary Standing Committees for each department.

As Deputy Speaker, she presides in the speaker's absence and she emphasized that the speaker or deputy directs discussions and does the least talking. She concluded by indicating that information given to them was part of capacity building and challenged them by indicating that:

"Suppose in the near future government decides to privatize the cleaning work wherein people might be given retrenchment packages and then private tenders would be introduced".

This came as a surprise to them and they were wondering what privatization of the cleaning service was. She insisted that they should start thinking seriously about it and if they needed information they should inform their OSW office which would liaise with Legislature for purposes of enlightening them on the subject.

Another challenge to them was that they should go back to their communities and look for constituency offices and to further inquire about their functions and that a special meeting would be arranged wherein they would be expected to give feedback.

3.7.4 Emerging themes

One member volunteered to give a vote of thanks and she:

- Commended the OSW for the wonderful work done about connecting them to resources like the Legislature;
- Indicated that they felt honoured to meet high profile people like the Deputy Speaker of the Legislature;
- Mentioned that such meetings are important and should continue in future;

- Indicated that they were in a better position to impart knowledge gained to others.

3.7.5 Post-planning

Participants planned what they needed for the next meeting. The speaker invited the whole group to the Legislature boardroom during their next session as she was concerned about the fact that most of them did not know where the Legislature is situated and felt that they were treated in a demeaning way by the system. This was a learning process for the Deputy Speaker as well. She learned with regret and disappointment how some employees of the present regime were treating the general assistants instead of promoting the mission of gender equality. They would be expected to report about information gathered in the speaker's and deputy's offices.

3.8 Third meeting held at the Legislature office - To orientate participants about Legislation.

3.8.1 Objectives

It should be noted that this was a continuation of the first meeting. So, the theory and objectives are the same as above.

Contents of the meeting

Participants met at the Legislature's boardroom. First of all the Deputy Speaker who took them around showed them the following:

- the two boardrooms
- mini-library
- speaker and deputy's offices
- offices used by Parliamentary Standing Committees
- their kitchen and tea room.

Most of the participants were seeing the Legislature for the first time and they kept on wandering and looking around at the interior decorations. When seated

in the boardroom, the Deputy Speaker welcomed them and indicated that she just wanted to have tea with them and she invited some of her colleagues whom she introduced. She requested that they give feedback about their constituency offices and those who had managed to contact them indicated the following:

- that constituency offices are where issues of concern by communities are reported;
- all political parties have representatives in the constituency offices;
- that the inputs that are received by communities are taken to the Legislature through the member of parliament (MP) elected by communities.

The Deputy Speaker indicated that those who did not do their homework should still go and find out more information. The challenge of privatization of the cleaning services was indicated again and they were encouraged to think about it wherever they were. The meeting ended with tea and snacks.

3.8.2 Emerging themes

Again, a volunteer gave a vote of thanks and she indicated that:

- They felt great to have been given such a treat, especially that under normal circumstances they are the ones who prepare tables for dignitaries but the opposite was done this time. This indicated the recognition with respect by Legislature. There was a strong reaction to the vote of thanks, which was shown by clapping of hands and ululating.
- There was a lot of excitement from participants about being honoured to have tea, which was prepared by high-ranking officials.

3.9 Fourth meeting: Mini-workshop conducted by Labour Relations and Personnel sub-divisions of the Premier's office

3.9.1 Theory

In constructivism, for change to take place, it is very important that the people need to have an understanding of their needs (reality) for them to address them collectively and effectively (Fourie 1991:8). Participants therefore needed knowledge about the basic rights and privileges so that change within their working environment could occur. The knowledge would assist them in having more understanding of issues affecting them and how to address them.

3.9.2 Objectives

Earlier on during the need and resource identification phase, the participants indicated their concern of wanting to know more about personnel issues, that is their employment rights and privileges as well as how they are to relate to the Labour Relations sub-offices of the Premier. I was requested to facilitate the coming of the Personnel and the Labour Relations Officers to the group. As facilitator I consulted the head of Personnel and Labour Relations with a request for a presentation. They in turn, delegated two officers to come and share information with participants. Two people, one from each section, made presentations on their divisions.

