CHAPTER ONE

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND AIMS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In South Africa there is a desperate attempt to curb the spread of HIV and AIDS. Without accurate figures but with predictions of almost five million of the population infected with the HIV virus, there have been a number of measures to provide rapid solutions to the problem. The impact of the HIV and AIDS epidemic on the country manifests itself in various ways: it is reflected by the high infant mortality rates, and in the increasing number of AIDS orphans. One problem in the fight against the disease is the stigma attached to HIV and AIDS and health workers believe part of the solution is to combat the stigma and discrimination associated with it. Certainly in my view, institutions such as government, hospitals, schools and non-governmental organisations (hereafter referred to as NGOs) can play an important role in this aspect of the epidemic. According to Dicks (2001:xv-xvii) and Frizelle (2005) increasing education, training, youth and adult focused health services will also help stem the tide of the epidemic.

NGOs and community health programmes have and will continue to play an important role in stemming the devastation brought by HIV and AIDS. Many agencies promote community health education programmes for various sectors of the population. One sector is that of adults in affected communities. The aim with these programmes is to assist in eliminating the various ways in which the HIV and AIDS epidemic impact has manifested itself. In this study I examined the community health education programme offered by the Meadowlands

Community Development Project to adults in the Meadowlands area with the aim of determining how adults are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge of curbing the spread of HIV and AIDS. Accordingly, this chapter entails a discussion on the context of the study. It further includes a formulation of the research questions from which the aim of the study is derived and explained. The research strategies and the methods used to conduct the research are briefly presented. The researcher's presuppositions and assumptions are discussed and, finally, a presentation of the structure and sequence of the study is made. As such, this chapter will introduce and guide the research.

1. 2 STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND MOTIVATION FOR STUDY

In understanding the HIV and AIDS epidemic, the role of key organisations in influencing people's behaviour is vital, and lessons learned can be implemented at a local level in order for hospitals, local government, NGO and community based organisations to have maximum impact in preventing the spread of HIV (Webb, 1997 : 71). Webb (1997) also states that the spread of HIV and AIDS has not been hindered/prevented in South Africa, and it is reasonable to propose that governmental intervention has had very little impact on the course of the epidemic. Firstly, government's response has been too inadequate in formulation, extent and timing to have had any significant impact on the spread of HIV. Secondly, it can be argued that the complex nature of the epidemic required an institutional response beyond the means and resources of government.

Webb (1997: 73) indicates that when the first deaths from AIDS in South Africa occurred in 1985, it was apparent that action of some form had to be taken. In South Africa, there has been much positive work done by the NGO sector. What was not anticipated by NGOs was a systematic neglect of the HIV and AIDS epidemic and refusal to take responsible action for those at risk from infection. In taking action NGOs such as Love Life, Treatment Action Campaign, Society for AIDS families and orphans (SAFO) in Soweto and AIDS consortium in

Johannesburg embarked on advocacy campaigns, which included education campaigns (Aids education); distribution of condoms and pamphlets educating people about Aids prevention with messages such as “abstain from practicing unsafe sex”; poster displays along streets and main roads; life skills programmes in various institutions such as churches and schools (Webb,1997:78).

Currently non-governmental organisations are playing an important role in attempting to educate and protect people against the killer disease by introducing and implementing, among others, community and adult education programmes. These programmes aim to assist people, particularly adults in acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills to help curb the explosive statistics and thereby improve their own lives and the lives of those in their communities (Burkey, 1996). However, the escalating infections and affections of the epidemic seem to indicate that many of these programmes fail to achieve their targeted aims. Evidence thereof is provided by Webb (1997:80) who states that as a result of inconsistency and institutional hesitance, large-scale efforts at Aids prevention have not been very successful. Often, facilitators do not incorporate adult education principles in their teaching and learning methodologies. From my understanding it appeared that one such programme, which formed the focus of this study, is a health education programme with an HIV and AIDS focus currently being offered by an NGO, the Meadowlands Community Development Project (hereafter referred to as MCDP). This study investigated the incorporation of adult education principles in the programme offered by the MCDP.

The fundamental purpose of teaching is to assist someone to learn (Gravett, 2001) and teaching is thus described as a learning-centred endeavour (Podgson & Tennant, 1995). In addition, when applied to the education of adults, current literature in the field of adult education, which is applicable in community education, indicates that a dialogic approach to teaching and learning best enables meaningful learning to take place (Knowles, 1989; Vella, 1994; Gravett, 2001).

Many non-formal community education programmes target adult learners with the aim of assisting these learners to acquire knowledge and skills. As such these community education programmes can be classified as adult education as they refer to activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles, or self-perception define them as adults (Merriam & Brockett, 1997:8). Therefore, an understanding of adult education principles is important for the educators of these adults, as it enables informed decisions on how to best interact with the learners, with a view to guiding and facilitating their learning (Gravett, 2001).

Many community education and development programmes however, fail to achieve their desired objectives and outcomes partly because facilitators do not incorporate adult education principles in their programmes. They often teach adults in a manner which encourages passivity and neglect engaging learners dialogically in the learning process (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991; Burkey, 1996). This is in contrast to one of the most basic assumptions that adult learning is best achieved in dialogue (Vella, 1994:3). As indicated above, it appeared that a health education programme offered by the MCDP, which ran over a six-month period, was one such programme. Although this programme has been in effect for two years, educators (who do not facilitate in the programme) at the school in which the project is housed, who are trained as adult basic education and training facilitators, and who have been learners in the programme, expressed concern at the manner in which facilitators taught adult learners. Most importantly they pointed to the lack of consideration of relevant adult education principles in the teaching-learning approaches facilitators adopted.

Adult education principles serve as a basis for informing facilitators and educators of adult learners about how to guide and foster adult education. A number of researchers and writers in adult education literature have identified many different principles in their quest to build a theory of learning that would aid

practices of adult learning (Brookfield, 1986:26; Knowles, 1989; Vella, 1994:3). Some of these principles include that of a needs assessment, a safe learning environment, sound relationship between facilitator and learner, praxis, multiple roles of learners and how to engage them in teaching and learning processes. Vella (1994:3) emphasizes the importance of using these principles for effective adult learning and notes that the principles are ways to begin, maintain and nurture the dialogue between facilitator and learners. However, if facilitators of community education programmes that target adult learners do not have the necessary knowledge and skills, it is likely that they may ignore these adult education principles and thus not achieve the programme's key objectives. As a result adult learners in such programmes may not benefit optimally from the learning experience. Additionally, if no attempt is made to determine the training needs of facilitators, the education and training they provide may continue unsuccessful over a number of years thus wasting precious resources and manpower.

Incorporating adult education principles by knowledgeable and skilled facilitators in the HIV and AIDS training, is important because many community members who are directly affected by the epidemic are the youth and adults. Therefore, there is a need to educate mainly adult community members about the epidemic and its consequences. In addition to a programme aimed at curbing the spread of HIV and AIDS, the MCDP is an adult and community education project offering a number of programmes and courses, through the same educators/facilitators (trainers), to adult learners: including life skills, general home nursing, first aid and, among others, care giving and support to the sick. However, for the purposes of this study only the HIV and AIDS course has been researched due to, firstly, the major impact the epidemic has in the lives of people who are at risk of contracting the epidemic. Secondly, potentially this programme can have the most impact in the fight against HIV and AIDS. Furthermore, government and non-governmental financial investment in curbing the spread of the epidemic is considerable, so I deemed it necessary to focus my research on this programme.

Against this background, the research questions guiding this study are as follows:

- How are adult education principles incorporated into the MCDP's community health education programme?

- What are the training needs of facilitators in the MCDP's community health education programme in adult education principles?

1.3 AIMS OF THE STUDY

The aim of this inquiry is to investigate how adult education principles are incorporated into the MCDP's community health programme and to identify facilitators' training needs in relation to the principles of adult education.

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1.4 ASSUMPTIONS AND PRESUPPOSITIONS

Before conducting the study, I believe that it is imperative that I clarify my assumptions and presuppositions about the topic. I deem it important to do so, as researcher in order to increase the validity and reliability of the research and to reduce research bias. My assumptions and presuppositions, as influenced by my own observations and by the conversations I had with those educators are that the facilitators plan and implement health education programmes without taking into account the needs, experiences, prior knowledge, lives and circumstances of adult learners.

1.5 DEFINITIONS OF CONCEPTS

It is important at this stage to clarify the key concepts used in this study. These concepts are sometimes understood differently depending on the context in which they are used. As Merriam and Brockett (1997:3) have pointed out, the problem with concepts is that their meanings depend on who is speaking, where one is standing and how one experiences the phenomenon. It is therefore necessary to provide different definitions and indicate how I shall be using them within this study.

1.5.1 Adult learner

An adult learner is defined as: a person who is classified as an adult is done so based on age which includes the extent to which s/he fulfils the social role that is typically assigned to an adult in a society, and that they assume responsibility for their own lives and livelihoods in addition to participating in educational activities (Gravett, 2001:6). In addition, an adult learner will be somebody whose main life task is not related to education. S/he has many other responsibilities or life tasks. Thus, adults typically add the role of learner to their other full-time, multiple roles (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991).

One can deduce from the above definition that an adult learner is someone who is a part timer in educational/learning events. In this sense not all of his/her time is devoted to schooling or educational matters but there are other roles in the society that s/he has to perform, such as being a worker (employee), a parent, a community leader and member and, among others, a family member.

1.5.2 Generalised characteristics of adult learners

Although there is no consensus among scholars as to the definition and characteristics of the adult learner, three generalised characteristics are referred

to in this study, which distinguish the adult learner from other learners such as the child and the youth. These are firstly, that learners are adults by definition, secondly, that they bring accumulated experiences with them into educational events and thirdly, that their readiness to learn is linked to their life roles and life tasks (Gravett, 2001:6-7). A brief discussion of these generalised characteristics will follow.

The first generalised characteristic is that adult learners are adults by definition. The status of adulthood is ascribed by society and society expects adults to behave responsibly by taking charge of their own lives. This is what differentiates adult learners from children as learners. Based on the above, the adult teaching and learning methodology should confirm and promote adulthood by supporting and encouraging independence, responsibility and self-direction through dialogue and co-operation (Gravett, 2001:8).

The second generalised characteristic is that adult learners bring vast amounts of quality experience and knowledge with them into the education environment. Prior knowledge and ways of thinking are the essential determinants of what people will subsequently learn (Gravett, 2001). The same sentiment is expressed by Belzer (2004:42) that prior experiences in formal learning contexts influence learners' perceptions of the current context. Literature on adult education indicates that experience is an important tool with which to construct new knowledge. However, it is important to indicate that some writers in the adult education literature argue that experience is not always easily accessible and hence it cannot always be used as a resource, that not all experience is educational and that sometimes experiences can hamper or hinder learning (Belzer, 2004:43).