3.9.3 Method

A flipchart was used and the facilitator from the Personnel section, started by introducing himself and explaining that the Personnel Section used to be under the then Public Service Commission prior to 1994 and that after amalgamation all divisions fall within the Premier's Office. He indicated the following, which were written down and explained in the language that they understood best.

Contents and participants' discussion

- It is a section that ensures that employees' rights and privileges are known as well as the general Code of Conduct and measures that can be taken if one misbehaves.
- All employees have a right to an induction course upon being employed, which has to be organized by their respective offices.
- Each employee has a total of 30/31 days per year leave days and that leave can be taken anytime as long as it is arranged with the respective supervisor and that the days are accumulative.
- Women employees are entitled to three months' maternity leave and three months' sick leave with pay if they must be hospitalized.
- Each employee is entitled to fringe benefits like a housing subsidy, medical aid, 50/50-study leave as well as part-time and full-time bursaries.
- In-service courses are available for capacity building of employees.
- There are measures taken when an employee absconds from work.
- Employees are free to come to Personnel in their individual capacity to inquire about issues of concern.

The Labour Relations employee also used the same method and he highlighted the following:

- It's important for all employees to know their labour rights and to know procedures of lodging their complaints with supervisors;
- The major function of the office is to mediate and maintain harmony between the employer and employee and to ensure that neither abuse power over the other and to see to it that people are treated equally and fairly at work.

- Any situation of harassment at work should be reported to the supervisor and if the latter doesn't respond, to the Labour Relations Office;
- In cases of dispute among employees which might lead to legal action, such are referred to the Legal Division of the Premier which advocates in court cases on behalf of employees;
- If an employee clashes with someone outside the public service, the Legal Service of the Premier will advocate on behalf of the employee instead of paying monies to the attorney.

A question posed to the two divisions was concerned with the challenge about privatization of the cleaning services. The answer was yes, that it is in the pipeline and the group was advised to look for information, or to be workshopped on how to run a business as well as financial management. Personnel Officer challenged them that they should think about forming consortiums in buying the tender, should that opportunity arise as they are experts in doing the work. The starting point would be to get information and knowledge.

3.9.4 Emerging themes

Participants felt empowered and very excited that for the first time they were addressed about their rights as well as procedures to follow when one is dissatisfied.

- They also expressed a feeling of really being within the Premier's Office as they now understood how some divisions work;
- They agreed to invite the divisions whenever necessary to update them about changes and amendments of rules and regulations which would assist them in making informed decisions.

3.9.5 Post-planning

It was decided that the Old Mutual Trust should give a presentation of the importance of a will during the next session. This request never materialized.

3.10 Presentation by Office on the Status of Women about their mission and functions

3.10.1 Theory

This was in line with Henderson and Thomas (1987:223) when they emphasize the importance of clarifying roles, as illustrated above, by posing the following question: ...”how often has inadequate reflection upon role at different phases in a group’s existence contributed to confusion both for the worker and the group? Too frequently in our experience”. This presentation was done deliberately towards the end so as to conscientise participants when they were more relaxed about OSW’s role and functions.

3.10.2 Objectives

The objective was to enlighten participants about OSW services as their first resource.

3.10.3 Method

The presenter was a colleague from OSW and she made her presentation in a very informal way. She also preferred the setup wherein participants formed a circle to facilitate communication and eye contact and being all at the same level.

Contents of the presentation

She indicated the OSW mission as follows:

- OSW’s mission is to establish mechanisms and procedures that will move the province towards gender equality, thereby empowering women to have equal access to opportunities and resources which will enhance their quality of life.