The third characteristic is that adults' readiness to learn is linked to their life roles and life tasks. It seems that many adults readily engage in organised learning if it can be linked to circumstances such as problems, challenges and needs in their

life worlds (Knowles, 1998). It is important to note that adults will engage in educational activities for a particular cause or to pursue personal goals.

1.5.3 Adult education

Adult education can be defined as any course or educational activity taken (part-time or full time if they take leave, and attend classes on a full time basis) by anyone considered to be an adult based on age, the fulfilment of social roles assigned and who is assumed to be responsible for his/her own life and livelihood (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991:22; Gravett, 2001:6). Merriam and Brockett (1997:8) define adult education as activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles, or self-perception defined them as adults. Therefore, adult education as an activity should help adults acquire insight, ability and disposition to realise this potential in their lives (Mezirow, 2004:69). It can be deduced from the above definitions that adult education is a purposeful educational process targeting learners considered to be adults who aim to achieve specified goals.

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1.5.4 Community education

It is important to note that, in defining community education, one needs to start with the explanation of the concept community. A community can be defined as a large cohesive group of people possessing a common culture and/or can be groups of kin, interest or geographical locations (Sergiovanni, 1994). Flecknoe and Mclellan (1994: 8) define "community" as a group of people living in a particular area, sharing a wide range of interests. Nisbet (in Doe & Khan, 2004:361-362) takes the definition further by viewing it in reference to social relations characterised by personal intimacy, emotional depth, social cohesion and continuity in time. From the above definitions it can be deduced that people living together in the same area or who have something in common can be considered to constitute a community. In addition to living together they are often

faced with common problems that need to be addressed collectively to come with a solution.

Flowing from the above description, community education can be described as a process in which communally available knowledge and experience are brought to the surface with the help of facilitators and/or educators. Through this process communities are transformed and conscientised so that people are able to recognise their own ability which will influence their own destiny and contribute towards a better life style within their communities (Weyers, 1998:1). Often in many community projects there is some training needed so that technical skills could be acquired. Training is mostly associated with preparing people for performing certain tasks that they are expected to master (Tight, 1996:18).

One can deduce from the above definitions that community education is aimed at empowering members of a community through active and intentional participation in skills and knowledge acquisitions. Belzer (2004:42) indicates that community education, through a community-based programme, aims to help learners to meet their personal, self-identified goals while empowering them to bring about social change by working to break down barriers to development. Through community education, members of a community are able to participate in decisions that affect them (Lahiri-Dutt, 2004:14).

1.5.5 Facilitator

A facilitator is an enabler of a process of making something easy by encouraging people to find their own solutions to tasks (Encarta Concise English Dictionary, 2001). It can, therefore, be deduced that a facilitator is a person who assists adult learners to successfully complete a specified programme in a given period. Adult education prefers to use the term facilitator, which denotes a more collaborative, learner-centred mode of interaction (Merriam & Brockett, 1997:16).

1.5.6 Programme

A programme refers to the total educational offering of an institution or organisation and consists of activities of varying time lengths, ranging from on-going programmes to semester-length offerings to one-hour workshops (Merriam & Brockett, 1997:16). A programme includes material to be taught and learned through programmed instruction and it is structured to be presented in a definite sequential manner.

1.6 OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS

This mini-dissertation reports on the progress of the research into the incorporation of adult education principles into the MCDP's community education programme. The structure of this mini-dissertation is organised as follows:

Chapter 1 provides a description of the background to the research and culminates in a discussion of the research problem, as well as highlighting the motivation for this study. The assumptions, presuppositions of the researcher were clarified and the definitions of key concepts were presented.

Chapter 2 provides a review of the current literature on this topic, drawing on the fields of adult and community education. This chapter will indicate how effective learning and teaching can be achieved by incorporating adult education principles and practices in any community education programme. Furthermore, it also highlights the importance of taking into account the generalised characteristics of adult learners when teaching adults.

Chapter 3 covers the research methodologies used in this investigation. In this chapter I will provide an explanation/description of the research paradigm within which this study is conducted. A research plan, including the data collection methods used to collect data followed by its analysis will be presented.

Chapter 4 explains the process by which data collected through non-participatory observations and individual semi-structured interviews was analysed. The analysed data forms the framework of the findings discussed in chapter **5.**

Chapter 5 presents and discusses the research findings of this investigation, and provides recommendations and conclusions drawn from the results of the study.

1.7 CONCLUSION

In the preceding paragraphs, I discussed the background of the study, the research problem and the aims of the study. Also, my assumptions and presuppositions were clarified and the definitions of concepts were presented. Finally an overview of chapters to follow was provided.

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CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

As already mentioned in chapter one, the purpose of this study was to investigate how adult education principles are incorporated into the MCDP's community health education programme and to identify the facilitators' training needs in relation to the processes involved in adult teaching and learning.

The community health programme, within the context of this study, could be classified as a non-formal education programme focused on meeting community needs in the field of health services with an HIV and AIDS focus (Merriam & Brockett, 1997). Non-formal education programmes, (the MCDP's health programme included), are generally recognised as an organised process aimed at transforming people so that they can contribute more effectively to the social and economic development of their society (Lewis in Husen & Postlethwaite, 1989: 32). Burkey, (1996) too highlights that these programmes aim at assisting people in acquiring the necessary knowledge and skills.

Community health education programmes can also be regarded as a form of adult education because they refer to activities intentionally designed for the purpose of bringing about learning among those whose age, social roles or self – perception defined them as adults (Merriam & Brockett, 1997:8). Therefore I will argue in this chapter that an understanding of adult education principles is important for the educators of adults involved in community health education, as it enables informed decisions on how to best interact with the learners, with a view to guiding and facilitating their learning optimally.

Consequently, this investigation has been informed by literature chiefly in the areas of adult and community education, focusing mainly on adult education principles. Adult education literature holds important insights for non-formal community education programmes. Such adult and community education literature include works by Brookfield (1986), Merriam and Caffarella (1991), Vella (1994, 2000), Farquharson (1995), Podgson and Tennant (1995), Rogers (1992,1996), Merriam and Brockett (1997), Cookson (1998), Merriam (1998), Gravett (2001) and, among others, Belzer (2004).

Theories on personal and community development and empowerment, and on people driven programmes as expressed by Shor (1992), Abott (1995), Burkey (1996), Weyers (1998), Bridgen (2004), Doe and Khan (2004), Berner and Phillips (2005) have also been consulted, as the participating adult learners are members of communities that need development.

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My main argument throughout this literature review will be that adult learners should be taught in ways that are different from the traditional top-down lecture methods. In arguing this point I will draw on the literature which distinguishes the teaching of adult learners from other learners such as children and the youth. Secondly, since many non-formal community education programmes target adult learners, adult education principles serve as a basis for informing facilitators and educators on how to guide and foster adult education. To substantiate my argument, I will explore various principles and perspectives underlying effective teaching and learning in adult and community education as reflected in the current research literature. Furthermore, since this study is about a community health education programme, I deem it essential to include a brief discussion of community participation in community projects and programmes. This will be followed by a detailed discussion of adult education principles and their implications for educational practice. In conclusion, I will revisit my initial argument in the light of evidence from literature and the arguments I make up to that point.

2.2 PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

As indicated in chapter one, a community can be defined as a large cohesive group of people possessing a common culture and/or can be groups of kin, interest or geographical locations (Sergiovanni, 1994). Nisbet (in Doe & Khan, 2004:361-362) views a community in reference to social relations characterised by personal intimacy, emotional depth, social cohesion and continuity in time. On the other hand Burkey, (1996:41) sees a community as group of people with something in common but also with different and conflicting interests. It can then be deduced from these definitions that people living together in the same area and/or who have something in common constitute a community.

Therefore, one particular view on community education is that a community represented by participants should be able and willing to participate enthusiastically in programmes that are clearly designed to solve their grievances and to benefit them (Burkey, 1996:44). This particular view is deemed to be important for this study since it is concerned with adult learners engaging in a community education programme designed at developing and empowering community members. Community participation implies an interactive process among members of the public, individually or in groups, with the aim of active involvement in matters that affect them (Lahiri-Dutt, 2004). Since, according to Lahiri-Dutt (2004), the primary goal of participation is to give proper responsibility to people for and control over their lives, it is important for programmes to be people-driven, whereby they themselves determine their own needs (Rogers, 1992).

Participation is a process in which, among others, facilitators are involved in. Facilitators help the community to give expression to and find ways to meet their needs (Lahiri-Dutt, 2004). This view is also emphasised by Weyers (1998:20), who sees participation as a process within which communities responsibly organise and manage their lives. They become active participants in

programmes affecting their general well being. It is my view that participation is a significant factor in a community health education programme aimed at social upliftment. Consequently, community participation, as Lahiri-Dutt (2004:13) puts it is “an imperative ingredient in any intervention which has continued to remain a form of collective bargaining”.

As pointed out above, community education is an intentional participative educational process with a purpose of achieving specified goals. One of the goals in community participation is the empowerment of members of a community by facilitators, through offering the community a “space” to express their needs and in helping them find ways to meet their expressed needs (Lahiri-Dutt, 2004).

As part of the process of determining needs in order to enable community members to reap the benefits of participating in community projects and programmes they should actively take part in decision making and implementation of activities attached to programmes (Rogers,1992). Also, they are then able to take responsibility for their own lives and make their own decisions about what should be learned and how it should be learned (Cookson,1998). Participating in community projects and programmes will also reduce people’s dependency on outside services, aid and authority (Werner & Bower, 1982) so that they are able to become more self -reliant.

On the other hand, in my view, non-participation in community projects might lead to serious challenges such as, the disseminated information not reaching the targeted people, that they are ill-informed about certain valuable information and that, as non-participants, they are not part of the decision making processes and therefore other people take decisions on their behalf. Therefore non-participation in community projects breeds ignorance on the one hand, and on the other hand it is caused by it. Furthermore, I argue that, through ownership of the programme and active involvement based on an accurate needs

assessment, participants may look at their environment critically and not take anything for granted. People could thus be encouraged to become independent, efficient, critical and self-reliant.