- OSW's mission is to establish mechanisms and procedures that will move the province towards gender equality, thereby empowering women to have equal access to opportunities and resources which will enhance their quality of life.
- She also stressed that their target is women within government departments;
- OSW cannot start talking about gender issues if people are not aware of resources available to them – hence the study is both important to participants and to the OSW;
- Functions of the OSW were clearly spelled out as was done in chapter two and participants were given copies of the OSW functions;
- An indication was made that time and again presentations about OSW activities would be made by the OSW employees.

3.10.4 Emerging themes

- Participants gained more understanding about the OSW as compared to their knowledge at the beginning;
- They are now fully aware that the office also belongs to them as they form part of the target group, as compared to at the beginning when they thought it belonged to educated women only.

3.10.5 Post-planning

The next meeting was scheduled for discussion around August 9th, which is National Women's Day and a woman parliamentarian was to be invited through the OSW.

3.11 Fifth meeting: National Women's Day



Figure 3: A general assistant from legislature displaying and explaining how they acquired their uniform.

3.11.2 Objective

The objective was to gain knowledge about the history behind the day.

3.11.3 Method

Informal discussions which generated questions was used. A flipchart was used whereon a written summary report about the event was made. The presenter also made use of explanations in a very simple way and pamphlets on the history of the day were handed out.

Contents of participants' discussion

The speaker, a woman Parliamentarian started by indicating that August 9th, 1956 was a day when women demonstrated in an anti-pass campaign at the Union Building where they said "enough is enough"² with the pass laws. Women marched and took to the streets, chanting freedom songs and slogans as a way of registering their concerns, demands and dissatisfaction about the pass laws of the previous apartheid regime.

- August 9th every year has been declared a "National Public Holiday" wherein all women throughout South Africa commemorate it in whatever way they wish.
- The anti-pass campaign ended in 1960 with the Sharpsville massacre, which took the government 10 years to respond to their demands.
- Women stood the test of time because they were united, focussed, committed, determined and dedicated to see the fruits of their struggle and thus to see the government's pass laws being cancelled.
- The presenter encouraged participants to be involved every year with the preparations and celebration of August 9th in their respective communities now that they knew the history behind it and to also educate other people about it.

² Means it could not be tolerated any longer.

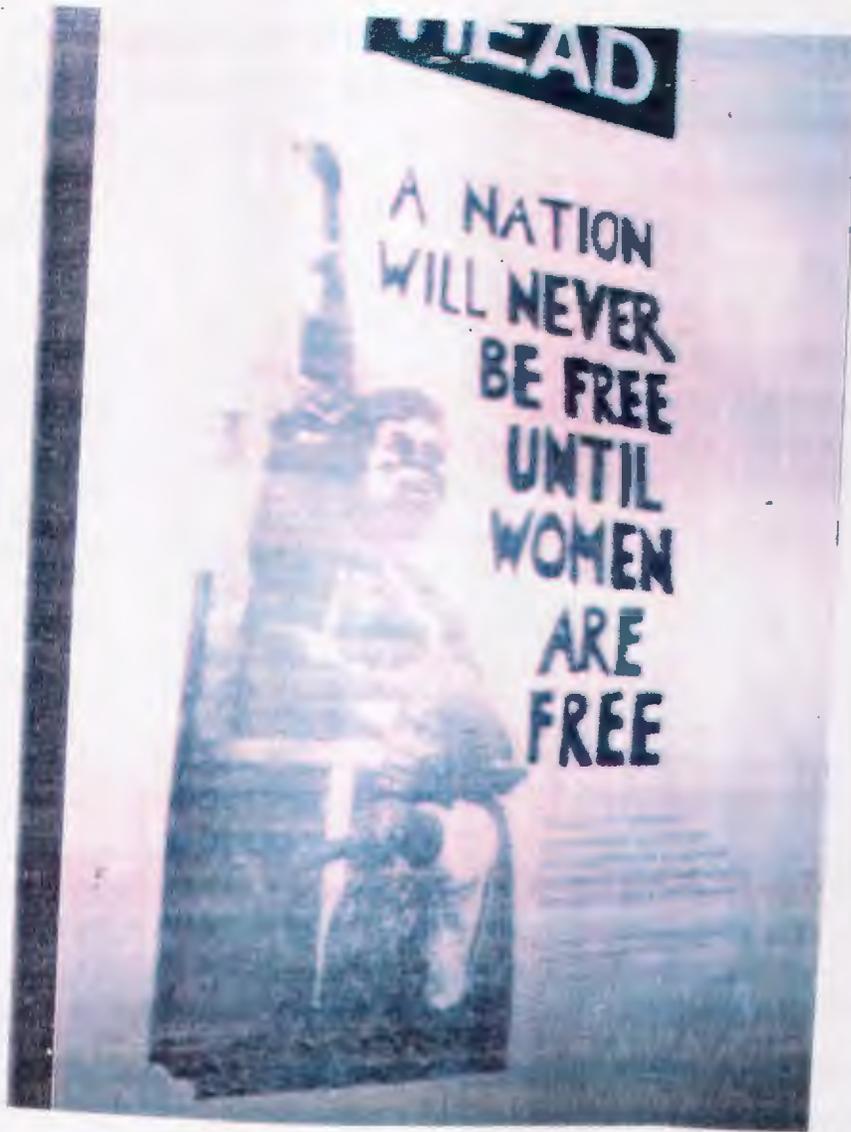


Figure 2: Some of the issues related to the National Women's Day.

3.11.4 Emerging themes

- Participants were overwhelmed to realize that August 9th belonged to them as women – they felt honoured to learn about it for the first time.
- The general feeling was excitement and they also realized that as women they have the power and control over August 9th, and they would henceforth actively participate in activities related to it.
- They intended to be actively involved with the preparations and celebrations of August 9th every year.
- They would also enlighten other people, more especially women with the information gained through discussions and during plenary sessions for the event.

3.11.5 Post-planning

The next and last discussion was to be around the issue of uniforms, which would be done by Legislature and OSW general assistants, as they were the ones with uniforms as their working tools.

3.12 Sixth meeting : Discussion about uniform which are working tools

3.12.1 Theory

In constructivism, for change to take place, it is very important that the people need to have an understanding of their needs (reality) for them to address them collectively and effectively (Fourie 1991 : 8).

3.12.2 Objectives

The objectives were:

- to improve their self image and ^{to gain} be respected;
- to maintain their dignity and recognition within the work situation.



Figure 4: General assistants from other divisions trying to fit the uniform with appreciation

3.12.2 Objectives

The objectives were:

- to improve their self image and to gain respect;
- to maintain their dignity and recognition within the work situation.

3.12.3 Method

The affected offices that is, participants from OSW and Legislature were given platform to stand in front wearing and displaying their attire and to explain how they had acquired it.

Contents of participants' discussion

One participant from the Legislature highlighted the following:

- Since the Legislature is an independent body, with its budget separate from that of provincial government, all the general assistants are supplied with dresses every year - at least five for each one of them and the previous year's become the wearer's permanently.
- They normally are supplied with three beautiful dresses, two two-piece (skirt and top) of good quality and are given an opportunity to go around town to choose whatever they want as long as it does not exceed a specified amount.

The OSW participant indicated that:

- Within their budget there is an allocation for uniforms for the general assistants. She knew this since she had worked for fifteen years for the former Transvaal Provincial Administration wherein they were automatically supplied with uniform, though they did not have a choice.
- After she had enquired about her uniform, which she now regarded as her right, the head of the office told her to get three quotations, of which the cheapest was accepted.

- This is done yearly and if the money is not used, the budget would be directed to other things.
- The participants with uniform encouraged others to approach their supervisors with respect and to enquire about the budget for uniforms.