In pursuing my main argument, as indicated above, this study draws on the literature which acknowledges adult learners as adults in the process of education. It also acknowledges that they bring vast amounts of quality experience and knowledge with them into educational events and settings and that their readiness to learn is linked to their life roles and life tasks (Rogers, 1996:60-61; Gravett, 2001:6-7). Any community education process that takes into account participants' active involvement in community education programmes should promote and incorporate their accumulated experiences (Baert & Jansen, 1997: 227). The importance of adults' life experience for adult learning and teaching is viewed as a given fact in the literature of adult learning (Brookfield, 1986) as their experience can serve as a rich resource for learning, for the adult learners themselves and for fellow learners (Knowles, Holton III & Swanson, 1998; Vella, 1994).

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Community education programmes should also take into account the adult learners' life tasks and life roles. Adult learners usually have many other responsibilities or life tasks and the adult's life situation is characterised by various roles, such as worker, spouse and, among others parent. Thus, adult learners typically add the role of learner to their other full-time, multiple roles, which they bring into the educational setting. Though their involvement in education may sometimes not be a direct extension of those roles, the multiple role involvement of adults is a significant element in any adult educational endeavour (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991; Gravett, 2001:6-7).

Through active participation in community education programmes, it is my view that when learners come together, they share ideas, skills and experiences as they engage with the programme. Consequently knowledge is socially

constructed (Gravett, 2001). Furthermore, a community education intervention or programme should encourage collective participation and self-reliance in the learning of, among others, new skills, knowledge, and attitudes. Consequently, community participation could be strengthened wherein people are able to identify their own needs and problems, and for full adult learner participation, those adult community education programmes should incorporate adult education principles.

2.3 THE INCORPORATION OF ADULT EDUCATION PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICES IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND DELIVERY OF A COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME

Before embarking on a discussion of the incorporation of adult education principles in a community health education programme, it is important to define the concept "principle". With reference to different authors and literature, a principle refers to a basic assumption, an ethical standard and a way of operation or in which something works (Encarta Concise English Dictionary, 2001:1154). Husen and Postlethwaite (1989:117) see a principle as an idea guiding practice that derive its legitimacy from beliefs and values about human beings, society and education. In support of the mentioned opinions, Vella (1994:3) defines a principle as the beginning of an action. These definitions highlight the importance of the incorporation of adult education principles for success and effectiveness in the teaching of adults. Furthermore, these principles provide recommendations and guidance for practice and they also serve as a basis on how to guide and foster adult education.

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

According to Knowles (in Vella, 1994:3) the enhancement of adult learning is best achieved in dialogue. The approach to adult learning based on these principles holds that adults have enough life experience to be in dialogue with any teacher, about any subject, and will learn new knowledge, attitudes or skills best in relation to that life experience (Knowles in Vella, 1994:3). Therefore,

principles are ways to begin, maintain and nurture the dialogue between educators and learners and among adult learners themselves.

Although Vella (1994:3) mentions twelve basic principles that are deeply interconnected for effective adult learning, different researchers and writers in the adult education literature have identified a different number of principles in their quest to build a theory of learning that would aid practices of adult learning. Amongst others, James mentions nine principles while Brundage and Markeracher provide thirty-six principles (Brookfield,1986:26). Although reference is made to differing numbers of principles, what is important about them is that they are all deeply interconnected for effective adult learning, and no one is better than the other.

I believe these principles should be considered by educators/facilitators of adult learners when planning and executing programmes to adult learners. These principles guide adult learning regardless of the context in which learning takes place. Community education, through a community based programme, utilising adult education principles and targeting adult learners, is aimed at empowering members of a community through active and intentional participation in skills and knowledge acquisitions. It is a participative activity in that the community or adult learners are guided by facilitators in an attempt to find ways in which to meet their needs. These principles could provide educators/facilitators of adult learners with a solid framework for planning teaching which aims at enhancing holistic and effective adult learning (Morais, 2000: 6).

In this section of the chapter I have used Vella's (1994:3-4) twelve adult education principles and practices in my argument for principles underlying the planning and implementation of community education programmes for adult learners. Although the twelve principles mentioned are taken from Vella (1994), I will make reference to other adult education literature to show how these principles are commonly identified in this literature as important as well. I also,

show how they are connected, and highlight the importance and necessity of incorporating them in the teaching of adult learners. For the purposes of this study I have chosen the mentioned twelve principles because, firstly, they can accommodate the different teaching methods and styles as educators/facilitators interact with adult learners. Secondly, I believe they are able to indicate and highlight a dialogic approach to teaching and learning. Thirdly, they are able to display the main features of the relationship between adult learning, learning facilitation and the generalised characteristics of adult learners. Lastly, authors and literature on adult education I have consulted emphasise the application of adult education principles in programmes and activities engaging adults as learners. Therefore, adult education principles that are utilised in adult education teaching methodology should be applicable in the teaching and learning methodologies of adult and community education projects and programmes.

Vella (1994) highlights that adult education principles cannot be applied as single entities, since no single set of principles is better than the other and that a single one cannot be used in isolation to guide and foster adult education. Instead a combination of all or some of them could lead, as the goal of adult education, to the realisation of effective teaching and learning in community education programmes targeting adult learners. The principles to be discussed are as follows:

- Needs assessment: participation of the learners in naming what is to be learned.
- Safety in the environment and the process.
- Respect and sound relationships between educator/facilitator and learner for learning and development.
- Praxis: action with reflection or learning by doing.
- Clear roles and role development.
- Engagement of the learners in what they are doing.
- Accountability: how do they know they know.

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

- Teamwork: using small groups.
- Careful attention to sequence of content and reinforcement.
- Immediacy of the learning; and
- Cognitive,affective and psychomotor aspects: ideas, feelings, actions.

Although I will discuss each principle on its own, they are all connected and where possible in my discussion such connections will be emphasised.

2.3.1 Needs assessment

The literature on adult education places great emphasis on doing an adequate needs assessment as a basic principle of adult learning (Vella, 1994; Wlodkowski, 1998). According to Vella (1994:3-4), a needs assessment is "the first step towards the participation of learners in naming what is to be learned", and it honours the fact that while people may register for the same programme, they come with different experiences and different expectations. In this way, a needs assessment becomes the first step in dialogue, whereby listening to learners' needs helps to shape a programme that has immediate usefulness to adults (Vella,1994:4).

Through a needs assessment, participatory education is enabled wherein many individual and group learning goals can be supported and made possible. Sauve (in Campbell & Burnaby, 2001:4) defines participatory education as a learning/ teaching process wherein all learners are involved and committed to defining their own learning needs and wants. Thereafter they work out an approach to address them, and evaluate that process within a context of making life better for themselves and those around them. Learning will then be enhanced if control over and responsibility for learning is concentrated in the hands of the learners, or at least shared between learners and resource people. Consequently, participatory practice in adult education makes learning authentic (Campbell & Burnaby, 2001). Within a community education context, Burkey (1996), places

great emphasis on the participation of the community in their own development as a key factor in the success of such community education projects and programmes.

Freire (in Vella, 1994:5) refers to needs assessment in terms of thematic analysis, as a way of listening to the themes of a group, to the issues that are vital to the people concerned. Therefore, a needs assessment is about listening to adult learners so as to shape a programme that will best meet their needs. According to Vella (1994:5) the listening effort is what we call a needs assessment, which is both a practice and a principle of adult learning.

In a needs assessment, educators/facilitators can listen to learners before a programme is designed, so that themes they consider important are heard and respected. Since adult learners learn what is linked to their life roles and life tasks, that is, they study for a particular purpose and they bring different needs, experiences and expectations with them into educational events, it is important to do a needs assessment before presenting programmes to them (Vella, 1994:4; Gravett, 2001). Educators/facilitators of adult learners should begin by establishing reasons why each learner wants to be part of the community programme, which consequently will help educators/facilitators to plan a programme that will be meaningful to all participating learners and to the community at large.

Vella (1994) and Knowles et al, (1998) indicate that when doing a needs assessment, the educator/facilitator can discover specific personal or group learning needs, which the programme will have to address. The needs assessment principle is further supported by Cookson (1998:47) who assumes that “adults have a deep need to be self-directing; they resent and resist being controlled by others; they see it as a symbol of their maturity that they are able to take responsibility for their own lives, to make their own decisions about what should be learned, when should it be learned, how should it be learned and if it

has been learned". Educators/facilitators could listen to the needs of prospective learners in a number of ways. Today, with advanced technology, using either focus groups or telephone surveys, data can be collected quickly and efficiently through user-friendly facilities such as faxes, e-mail, questionnaires and telephones.

Hutchinson (in Vella, 1994:4) offers another formulation of the needs assessment process, referred to as the WWW principle – "WHO needs WHAT as defined by WHOM?" This is the question at the heart of a needs assessment. Based on this principle, educators/facilitators need to know WHO the learners are, WHAT they need and WHO will determine these (i.e. the learners and their needs). Farquharson (1995:18) also says that an educator needs to know who the learners are, who will determine their needs and how learning will be conducted.

Following the WWW principle, adult learners and educators will be the decision makers of the programme. As such the content could have immediate usefulness to learners, and therefore, could begin to address their needs and expectations (Vella, 1994:4-5). This complies with one of the generalised characteristics of adult learners mentioned earlier in this study that adult learning must be related to skills and knowledge useful to their everyday life. The educator/facilitator's role is to edit the learners' needs and give them an assurance that they are on track in their learning (Vella, 1994:25). Adult and community education programmes should be accountable to the adult learners who are subjects of their own learning and are in a healthy relationship with their educators/facilitators.

Furthermore, literature on adult education also indicates that adult learners, as members of the community, will walk out/drop out of the course if they cannot decide what is to be taught and if their needs are ignored. Therefore, educators/facilitators need to discover what learners know and what they think they need or want to know (Vella, 1994: 5-6; Knowles et al, 1998). Otherwise, as Brookfield (1986) and Lahiri-Dutt (2004) state, learners can withdraw their

participation if they feel that the activity/programme does not meet their needs, (this can include broader community needs), does not make any particular sense, or is conducted at a level that is incomprehensible to them. This is supported by Shor (1992) who explains that learners who dislike the content, process or roles set out for them will withdraw into passivity or silence in the class and become indifferent as they are bored.

This could be one of the reasons for the high dropout rate among adult learners who find themselves in classes that do not address their needs. Other reasons include the ignorance and/or violation of adult education principles. Disregarding the multiple roles of adult learners in the planning and implementation of learning programmes also result in learner drop out. If adult learners drop out of programmes, one key question that remains to be answered is, who has done the needs analysis? Is it done by the community as a whole or by learners in the programme? How are participants identified and who does the identification?