3.12.4 Emerging themes

- The session was full of fun, thought provoking and it challenged participants to think deeper how they are going to implement the request for uniform at their department. Others also wanted to try on the uniforms, which they claimed were beautiful.
- Those wearing uniforms felt great and their self-esteem was raised as they boasted about it.
- At least those that did not have uniforms had somewhere to start in obtaining them.
- Participants learned with appreciation that there were certain good examples learnt from the former apartheid regime, which was blamed for almost everything, that the regime had other good things like uniform to offer. It clearly indicated that a uniform was provided the same way like in the past. It was the question of power being abused by the higher authorities in order to utilize the funds for other needs.

3.12.5 Post-planning

Some participants took the issue on their shoulders and said that they would discuss it with their supervisors because the implication of the presentation was that all the divisions' budget have an allocation for uniforms. They were advised to approach the issue in a polite way. Participants agreed that more sessions were necessary to follow-up the issue of uniforms.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter spelled out clearly the process of participatory research through a case study illustration. The last chapter will dwell on the evaluation of the whole process as well as major findings and conclusions.

CHAPTER 4

CONCLUSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter serves the purpose of presenting the evaluation of the whole PR process in terms of objectives set, research question, as well as the mission and functions of OSW. Conclusions drawn, recommendations, future planning and a final reflection will also be presented.

4.2 Evaluation of the PR process

4.2.1 Objectives of the study

On the whole, one can say that the objectives of the study have been met. It was learnt that the OSW (as resource number one for its target community), as well as all other surrounding resources within reach were unknown to participants but that through the study and process, were made known.

- **Objective 1**

To explore the role that the general assistants can play regarding issues affecting women and to extend the OSW services to its target community.

This objective has been met in that the general assistants, if enlightened with information are capable to play the role that all other women can participate in, for example celebrating the National women's Day.

- **Objective 2**

To use the results of the study for future programme planning for the OSW as well as to make inputs for policy-making.

The objective has been partly met because the OSW can use the example whereby Legislature invited participants for tea. This shows that Legislature does recognise that the general assistants are women like others. This would lay a good foundation since policy making is a long

process. The study will assist the OSW in designing programmes for a larger forum of general assistants in that the process is an eye opener. This will assist with preparation for workshops and seminars.

- **Objective 3**

To identify tasks that the general assistants need to be involved in within the OSW mandate.

Yes, the objective has been met. They managed to celebrate National Women's Day as well as Mother's Day, which indicated that the knowledge gained was empowering.

- Tasks that the general assistants need to be involved in within the OSW mandate are the general and normal tasks of all other women. They are, for example, delegation of duties for celebrating events like, National Women's Day. Some would be responsible for organizing T-shirts, others for table decorations and still others for choosing speakers.
- The OSW will facilitate capacity-building programmes for the larger forum of the general assistants. This would be facilitated through the participants in this process due to the knowledge gained.

4.2.2 Research question

What impact on change does a process of participatory research have on capacity-building for the general assistants of the Northern Province in terms of the Mission of Office on Status of Women?

- A process of capacity-building brought about change to participants in that
 - (a) During reflection phases they became enlightened with knowledge which led to the recognition of their rights and their self-esteem was boosted. Perceptions of participants changed regarding the office,

and they realized that it serves all women and as such they became free to participate.

- (b) They started to take charge of their lives for example, follow-up on the issue of uniform. They were able to face their seniors in accessing working tools, because they gained more knowledge of their rights.

4.2.3 The OSW mission

The OSW mission reads as follows: "... to establish mechanisms and procedures that will move the province towards gender equality, thereby empowering women to have equal access to opportunities and resources which will enhance their quality of life".

From my frame of reference, I feel very proud of this PR process in that it was an eye-opener for the OSW in its effort to reach its target population. The fact that this study managed to break the culture of silence, as well as to change participants' mind set, is to me more than an achievement. Participants were introduced to resources within their reach and to the most valuable resource, which is the OSW. The process laid a very good foundation and a starting point wherein the OSW can start talking about "gender" and gender equality. The latter can only be discussed when the OSW is sure that the status of women is elevated within government departments.