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Through the principle of needs assessment, the educator/facilitator of adult learners is able to determine when to start teaching and what aspects to begin with. This becomes relevant for the principle of immediacy, which states that learners, through adult and community education, need to see immediate results in relation to their needs. Therefore, without a needs assessment, teaching and learning might be focussed on areas that are not urgent. This could lead to learners becoming disinterested and ultimately dropping out of class due to the fact that their immediate needs are not addressed. To eliminate or minimise dropouts, it is my view that communities, learners and adult educators/facilitators should work together as a team, with definite roles and also pay particular attention to prioritised community and learner needs.

It is my view that when learner and community needs are accommodated in community education programmes aimed at adult learners and learners are told why they learn what is in the programme, their motivation to learn is enhanced.

In addition, programme developers and educators/facilitators will approach the teaching and learning process in a manner that enhances learning. Consequently learners will feel protected in learning environments wherein their needs are considered and it could minimise the dropout rates in community education programmes.

2.3.2 Safety in the environment and the process

The environment in which learning takes place plays an important role in successful learning (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). Flowing from this, one of the requirements for meaningful learning is the creation of a safe and non-threatening learning environment. As an adult education principle, the creation of a safe environment includes respect for learners as subjects of their own learning, the design of learning tasks and small groups, the atmosphere in which teaching and learning occurs, the personality of the educator, as well as the challenge of learning new material in a stimulating, inviting and safe environment (Vella, 1994:6; Knowles et al, 1998).

UNIVERSITY
JOHANNESBURG

The teaching and learning environment must be welcoming and supporting. Establishing an environment of safety in the setting of learning and in the process, for learners and educators is both essential and challenging (Vella, 1994:131). The safety principle guides the educator/facilitator during needs assessment and in the planning and presentation of programmes in their initial stages. This would enable the educator/facilitator to create an inviting and warm atmosphere for adult learners. Furthermore, according to Vella (1994:6-7), learners have shown that they are not only willing but ready and eager to learn when they feel safe in a learning environment. Therefore, Wiesenberg and Willment (2001:6) recommend the creation of a community learning environment in which learners feel valued.

Cookson (1998:50) proposes that a climate conducive to learning is a prerequisite for effective learning to take place, and that there are two aspects to a learning climate – physical and psychological. The physical climate refers to the actual space in which learning takes place. It is concerned with factors such as room size, temperature, lighting, seating type and arrangements, and how technology is arranged and used in the learning space. (Knowles et al, 1998). A learning space that is physically uncomfortable and with a layout that does not afford a comfortable degree of personal space will detract from the learning process (Merriam & Caffarella,1991:150). Consequently meeting rooms should be bright and cheerful. Participants should find the facilities hospitable and encouraging of sharing (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991:29). In this respect Cookson (1998:50) indicates that the physical climate shall not refer to a typical classroom set up, with chairs in rows and a lecturer in front, because this announces to anyone entering the room that the role of the learner is to sit and listen to one-way transmissions from the lecturer. Instead, in order to instil effective learning for adult learners, an environment conducive to learning with learners seating around tables or in one large circle or several small circles will have to be created.

Such a design with tables of threes or fours, breaks down the stereotype of the classroom with an all knowing educator and passive learners (Vella, 1994:35). The possibility of safety is further enhanced when small groups for interaction are formed. In small groups, learners feel included and invited. These groups provide safety, as adults can speak more openly with three or four of their peers (Vella, 1994:35). This eliminates the fears that many learners have of speaking in front of a large group which may be intimidating and daunting. Learners need to feel safe and comfortable with their co-learners. Facilitators should plan group work where learners are able to voice and share their opinion in small groups as this provides physical and social safety.

The other aspect to a learning climate is psychological and is presented by Cookson (1998:51-52) and Knowles et al, (1998) as one of mutual trust, collaboration, mutual respect, pleasure and humanness. According to Rogers (1992:132), this climate refers to the atmosphere created in the class session by two sets of relationships, those between educator and learners and those between learner and learner. This climate may be warm, informal and open or it may be cold, formal and closed. In adult and community education in particular, the climate will reflect how seriously the organisers and educators take the intentions of the learners into account and the importance they attach to the expectations and hopes of the learners and ultimately the community is to benefit from the programme.

People are more open to learn when they feel respected. Cookson (1998:51-52) argues that if people feel that they are being talked down to or ignored and that their experience is not valued, their energy is spent dealing with that feeling more than with learning. He advocates the use of techniques such as friendly greeters at the door of an opening session, asking learners to fill out name tags with their names in large letters, and putting them in small groups as the first activity to have them introducing themselves to one another, share their interests and resources, and pool their goals for the programme.

Cookson (1998:51) emphasises that because of conditioning in earlier school experiences, in which competition for grades and teachers' favour was likely to be the norm, adults often tend to enter into any educational activity with a rivalrous attitude towards fellow adults. This is true for community education programmes too. Cookson (1998) indicates that since peers are the richest resources for learning this competitiveness interferes with learning. Accordingly, an opening exercise in which learners in small groups are put into a sharing relationship improves the quality of learning. The small groups can quickly become learning teams, working together to help one another reflect and learn, building a spirit of constructive competitiveness (Vella, 1994:35). In a community

education context especially one targeting health education, such learning teams may have for reaching positive benefits for the wider community once the programmes ends.

The psychological environment centres on creating a climate in which the community, learners and educators are able to engage in genuine exchange. For educators, this typically means helping learners feel welcome and at ease in the opening minutes of the activity. It also involves attending to the fears and doubts that adults may be experiencing. Also, it recognises that learners do not come to the learning situation with a "blank slate" rather, they come with a range of life experiences – some of which can serve as possible learning resources and others that can detract from learning (Merriam & Brockett, 1997:150).

Vella (1994:82) indicates that in creating a safe, non-threatening environment, contacts need to be made with the learners prior to the commencement of the programme and therefore learners will feel assured that their needs or some of their needs will be addressed. Vella (1994) mentions that such contacts create a feeling of safety whereby learners trust the competence of the educator/facilitator as well as the design of the programme. Learners will feel safe if they have trust in the educator (Knowles et al, 1998). In building a relationship of trust, an adult educator/facilitator can pursue a natural way to make learners feel safe and confident, by providing written material/handouts that learners can read before the commencement of the programme or through introductory words with them (Vella, 1994:7). In a community education context this may be easily achieved if the community is easily accessible.

A non-judgemental environment is a necessary safety assurance wherein a feeling of safety for learners is enhanced. This includes experiencing, encouragement, appreciation and affirmation of their efforts (Gravett, 2001:19). Therefore, it is important for educators/facilitators to affirm adult learners make contributions in teaching and learning sessions. According to Vella (1994),

affirmation invites learners to use their power to fully participate in programmes. It is, therefore, my view that if educators/facilitators ridicule and openly disapprove inputs from learners, it would have a negative and destructive impact on learning. Consequently, a safe and non-threatening learning environment is compromised and ultimately destroyed and unhealthy relations among educators and adult learners engaging in community programmes would develop.

2.3.3 Respect and sound relationships between educator and learner for learning and development

Elements of respect, safety, open communication, listening and humility are prerequisites for developing sound relationships (Vella, 1994; Knowles et al, 1998). According to Vella (1994), respect is one of the positive aspects that support learning in adults. Hence the importance of respect in community education programmes can never be over emphasised. Gravett (2001:45) emphasizes that educators who strive to establish a co-operative learning climate should show respect for learners; this is equally true for community educators. Gravett (2001) further explains that respect in an educational setting means that the integrity of each person is valued in ways that welcome the worth and expression of one's true self without fear of threat or blame. In such an atmosphere, people know that they are respected because they feel safe, capable and accepted.

Respect as a prerequisite for developing sound relationships is an important factor in any learning situation and need to be borne in mind by educators/facilitators when planning and presenting community education programmes. A relationship of mutual respect between educator and learners is often cited as the most important motivator for adult learners. Community educators who strive to establish a co-operative climate should interact respectfully with learners, who are members of the community and are engaging together in a community education project. The importance of showing respect to

learners cannot be under-estimated, hence Vella (1994:9) emphasises that when an educator fails to show respect or fails to affirm a learner s/he begins to doubt the learning relationship and often manifests anger, fear and disappointment.

Therefore a sound relationship between learner and an educator/facilitator will enable the learner to recognise that the educator is an available resource (Vella, 1994:182). Cohen (2003:6) mentions other prerequisites for maintaining sound relations. These include empathetic listening to learner needs by educators. It is, therefore, my view that for sound relationships among adult educators/ facilitators and learners, the former must have good listening skills, which forms part of a needs assessment and must level the playing field for effective teaching and learning by ensuring an inviting and safe learning environment. Good community educators should also identify with and make themselves available as learner resources. Furthermore, they have to be understanding and provide non-judgmental responses and descriptive feedback to learner queries. Having done that, the community educator will be in a better position to earn the respect of his/her adult learners.

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

2.3.4 Praxis: action with reflection or learning by doing

Vella (1994:11) presents praxis, a Greek word, meaning action with reflection. Action means the actual doing and reflection means to think deeply and consider seriously what has been learnt. This view is supported by that of Newman (in Merriam & Brockett, 1997:253), who also describes praxis as the interaction of reflection and action. This signifies that without the doing and without taking action, all of the analysis or reflection is dis-empowered. Newman (in Merriam & Brockett, 1997) goes further to indicate that in the notion of praxis that Freire presented, “reflection and action are both contained in praxis and cannot isolate one from another. The two activities fuse into one dynamic process in which the learners act on themselves and on their world, bringing about a change in their

own consciousness and in the way they engage with other people, organisations, institutions and objects around them".

Farquharson (1995:244) refers to praxis as "the capacity to blend action with reflection, creativity and a zest for ambiguity". I concur with Farquharson (1995) that learning occurs when one blends action with reflection in that adults learn anything, including skills, concepts or attitudes by better doing. For example, after learning new knowledge or a skill, learners have to reflect on what they shall have done by analysing, looking at its application and implications for their situation. This implies that the learning of new ideas, skills or bodies of knowledge does not take place in a vacuum but is set within the context of learners' past, current and future experience (Brookfield, 1986:15). In a community education context learners experiences in a particular community are intertwined with their learning.

Praxis, as indicated by Vella (1994:11) can be used in teaching knowledge, skills and attitudes as learners do something with the new knowledge, practice the new skills and attitudes and then reflect on what they shall have done. Therefore, it is important that community educators/facilitators, when designing and planning programmes, need to make provision for praxis in the form of description, analysis, application and then reflection and implementation (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). In my view, this will afford learners an opportunity to practice new skills, ideas and/or attitudes and immediately reflect on them. When learners practice a particular skill or acquire knowledge and in turn are invited to analyse the quality of their experience, this moves practice to praxis (Vella,1994:12).