The OSW was also in a position to see where it stands as it can be said to have been inaccessible to its target community. The OSW cannot start implementing its functions until people are in a better position to access resources within reach.

4.3 Major Findings

During the process it was discovered that participants, due to lack of knowledge, were helpless and always felt very weak. This made decision-makers and supervisors take advantage of them, which impacted on their image and self-

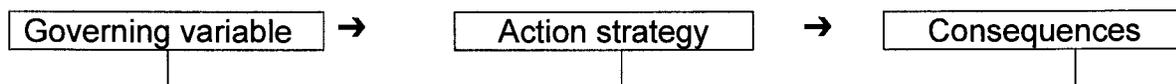
esteem. They did not know their basic conditions of employment, labour relations rights and the resources around them which could be of assistance. This created a situation wherein they felt like they were treated like “doormats”. Thus the general assistants needed to break the culture of silence and apathy and take action to correct their situation.

Lessons Learned

Participants learned the following:

- Laying down of ground rules and following them.
- Managed to identify needs, resources and to prioritize.
- That their participation throughout the whole process as well as brainstorming issues in order to reach a consensus was necessary for empowerment to take place.
- The importance of PR process – taking charge of issues that concerned them.

This can be demonstrated by using Argyris & Schon’s (1974:3) model of conceptualization which is developed for the purpose of helping people to be able to make more informed choices about the action they designed and implemented. It is illustrated as follows:



- **Governing variables** are values, which the person is trying to keep within some acceptable range. The general assistants’ value is that they would like to be recognized and to be treated with respect which would improve their self-image.
- **Action strategies** are strategies used by a person to keep their governing values, that is the value of respect. Participants invited the stakeholders as available resources to share with them information about how their offices are functioning. This was a strategy, which benefited them a lot.

The issue of uniform was explored through a strategy of making use of the general assistants who already had the uniform.

- The strategies will have **consequences** which are **intended** – those the actor believes will result, and **unintended**. Intended consequences were indicated during their actual participation and involvement in the celebration of National women's Day. An example of unintended consequences was when the Deputy Speaker of Legislature invited them for tea, which was appreciated by the participants.
- An example explaining the above model is as follows: A person may have a **governing variable** of suppressing conflict, and one of being competent. In any given situation she will design action strategies to keep both governing variables within acceptable range. For instance, in a conflict situation she might avoid discussion of the conflict situation and say as little as possible. This was clearly indicated when participants from Premier's office were denied an opportunity to have tea with the Premier. They suppressed the conflict but had a platform to express it to the Deputy Speaker of the Legislature.

Due to the fact that empowerment is part of the process of change and transformation, participants moved from:

- ignorance to knowledge about available resources;
- poor image to good self-image;
- hopelessness to hopefulness.

The above implies that participants became empowered through the PR process, which indicated that they could be threats to their supervisors in that they could question issues like their active participation in National and International Women's Day celebrations as compared to the situation prior the process.

Through knowledge gained, the general assistants would become aware of their rights and the procedure to follow when voicing their dissatisfaction in future, which would pose another threat to the stakeholders.

Both the participants and I learnt that information, which leads to knowledge, is power. If one is empowered, one develops and learns skills like assertiveness, through collective action. Participants also learnt that reflection coupled with action leads to change.

What did empowerment of the general assistants do to stakeholders

The empowerment perspective suggests that we should give voice to the participants' definition of reality and to help participants gain greater control of their lives through recognizing their strengths and abilities. The fact that participants' self-esteem and morale was boosted and that they could challenge their supervisors about the issue of uniform and just having information about their basic employment conditions, was enough to shake the stakeholders as they usually cling to power and do not want to let it go.

Stakeholders, like the presenters of information, were also in a learning situation. They became aware of some of the discriminatory practices within government against women in particular when the general assistants within the Premier's office were not given a chance to have tea with the Premier. This was a clear indication of abuse of power by some authorities, which is part of the transformation process.