Praxis is a process in that it is a cycle of events where learners are in a position to do, reflect, change and adopt new ways of doing. Brookfield (1986:10) supports this statement when he describes praxis as a principle where learners and facilitators are involved in a continual process of activity, reflection upon

activity, collaborative analysis of activity, new activity, further reflection and collaborative analysis. Brookfield (1986) also emphasizes that educators should allow more time for reflection by learners, a general atmosphere of flexibility, regard for learners and openness. Reflective learning is when learners think, analyse, reject or accept what has been learnt before. It implies that adult learners should be able to apply the skills they have acquired in real life situations and reflect with other learners on their experience in those situations. In this way reflection leads to redefining experience anew and considering the next step. It is linked to problem posing, creativity and encourages questioning. Piaget highlights the relation of action to knowing: knowledge is constructed from action, to know an object is to act upon it and transform it (Shor, 1992:17). This implies that after learners have been actively involved in learning, time should be allocated for assessment, feed back and presentations. This would be time for tying things together and for learners and educators to provide own interpretations and regular feedback on progress.

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Therefore, in reflective learning, adults do not engage in rote learning. Instead they learn for a particular purpose and what they learn is related to their life tasks and roles (Merriam & Caffarella, 1991; Knowles et al, 1998). The principle of praxis therefore implies active participation of learners, as they will not accept information or knowledge dished out to them without questioning and analysing it. They still reflect on previous knowledge and experience to make sense of it in order to accept or reject what is presented to them. If this happens, meaning and appropriation of knowledge shall have taken place. This would be possible only if methods such as problem posing or questioning are used to enable learners to analyse and debate during the construction of knowledge and not repeat or memorise content or facts as given.

I contend that if teaching and learning continue without giving learners a chance to reflect on their previous learning, learners can be found with a mass of cognitive matter like facts, data and information that may seem impossible to

help them in their situations and performance of tasks or roles. This is referred to as non-reflective learning. Jarvis, Holford and Griffin (1998:61) describe non-reflective learning as a situation where learners memorise, remember, repeat and accept things as they are. It is similar to non-critical learning associated with a banking approach (Freire in Shor, 1992:31) wherein educators treat learners' minds as empty accounts into which they make deposits of information. In summary, non-reflective learning does not encourage creativity on the part of the learners. Kotelo (2001), shows the dangers hereof in a South African community education programme by indicating that, at the end hereof participants could not remember their roles and needed retraining in order for them to execute their responsibilities properly. They actually needed to be trained as if they had never received training before. Thus, if a facilitator deprives learners of the opportunity to use their prior knowledge and skills when learning, the chances of them forgetting what was learned is very high.

2.3.5 Engagement

UNIVERSITY
OF
JOHANNESBURG

The principle of engagement refers to learning as an active process where learners are fully engaged in their own learning and action plans (Knowles et al, 1998). Vella (1994:159) defines engagement as a major determinant and a principle that enables learners not only to take part in meaningful learning but also to practice learning as subjects of their own learning. Engagement includes involvement, participation, engrossment and transcendence (Vella 1994:13)

Authorities in adult education (Knowles, 1989; Rogers, 1992; Vella, 1994), state that people learn best by doing. Learners need to be able to "do". By "doing", they are actively engaged in the learning process. This implies that the educator teaches and learners learn. Teaching adults is a matter of setting up a programme of activities, study and practice, and encouraging and enabling them to join in. They do the work and arrive at the goals (Rogers, 1996:234). In almost

all instances and settings, including community education, learners should engage in meaningful learning as teams.

Wlodkowski and Ginsberg (1995) reiterate that a team's engagement in learning and in action plans is a vital principle to assure quality of its learning. Vella (1994) supported by Gravett (2001) indicates that learners are invited to put themselves into learning tasks, working in small groups or teams, and when they are deeply engaged, it is often difficult to extricate them from the delight of that learning. Based on what is mentioned above, teamwork involves engagement by all team members and without engagement there is no meaningful learning (Rogers, 1996). This is supported by Lewin's teachings (Vella, 1994:164) that people learn more when they are involved in the learning, doing what they are learning than when they are merely listening to someone talking. This implies that learners must be allowed to play an active role in all the stages of the process of learning. As indicated above, adult education principles specify that adults learn better by doing. Therefore, for many adults engaged in non-formal community education programmes, this principle also applies. Rogers (1996:234-235) also supports this view by spelling out that unless learners are active, they will not learn. Learners need to be active in their own learning for a number of reasons. Firstly, for motivation – they need to achieve something regularly in order to build up and maintain a sense of success. Secondly, for learning itself, the introduction, acceptance and internalising of the learning changes.

Through engagement, Buchanan (in Kruger, Gravett & Petersen, 2005:133) argues that active participation creates opportunities for learners not only to practice skills and apply theory to practice but also to move towards gaining professional skills. I, therefore, see it important for educators/facilitators to plan programmes indicating what learners will do, not as in most programmes what the educators are going to do. Participation is essentially a "learning by doing" exercise – plans are made, action is taken, results are studied, lessons learned and new plans with action taking place (Burkey, 1996:57). Emphasis need to be

on the learners' activities of what Vella (1994) and Gravett (2001) use with adult learners, learning tasks. These learning tasks require active participation and engagement in the tasks and ensures that learners working in teams are engaged in the process of learning. A learning task is an activity that helps learners to understand by following instructions to arrive at an answer. In the use of learning tasks, Vella (1994) supported by Gravett (2001) explains that learners are invited to put themselves in the learning task by learning new content on their own.

Another writer who finds engagement to be of importance is Brookfield (1986:1), who argues that the engagement of learners is not only an indication that they are learning, it is how they learn. If learners are engaged in their learning, they themselves decide what occurs in the learning event and how it occurs. When using the principle of engagement in teaching, a community educator will design activities suitable for the inclusion of all learners and which are relevant to life roles and task situations of learners and the community.

UNIVERSITY
JOHANNESBURG

Flowing from the discussion above, an educator/facilitator engaged in community education, is not there to cover a syllabus or a pacesetter or a set of course material. He/she is available to engage adult learners in effective and significant learning and as active subjects or decision makers, through stimulating learning tasks (Vella, 1994; Gravett, 2001). S/he is available to engage adult learners in effective and significant learning and as active subjects of communities. If an adult educator/facilitator ignores the recommended methodology and concentrates on what needs to be taught, it will result in what Rogers (1992:123) terms a "top-down" model, which discourages a dialogic approach and promotes the monologic one. Efforts to cover a set curriculum in a non-formal community education programme often leads to neglect of this principle of engagement.

The engagement of learners can best be achieved through dialogue. According to Burbules (in Gravett, 2001:35), dialogue refers to a respectful relationship, with

educators and learners thinking and reasoning together. Hence it is not merely a technique or tool used for engaging participants in conversation or an exchange of ideas.

Based on these deliberations, it is my view that if adult learners are being involved, they are likely not to forget the activity they are engaging in. Therefore, let us move away from, as Burkey (1996:83) puts it, “doing things for people, rather that helping people do things for themselves in communities”. There is a further reason why adult learners should be active, and that is the need to encourage them to continue purposeful and structured learning once a particular programme is over. This is very pertinent for community health education programmes as, for example, a particular community can take action to halt the spread of HIV by, among others, discouraging sex before marriage and given incentives to members of communities who reach particular ages before contracting the virus. This has implications for the community’s ability to engage in lifelong learning. Candy, Gebert & O’Leary (in du Plessis & Koen, 2005:21-23) define lifelong learning as including all aspects of learning experience through life, whether formal or informal. Furthermore, it is defined as “to acquire the skills required to learn and to continue through life to learn from a variety of sources and experiences”.

Rogers (1996:235) highlights that “lifelong learning is a necessary part of life itself, not just a preparation. We need to continue to learn because we cannot learn at the start all that we shall need during our path through life”. Rogers (1996), emphasises that the ultimate goals of learning are enhanced adulthood, greater maturity and self-development, increased autonomy and responsibility for ourselves and for others. Therefore, as Vella (1994:189) puts it “without engagement there is no learning. In adult education, designs based on a competent needs assessment can be engaging and, consequently, help adult learners”. It is therefore my view that for a community education programme to attain success and be celebrated in life, adult learners need to be engaged.

Rogers (1996:236) argues that the way in which community educators select the content of those programmes and the methods they use should foster the adulthood of the learners. These should assist in the development of the learners as individuals and provide opportunities for the exercise of autonomy. Consequently, community education should contribute to continued learning and strengthen the independent learning habits of the participants.

For engagement and needs assessment to be successful, adult learners can join in the planning of the programme, the stages of learning, the steps by which the skills and knowledge are built up and in the areas that most teachers guard carefully to themselves. They can contribute to setting the goals so that educators do not impose their own intentions, thereby encouraging autonomy and independence. Rogers (1996) goes further to indicate that adult learners can assist in constructing the learning schedule, the content part of the course, the sequence of events and activities, for they have their own skills of learning. They can also share in the process of evaluation and ultimately contribute to all parts of the teaching-learning process. Community educators and adult learners could thus become active partners in the process of learning and teaching (Struyven, Dochy & Janssens, 2002). The principle of engagement is applicable to both adult and community education since it refers to adult learning which is often a part of community education. Furthermore, it is my contention that adults attending community education programmes thus also learn better through engagement. Educators and adult learners, as members of a community, become active partners in the process of teaching and learning in an adult education setting, designed to meet the needs of the community. This is particularly relevant for a community health education programme that for example aims at creating HIV and AIDS awareness.

It is through this engagement that motivation can be improved. Regular educator-learner discussions are important for learners to become aware of their progress,

in order to determine new goals, to get feedback regarding their work and to compare their own interpretation of their efforts with that of the educator. It is through this engagement that the reflective function of evaluation is nurtured and improved (Grosser & Lombard in du Plessis & Koen, 2005:42).

Through active involvement in their learning, adult learners are able to select, perceive, interpret and integrate new information to form a coherent and meaningful whole with their prior knowledge and experiences (Struyven et al., 2002). It is my view that prior knowledge and experience will add value in the engagement of learners in community programmes. To construct new knowledge, prior knowledge and experience provide the base. This is supported by Lindeman (in Belzer, 2004:42-43) who wrote, “the resource of highest value in adult education is the learner’s experience … Experience is the adult learner’s living textbooks as an important tool for building new knowledge”.

However engagement of learners in what they are learning, taking into consideration their accumulated experience and needs assessment by educators, could bring about a clear definition of their roles in adult teaching and learning. Consequently, effective and meaningful learning could occur.