In general the divisional heads' power was neutralized by my approaching them with respect and always updating them with progress and making provision for them to ask questions – so the PR process was also empowering to the stakeholders in that they appreciated change for the general assistants.

- What did empowerment of general assistants do to OSW head of office and personnel
- For OSW's head of office, at the beginning she welcomed the PR process in the OSW boardroom. Due to the enlightenment process through which the general assistants gained knowledge about resources available which

improved their vision of self-actualization, self-definition and self-determination, her status was threatened. This indicates that some divisional heads within this democratically elected government still need empowerment workshops as they still cling to the previous way of doing things. The process was threatening to some divisional heads.

- As the process continued the head of OSW started questioning what the general assistants were doing in their boardroom. She even went to the extent of influencing other officers to be negative towards the general assistants, which was heart breaking for me as a facilitator. She nearly destroyed the process but, the OSW general assistant's strength, cooperation and positive attitude towards the project assisted a lot in that she became my major support system.
- As a former trade unionist and political activists she had an understanding that the project would be of benefit to participants. From my observation, my status and power as researcher was becoming a threat to the OSW head of office as she had a belief that I was gaining more recognition from the ordinary people like the general assistants. This threatened her status of power as head of office.

4.4 Conclusion

- Discussions facilitated communication and sharing of ideas as well as critical analysis and prioritization of their concerns. This implies that in future we will not be talking about general assistants or clerical staff, but instead, women as a whole within the government service. This can only be done if the "left-behind" women's social status can be enhanced through capacity-building and by exposing them to available resources.

The participants have at least become conversant with some of their rights and procedures to follow. This method can be adopted in future. PR gives

people power to take charge of their lives. This is in line with a gender expert who once said:

“A NATION WILL NEVER BE FREE UNTIL WOMEN ARE FREE”. “Women’s liberation has become an irreversible trend in our world. Governments will join hands all over the world to achieve this liberation” (Peng, 1995).

4.5 Recommendations

- PR is recommended as an appropriate method of research because of its relevance to the current trend in South Africa which is people driven and person-centred as spelled out in the Reconstruction and Development Programme (African National Congress:1994).
- PR is the approach, which pays attention to action and reflection; hence it is a useful approach, which has the potential to mobilize people for generation of knowledge.

4.6 Future Planning

The results of this PR study will be fruitfully used by the OSW for programme planning and policy-making in that government departments need to be more aware of issues affecting women and how to address them by recognizing the social status of women in order to reach gender equality.

It was a good starting point because issues of concern were discussed and a platform for the general assistants was established. This was an awareness raising campaign on its own and it was a good starting point for distributing OSW services to its target group. It would lay a good foundation for the time when we would be talking about gender equality because the general assistants would be empowered.

4.7 Final Reflection

PR is a learning experience for both participants and facilitator, who discover issues in a rewarding and thought – provoking way. There was a strong feeling from the participants that this process of empowerment should continue on a larger platform with all general assistants in government departments, and that more attention should be given to gender issues.

Bibliography

African National Congress 1994. Reconstruction and development programme: A policy framework. Johannesburg : Umanyano.

Anderson L. 1994. Espoused theories and theories-in-use: Bridging the gap (Breaking through defensive routines with organisation development consultants). Unpublished Master of Organisational Psychology thesis, University of Qld.

Argyris C. 1978. Reasoning, action strategies, and defensive routines: The case of OD practitioners, in Woodman R A & Pasmore A A (Eds), Research in organizational change and development. Vol 1 p 89-128. Greenwich: JAI Press.

Argyris C & Schon D. 1978. Theory in practice: Increasing professional effectiveness. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Burkey S. 1993. People First : A guide to self-reliant participatory rural development. London : Zed Books Ltd.

Campos J & Coupal F P. 21 February 1996. Participatory evaluation. Draft United Nation Development Programme.

Chambers R. 1992. Rapid and participatory rural appraisal. Social Work 3, Volume 3 (pp 283 – 292) Pretoria, Unisa.