2.3.6 Clear roles and role development

Learning theory (Rogers,1996; Vella, 2000; Dochy & Janssens, 2002, and du Plessis & Koen, 2005) proposes that learners must construct their own learning through active engagement with new concepts, skills and attitudes. Therefore, recognising the impact of clear roles in communication between the adult learner and educator/facilitator is another vital principle of adult learning. It is important to make a clear definition of the roles of educator/facilitator and adult learners within the teaching and learning situation.

Rubin (1998:15) emphasises that for community education projects to be successful all the stakeholders (community educators/facilitators and adult learners) should know their roles and responsibilities with a clear understanding of what is expected or required of them. What then are the roles of educators/facilitators? Vella (1994: 17-18), Knowles et al, (1998:86) and Gravett, (2001: 36) indicate them as, among others:

- To allow learners to demonstrate their previously acquired knowledge and skills,
- To advise, coach, guide, mediate and become co-learners,
- To establish the needs of the learners,
- An educator/facilitator must be accessible, through dialogue, to learners and
- S/he should be committed to dialogue, both inside and outside the classroom.

One basic assumption is that adult learning is best achieved in dialogue (Vella, 1994:3; Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995; Gravett, 2001). Therefore, for both parties to define their roles, they need to engage in dialogue and "any impediment towards dialogue should be courageously addressed and eradicated" (Vella, 1994:18). Because of these roles, this calls for a radical change in the role of the educator. Educators nearly do too much for their learners, they work too much on their own. They exclude, often without realising it, learners from many parts of the task. The educator chooses the subject and the content, chooses the goals, the pace of learning, the level of the course and s/he chooses the methods and evaluates the results (Rogers, 1996:238).

Rogers (1996) indicate that all this is done naturally, for it springs from a deep-rooted set of attitudes towards the learners. There is a belief that learners are not capable of taking control of their own learning and they cannot act on their own. There is a sense of superiority of the educator arising from the traditional world of education, a world that sees being "learned" as the desired goal of all education and a state of attainment that the learner might ultimately reach. Consequently,

education becomes a one way process to transfer knowledge and expertise (Rogers, 1996:238).

Rogers (1996:238), furthermore highlights that “a reappraisal of the roles of educator and learners will affect all parts of the teaching-learning opportunity”. If the educator abandons the attitude of “I will tell you” but instead says “I will help you to work it out”, the whole curriculum will change and “I will help you to engage in a series of learning activities”, the whole body of teaching methods will change.

“Consequently learners will gradually become confident of their own powers of thinking and their ability to speak out. They will not allow other people to lecture them as though they were children. They will not feel inferior to people posing as their superiors” (Burkey, 1996:134). This implies that community educators should do a lot of listening rather than talking, should learn more than teach and should also facilitate more than lead. Therefore, educators/facilitators should act as resources to learners (Vella, 1994:27; Knowles et al,1998:85), by working with adult learners and not for them (Burkey, 1996:79). Facilitators should work with adult learners and not for them because adult learners have to be the subjects of their own learning and not the objects. To work with the learners, educators/facilitators should be able to identify with the learners and should not impose their own ideas on the learners. Burkey (1996) also makes mention that facilitators can play their role effectively only if they have adequate knowledge and understanding about the community with which they are going to work. They should, for example, study and analyse the socio-economic conditions, the value systems and the cultural traditions embedded within the community (as in the community that is served by the MCDP).

UNIVERSITY
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2.3.7 Regard learners as subjects of their own learning

"Regarding the learners as subjects of their own learning is a principle that involves the recognition that adults are in fact decision makers in a large part of their lives" (Vella, 1994:12). Therefore adults desire to be treated as subjects of their own learning and that they themselves decide what occurs in the learning event as decision-makers (Gravett, 2001). Adult learners should not be treated as objects who engage in rote learning that does not require active thinking (Freire,1971). According to this principle, the learner should be a partner in the planning, conducting and evaluation of the learning process and not just a recipient of some pre-planned set of learning experiences over which the learner has no control (Mokubung, 2002:17).

Ways in which educators/facilitators can invite learners to be subjects of their own learning include that they should ask open questions that will invite both parties to approach learning as subjects (Gravett, 2001:45). In approaching adult learners as subjects, the educator should differentiate between their suggestions and their decisions. This is sometimes referred to as a distinction between a consultative voice (a suggestion) and a deliberative voice (a decision) (Vella, 1994:187). Engaging adults in their own learning means engaging them as subjects of that learning and therefore, adult learners make decisions on what and how they learn (Gravett, 2001). At times they offer suggestions and at others they make decisions (Vella, 1994:13).

The position of adult learners seeing themselves as subjects of their own learning can firstly, benefit educators/facilitators in that it can bring about a radical change in the way they teach. Secondly, it can lead to radical changes in the effect of teaching, for example, fewer drop-outs, as learners are important decision makers or subjects of their own learning. Thirdly, it can mean more measurable results of the learning process, as learners know they know because they have chosen to do what they are learning. In conclusion, it can mean better

use of financial and human resources, as adult learners practice making healthy decisions in the learning process (Vella, 1994). This implies that there is no wastage of money and other capital investments in the teaching and learning process for adults. Contributions made by educators/facilitators in the process add value in the development of learners. Better use of financial and human resources will bring about a reduction in the dropout rate since emphasis in the learning process is sequential and cumulative (Rogers, 1996), as shall be indicated below.

Burkey (1996:82) mentions that change agents, or educators/facilitators in community education programmes, should have respect for and faith in the people with whom they are working. A faith in people should be their guiding force. Respecting learners and engaging them in learning yields benefits. The principle of respecting learners acknowledges the uniqueness and human potential of the learners as decision-makers in their own learning. Furthermore, the position of adult learners seeing themselves as subjects of their own learning enhances their development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes taught (Vella, 1994:14; Gravett, 2001).

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2.3.8 Sequence and reinforcement

Gravett (2001:42) stipulates that learning should progress from easy to difficult tasks, from simple to complex and from group supported to solo efforts. Also, the learning process should be sequential and cumulative. It should not just be a number of unrelated “magazine” items, individual parts without any interconnection. Rather it builds up piece by piece, making relationships between the diverse elements of the learning process (Rogers, 1996:40).

On the one hand, sequencing of learning material, therefore, means the programming of knowledge, skills and attitudes in an order that goes from simple to complex and from group-supported to solo efforts. On the other hand,

reinforcement is the repetition of facts, skills and attitudes in diverse, engaging and interesting ways until they are learned. Learners engage in tasks that are interesting and diverse until they are learned (Vella, 1994:9-10; Gravett, 2001).

Educators/facilitators must ensure that community programmes carry adequate reinforcement opportunities for the learners, to assist them with learning. S/he needs to give learners time to practice what they shall have learned, and thus reinforce the learning process. Through reinforcement the learners will know that they know. The importance of the principle of reinforcement is further emphasised by Jung (in Vella, 1994:57). The design of reinforcement in adult learning is the job of the educators/facilitators.

The design of learning tasks must reflect an appropriate sequence and adequate reinforcement. Through sequencing and reinforcement, learners will feel empowered in the skill or with knowledge if they have had time to repeat a task or practice a skill. In the end learners will know what is expected of them and will do it with confidence (Gravett, 2001).

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Sequence, reinforcement and practice opportunities are interrelated with the principles and practices mentioned above. Learning tasks should move from simple to more complex. It is my view that, failing to do this, learners may abscond from programmes due to fear of failure, feelings of incompetence and anxiety. Morais (2000:11-12) reiterates that "when adults believe that the material to be learned is too difficult, they will not learn. Reinforcement of the task often motivates and encourages learners to tackle what they thought they could not learn". Adults may do their own reinforcement through practical work and study. However, facilitators, if they are to be accountable, must carry adequate reinforcement with learners to assure meaningful learning (Vella, 1994:10).

In learning situations for adults, the educator/facilitator is accountable for a design that works for the learners there and then. In formal school situations,

learners are accountable to the educator, whereas in adult learning in community education programmes, the accountability is mutual. Adult learners need an accountable design and an accountable facilitator to provide the necessary sequence and reinforcement tasks. They will do the work that enables them to ultimately know that they know. It is the task of facilitators to design learning for adults in a way that assures that the principle of sequence and adequate reinforcement is honoured within the learning programme (Vella, 1994:10).

During the process of sequencing and reinforcement, the facilitator listens to adult learners and changes learning tasks to meet their needs for reinforcement. If the task is too difficult for most learners, it should be changed. This puts adult learners in the position of subjects of their own learning, and as decision-makers in the appropriate tasks. All this should happen in a healthy relationship with the educator/facilitator (Shor, 1992).

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On the other hand, the consequences of not honouring sequencing and reinforcement of a learning task are, firstly, possible dropouts. Learners can drop out of programmes aimed at helping communities in solving problems and challenges encountered. Secondly, learners can display their anger, fear and disappointment if the learning process is not sequential and cumulative. If they fear and are confused about what they have to learn, they will be reluctant to learn. Lastly, if appropriate sequencing of learning material from simple to complex and reinforcement thereof is not done, adults might believe they cannot learn (Vella, 1994:9).

2.3.9 Cognitive, affective and psychomotor aspects: ideas, feelings, actions

Vella (1994:14) says that “learning with the mind, emotions and muscles is a vital principle that is often neglected”. Adult learning without reflection can result in

adult learners faced with a mass of cognitive matter: information, data and facts that may seem impossible to comprehend or learn.

Many formal approaches to learning often see learning as only a cognitive process, which has serious negative consequences such as a possible drop out of programmes by learners. Furthermore, learners may be frightened off due to a no safe environment (Vella, 1994:14-15). The negative consequences can be prevented by using three aspects of learning, i.e. feelings (affective), ideas (cognitive) and actions (psychomotor). Most learning involves more than the cognitive material (ideas and concepts). Also, It involves feeling something about the concepts (emotions) and doing something (actions) (Shor, 1992; Vella, 1994).

Campbell (in Vella, 1994:15) reminds us that the brain thinks it is running the show when in fact it is merely a peripheral organ, "secondary at best". Learning is multifaceted, in that it has to do with ideas, feelings and actions. These are interrelated and each impacts on the other. An educator/facilitator of adult learners must ensure that community education programmes cater for the factual elements and for ideas to be shared, feelings and opinions to be discussed and actions to be implemented (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1995).

An educator/facilitator must consider all three facets when delivering a programme to adult learners. To further the importance of the three aspects of learning, Kurt (in Vella, 1994:15) states that very little substantive learning takes place if the three aspects of learning are not incorporated and considered.

Each objective set by learners in a programme should be related to a learning task that will involve cognitive, affective and psychomotor activities and content. As adult learners, they need all three aspects to know that they know enough about their community to seriously plan projects with its members. Ideas, feelings and actions, all work together to invite adult learners to learn about the real world

they will be serving. The learning transaction necessitates affective as well as cognitive involvement; consequently, learning has an impact not just on the behaviour but also on the attitudes and personality of the learner. To effect this involvement, instructional techniques that are experiential, non-threatening and collaborative need to be introduced (Merriam & Brockett, 1997:37).

In addition, Richards, Howarth and Richards (in Kruger et al, 2005:132) stress the importance of specific skills which need to be developed. These include the cognitive skills, affective skills and conative skills. In the view of Kruger et al (2005:132), equipping a learner for a health profession using a health programme requires the fostering of professional skills to develop a high degree of reflectivity, autonomy and continued professional development which also ensures a safe and ethical health service for the community. Furthermore, these skills should incorporate ideas, feelings and actions. It is also important to recognise that adult learners in any community need to see the immediate usefulness of new learning: the skills, knowledge and attitudes they are working to acquire (Vella, 1994:16), as shall be indicated below.

2.3.10 Immediacy of learning

Adult education literature (Vella, 1994; Wlodkowski, 1998; Gravett, 2001) indicates that adults, including those involved in community education programmes need to see the immediate usefulness and relevance of new learning, as most adults do not have time to spare due to their multiple roles. They want to spend their time studying something or engaging in programmes that will have immediate impact and consequences. Farquharson (1995:64) says that adult learners like to feel that what they are learning is useful and relevant in their daily lives. This then leads to meaningful and more rapid learning.

Educators/facilitators should make community education programmes relevant by connecting previous knowledge of learners to new content and make this

content applicable to their daily lives. Therefore, it is my view that if learners see the immediate usefulness of learning, they would be highly motivated to learn because they wish to acquire skills and knowledge which they can use in immediate and practical ways (Rogers, 1989:48). Since the delivery of health services is a priority to government and communities, adult learners engaged in community health education programmes, would be motivated to engage in lifelong learning because all communities need basic health services. This principle of immediacy can then guide educators/facilitators to steer the learning process to a level where drop-out from community education programmes is kept at a minimum. However, minimum drop-out can be sustained where community education programmes show immediate results (Rogers,1989:48; Vella,1994:9).

The principle of immediacy should bring about a difference to adult learners engaging in the learning process. They should gain confidence in the programme, in the educator/facilitator and in their own learning ability as subjects in their own learning. In addition, this principle will assist the educator/facilitator in organising sessions in the community education programme - which implies the beginning of an action and the need for adult learners to be able to use what they would be learning (Vella, 1994:187).

Without the principle of immediacy, I argue that the learning process can be valueless and a dull and de-motivating atmosphere can develop. In such situations, learners are indeed physically present, but do not actively engage in the learning process and they are not even excited about what they are learning. In such a situation, the principle of immediacy needs to be put into practice and applied with immediate effect. Since health is a priority to communities, for example, health education programmes should be delivered to communities as a matter of urgency to meet community needs. Furthermore the principle of immediacy is vital for community health programmes due to the fact that the delivery of health services to communities is a priority to the government and even to NGOs (the MCDP included).

Merriam and Caffarella (1991); Vella (1994); Cookson (1998); Knowles et al. (1998) and Gravett (2001) highlight that adults are life-centred and task-centred in their orientation to learning. They perceive that the acquisition of new knowledge and skills is worthwhile to the extent that it enhances their ability to perform real tasks that are relevant to their life situations. In conclusion, adults become ready to learn something when they perceive that it will contribute towards their achieving some life goal. Therefore readiness to learn is a function of a desire to learn.

According to Gravett (2001:15), adult learners' need for immediacy has, among others, the following implications:

- Adults are more likely to be motivated to learn when they believe learning content to be relevant and will benefit their life situation.

- As adult learners seek the acquisition of new knowledge and skills to address a real-life problem, it is important that they receive frequent feedback about their performance. Community educators/facilitators of adult learners should continuously affirm the progress of learners, but also indicate knowledge or adequacy gaps that exist. This promotes a questioning attitude, which is conducive to effective learning (Wlodkowski in Gravett, 2001:15).

- Learners should be invited to indicate how new learning can be applied in their life -worlds.

2.3.11 Teamwork: Using small groups

According to Vella (1994:18) and Knowles et al. (1998:75) teamwork is both a process and a principle. Teams of about 5 to 7 learners, provide in the adult and community learning experience, a quality of safety that is effective and helpful.

The shared responsibility and safety in teams have proved to be effective in most learning situations and in any cultural setting (Gravett, 2001:48).

After learners have assessed their needs, teams consisting of, among others, friends may be formed. Teamwork enhances learning. Adult learners become part of a special community of learners while learning to share and negotiate knowledge. Also, they develop social and interpersonal skills through interaction with one another (Gravett, 2001:49). Also, teamwork provides safety for undertaking the difficult tasks and teams provide an optimal field - where every participant learner gains for being part of a team (Vella, 1994:19). Therefore, it is important for educators/facilitators to plan and organise programmes involving teamwork. These programmes should be designed in such a way that every team member gains as much as possible and is guaranteed some form of success. However, this does not imply that programmes need to be easy. These need to be challenging and open to discussion where learners are able and willing to help one another and in the end are proud of their achievements as a team.

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Teamwork is a social activity. Farquharson (1995:423) stresses the social aspect in teamwork by indicating that “learning is inherently social”. As a social activity and process, learners should work with friends who they feel comfortable with as this creates safety for the shy learners or for those who struggle with a difficult concept. In addition, the facilitator should respect learners as subjects of their own learning by allowing them to choose their own teams as often as possible, especially when a learning task is complex and difficult. Vella (1994:19) also mentions that an educator/facilitator of adult learners can set up arbitrary teams at the beginning of a course and then have learners forming small work teams for themselves, choosing whom they wish to work with. However, Vella (1994) goes further to say that it is the educator/facilitator who has the final word if serious issues such as gender, age or race seem to divide the learning group.

Teamwork is a collective effort, that is organising to carry out activities in like-minded groups. It is generally accepted that participation is meaningless outside the collective context. In a community education content particularly adult learners must come together and pool their human and material resources in order to attain the objectives, which they set for themselves (Burkey,1996). Burkey (1996) goes further to indicate that community educators/facilitators must assist learners to appreciate the advantages of working in small groups, because it is only through group work action that they stand a chance of increasing control over their own lives. Therefore, it is my view that the educator/facilitator in community education should ensure that all learners in a team are welcomed and make positive contributions in a spirit of team building. No member of the team should be excluded or treated in isolation from other team members.

Vella (1994:19-20) also stresses that community educators/facilitators should aim at having teams working effectively so as to contribute to the personal development of learners, as the ultimate aim of learning. She also highlights that in a team, learning is enhanced by peers, who amongst others create safety for the learner who is struggling with complex concepts and skills or attitudes. They also offer a mentoring service, whereby they help one another with clarity, tenderness and skill.

Teamwork benefit adult learners, in that teams invite constructive competition. Constructive competition is structured so that teams work together efficiently in the learning process, have fun together and manifest their learning with a certain pride in their achievement as a team. In addition, at the beginning of a programme, learners are invited to examine their roles in the team. These are group maintenance roles and task maintenance roles. As a team, they consider how these roles are being acted out, and they can use praxis to examine how their team can work more efficiently (Vella, 1994).

Teamwork also benefit learners in that they become accountable to their own objectives and to their teams, as shall be indicated in the next section. Side by side with the principle of accountability, groups decide what shall be learned, how it will be studied and what shall be done with the learning changes at the end of the programme (Rogers, 1996:237).

2.3.12 Accountability: How do they know they know?

Vella (1994:21) mentions that "Accountability is one of the foremost principles of adult learning and the design and planning of any learning event and/or programme must be accountable to the learners". This is also applicable to community education programmes for adult learners. Vella (1994:8) identifies the principle of accountability as one that emphasises that learners are accountable for their own learning. Each learner learns what s/he is able and ready to learn. The educator/facilitator is accountable for effective teaching of the learners so as to allow them to satisfy their learning needs (Gravett, 2001). This is emphasised by Vella (2000:82) when she says *"the role of adult educators is not to cover a set of content, but to design and teach for accountable learning"*. This is planning for learning-centred outcomes-based education (Gravett, 2001:52). Mokubung (2002:17) indicates that it is significant that learners be allowed to participate in the planning and design of their learning programmes so that they can decide what and how they want to learn. It is therefore crucial that community educators/facilitators and learners should be held responsible and accountable for the planning and implementation of adult and community education programmes and ultimately for their achievements in targeted communities.

Accountability of the design and planning of any programme to learners find justification in that what was proposed to be taught must be taught; what was meant to be learned must be learned; the skills intended to be gained must be manifested in all the learners; the attitudes taught must be manifested and the knowledge conveyed must be visible in adult learners' language and reasoning

(Vella, 1994:21). Therefore, accountability is a synthesis principle, which is the result of using all the other principles as well as the beginning of an action. To remain accountable, the community educator must then do what s/he sets out to do.

If an educator/facilitator of adult learners neglects this principle, it could impact negatively on all the other principles. For example, accountability is interrelated with the principles of safety, respect and sound relationships among adult learners and also in communities that educational programmes intend to service. How do they know they know? This is the accountability question that reaches back to touch all the other principles and practices.

2.4 CONCLUSION

As indicated in this study, traditional teaching methods, where the role of the educator is viewed as the transmitter, depositor and an authority of all knowledge, are not optimal in adult and community education. For the educator of adult learners to effectively fulfil his/her role, adult education principles should be taken into consideration at all times during teaching and learning.

UNIVERSITY JOHANNESBURG

In this section I drew from relevant literature, those issues that relate to the principles and practices of adult and community education since this programme targets adult learners who are also members of communities. I have argued that in order to make community education programmes meaningful and challenging for their adult learners, the educator/facilitator needs to have a sound knowledge of adult learners and how adult learning can be enhanced. Furthermore, I have indicated how effective learning and teaching can be achieved by incorporating adult education principles and practices in any community education programme. Adult education principles imply viewing learners as subjects of their own learning and that they should be actively involved in the learning process, from

needs assessment right through to accountability. In addition, the generalised characteristics of adult learners should be considered.

Without adult education principles and practices underlying community education programmes, the educator/facilitator runs the risk of a monological approach wherein learners are merely physically present and are passive objects and not enthusiastic subjects of their own learning. Adult education principles therefore become the answer to a need for mutual inquiry with learners rather than the educator trying to deposit and impose his/her knowledge and experience on the learners. Therefore, the incorporation of adult education principles in community education programmes lead to learning centredness where the educator is a resource for learning and also a co-learner with learners actively involved in their learning.