Chester M A. 1991. Participatory action research with self-help groups: an alternative paradigm for inquiry and action. University of Michigan.

Collins K J. 1997. An enquiry group exploring change in South African Welfare Leadership. The Social Work Practitioner – Researcher Vol. 10 (1) (pp 48 – 60).

Collins K J. 1999. Participatory research : a primer. Cape Town: Prentice Hall.

Cornwall A & Jewkes R. 1995. What is participatory research? Social Science Medical. Vol. 41(12) pp 1667 – 1676.

De Koning K & Martin M. 1996. Participatory research in health. London: Zed Books.

Egan G. 1994. The Skilled Helper: a problem management approach to helping. Grove Pacific, CA: Books/Cole.

Fals-Borda O & Rahman M A. 1991. Action & Knowledge : Breaking the monopoly with participatory research. New York: Intermediate technology publications.

Fourie D. 1991. The Development of ecosystemic thinking. Unpublished notes: Pretoria.

Freire P. 1994. Pedagogy of the oppressed. Penguin Books, Great Britain.

Gaventa J. 1991. Towards a knowledge democracy : Viewpoints on participatory research in North America. New York: Seabury.

Graham H, Jones G & Jones J, 1992. Community development research: community development. 27(3) 235-244.

Hall B L. 1981. Participatory research, popular knowledge and power : a personal reflection. Convergence, volume 14 (3).

Henderson P & Thomas D. 1980. Skills in neighbourhood work. London: George Allen and Unwin.

Hope A & Timmel S. 1984. Community worker's handbook: training for transformation. Johannesburg: the Grail.

Kenyon J & Warnock B. 1984. When a community defines its situation together. p22.

Kornergay E. 1997. National Office on the Status of women: First provincial consultative workshop. 4-6 July.

Korten D. 1980. Community organizing and rural development: a learning approach. Public Review, Sept/Oct.

Maguire P & Mulenga D. 1994. Participatory research – what is it? Unpublished paper presented at the summer school in participatory research, Umtata.

Mzizi T. 1998. OSW Consultant. OSW business plan for Northern Province. Unpublished.

Peng P. 1995. Chair Chinese Organizing Committee for the fourth world on Beijing women. NGO Secretariat for Beijing.

Personnel Administration Standard (PAS) 1994, April. Final PAS: Vocational Class: General Assistants ALGASSTP S17/11/119

Reason P. 1994. Participation in human inquiry. London: Sage.

Reason P & Rowan J. 1981. Human Inquiry: a resource book of new paradigm research. New York: John Wiley and sons.

Rogers C. 1951. Client-centred therapy. Boston:Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers C R. 1980. A way of being. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers C R. 1987. Client-centred therapy: Its current practice, implications and theory. London: Constable.

Schenck C J. 1996. Only study guide 1 for HMWGEM-T: Community development. Pretoria: Unisa.

Schenck C J & Louw H. 1995. Participatory learning: A people centered way of working in community development. The Social Work Practitioner, 8(1): 79 – 79

Shriver J M. 1995. Human behaviour and the social environment: Shifting paradigms in essential knowledge for social work practice. Boston: London.

Small S A . 1995. Action Oriented research : Models and methods. Madison WI: University of Wisconsin – Madison.

Sohng S S L. 1996. Participatory research and community organizing. Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare, 23 (4) 77-79.

South Africa NGO Planning Committee for the 1Vth UN World Conference on Women, Beijing, September 1995. Activity Report 1994/1995.

Swanepoel H. 1992. Community development : Putting plans into action. Johannesburg: Juta.

Swanepoel H. 1994. A guide for trainee community development workers. Johannesburg: Southern

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. As adopted on 8 May 1996 and amended on 11 October 1996 by the Constitutional Assembly; and amended by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Amendment Act, 1997. (Act No. 35 of 1997) One law for One nation.

Van Rooyen C A J & Gray M M A. 1995. Participatory research and its compatibility to social work. The Social Work Practitioner-research. Vol. 8(2). pp 87 – 92.