This study argues that educators often do too much, organising content, subject matter, objectives and goals. It gives educators a sense of superiority, as they often think that learning is dependent for its effectiveness on their activities rather than those of the learners. Such a hierarchical set-up will not allow for the programme to be designed to the benefit of the learners. However, adult education literature with a dialogic approach indicates that the role of the educator/facilitator is that of planner, organiser, leader, mediator and co-learner in the teaching and learning process.

As indicated above, the role of the educator/facilitator of adult learners in a community education programme is to facilitate learning without imposing his/her knowledge on learners. It is my view that the incorporation of adult education principles in adult learning would fast track the establishment of a group climate that would encourage problem solving and support active learner involvement. Finally, community educators/facilitators should show respect to learners by empowering them to perform at their best. Shor (1992:10) sums it up by saying that "learners need a challenging education of high quality that empowers them

as thinkers, communicators and citizens". It becomes important therefore that adult education principles be incorporated into community health education programmes for meaningful teaching and learning. The mentioned adult education principles and the generalised characteristics of adult learners form the basis of the research process discussed in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

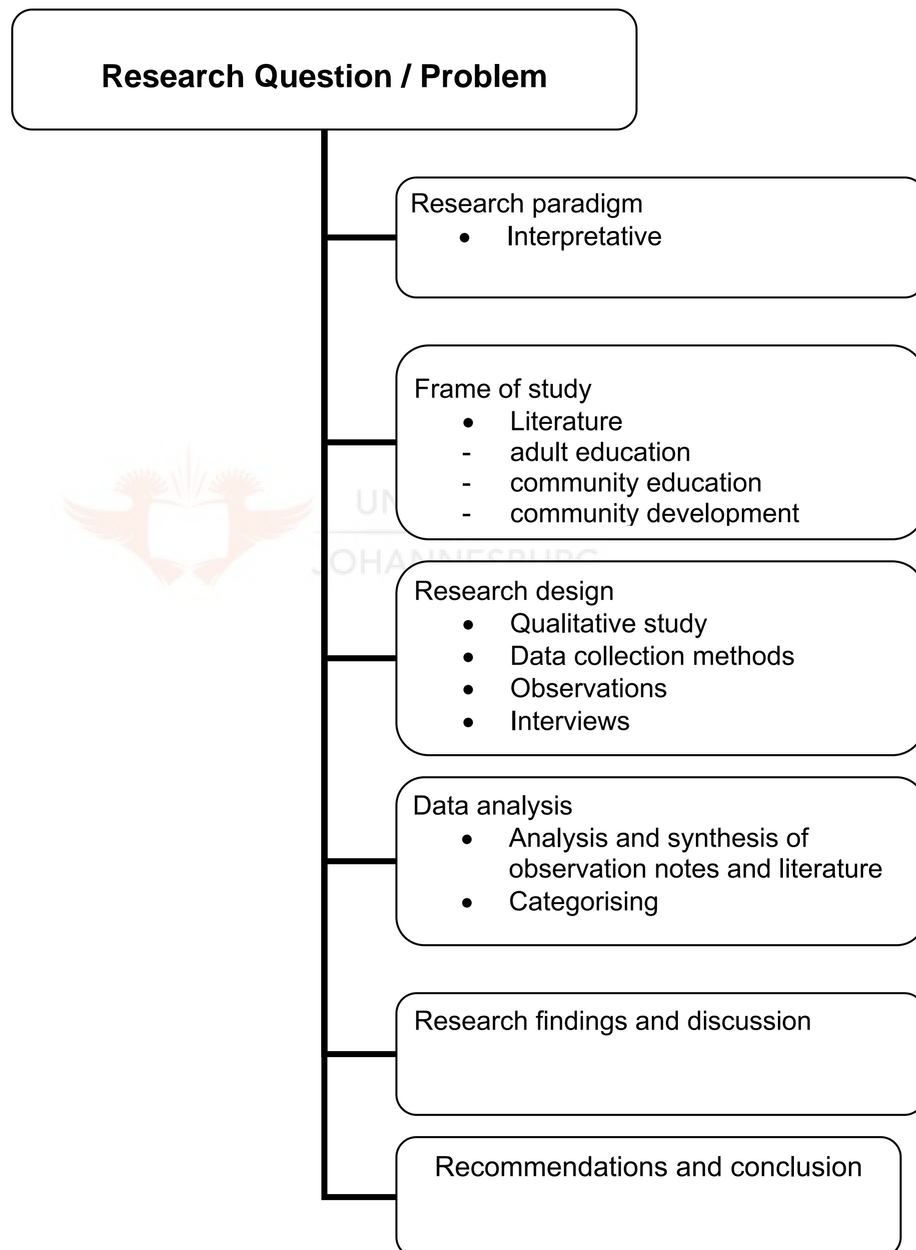
3.1 INTRODUCTION

A research strategy is a plan for assembling, organising and integrating information (data) gathered. A well-defined research problem is a prerequisite for any study. The research design has its origin in the nature of the research problem which is to be investigated and reflects a series of major decisions to be made by the researcher in an attempt to discover the best strategies to answer the research questions posed. "The function of the research design is to provide a plan for the assembling, organising and integrating of data which results in a product which is the research findings" (Swart, 1994:163). Refer to figure 3.1, the schematic representation of the research design. Put in another way, a research strategy to be taken in a study depends on the researcher's paradigm which determines how the problem is shaped, how the main research questions are posed, how and why data is collected and ensuring that valid and reliable results or outcomes that are trustworthy, consistent and dependable are achievable.
"Therefore, the main function of a research decision should be to maximise the validity of the eventual results" (Mouton, 1990:107).

In this chapter I will firstly provide a detailed explanation of a research paradigm within which this study is conducted. Then I will provide a layout of my research plan. Thereafter the data collection methods used in this study, followed by an analysis of the data will be highlighted. A code of ethical standards directed at the participants will be provided. Finally, for the findings of this study to be

considered trustworthy, I will discuss the provisions for ensuring that valid and reliable outcomes are achieved before concluding this chapter.

Figure 3.1 : SCHEMATIC REPRESENTAION OF THE RESEARCH DESIGN



3.2 RESEARCH PARADIGM

All research is conducted within a particular paradigm, which Maykut and Morehouse (1994:4) define as “a set of overarching and interconnected assumptions about the nature of reality”. Guba and Lincoln (1989:195) define a paradigm as “the basic belief system that guides the investigator in choice of method and represents a worldview that defines for its holder the nature of the “world”, his/her place in it and the possible relationship to that world and its parts”. Patton (1990:37) refers to a paradigm as worldview, a way of breaking down the complexity of the real world. Therefore, based on these definitions, I would assert that a paradigm is a framework for research and represents a worldview that defines for its holder the nature of the world. A paradigm is thus a basic set of beliefs, a set of assumptions that underpins and represents the position the researcher is willing to take.

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There are various research paradigms in which the researcher can locate himself/herself when conducting research. Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit (2004:17) mention three research paradigms, namely; the interpretative, positivistic and critical paradigms. In this study I located myself as researcher within the interpretative paradigm for a number of reasons. Firstly, I was interested in analysing and interpreting reality as experienced by those who construct it. Secondly, I had to investigate the teaching and learning process as conducted by the MCDP with a view to gaining an understanding of how adult education principles are incorporated in the training of adult learners. My task as a researcher was thus to interpret the realities that were created by the participant educators/facilitators in this study. Researchers working from an interpretative paradigm often use qualitative research methods. The reason for utilising qualitative research methods in this study was related to its purpose which was to investigate and gain an in-depth understanding of how adult education principles are incorporated in to the MCDP’s community health

education programme. Qualitative research methods namely, non-participatory observations and follow-up individual semi-structured interviews were thus used as means of data collection.

There are other aspects that are normally associated with qualitative research. These include, firstly, that the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Guba and Lincoln (1989:149) refer to this as being the "human as instrument". A person who is as "human as instrument" is able to capture the complexity and constantly changing situations, which is the human experience. Magalela (2001) supports by indicating that only a human investigator has the ability to respond to situations immediately, to summarise or clarify a situation, to respond and adapt to a situation in which other instruments cannot. In summary, the human instrument is responsive, adaptable and holistic. Secondly, qualitative research involves observation and fieldwork, which includes the researcher being physically present in the field of research and being able to present a "richly descriptive" research report (Merriam, 1998: 7-8). According to Maykut and Morehouse (1994:25-26) the aim of the qualitative researcher is to "indwell" in the situation by being physically present in areas where investigations take place and to reflect on the process.

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3.3 RESEARCH PLAN

I started my research by setting up a research plan to structure my activities. However this plan did not remain the same throughout the research process. A number of factors beyond my control as researcher influenced my research plan and I was compelled to adapt my original plan. Time constraints were the first factor. The project co-ordinator of MCDP gave me a maximum of six weeks, starting from the 06th February 2006 to the 24th March 2006 for observations and interviews. As a result of our negotiations I had to exclude the last week of February 2006 and the first week of March 2006 from my research plan as these

weeks were to be utilised for monthly tests and other forms of adult learner assessment.

In my original research plan I also wanted to observe a number of lessons conducted by each of the nine educators/facilitators of adult learners in the classrooms and conduct a focus group interview with all of them. Had I observed all the nine educators/facilitators of adult learners, I believed I would have been able to gather a great amount of data pertinent to the research questions over a number of lessons. I would have been able to thoroughly investigate the use of adult education principles by educators/facilitators of adult learners. Therefore, I aimed at observing more than one or two lessons per educator/facilitator. As a researcher I determined that I needed at least four lessons for each of the nine educators/facilitators to be able to come up with reliable data about how adult education principles were utilised in the teaching and learning processes in the classroom in this specific programme.

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Out of the nine community educators/facilitators that I had planned to observe, three indicated, for personal reasons, their unwillingness to take part in the research. Due to the fact that I had no other option, I had to change my research plan and observe the remaining six educators/facilitators who were willing to be part of the study.

As indicated, I had also planned to conduct a focus group interview with the six educators/facilitators whose lessons I observed. I had planned a focus group interview for the educators/facilitators, firstly, because focus groups include four to twelve participants (Kruger as quoted by Kingry, Tiedje & Friedman, 1990) and they are less intimidating to participants. In a group, participants feel free to respond to questions asked. Secondly, a focus group is thus “a carefully planned discussion designed to obtain perceptions on a defined area of interest in a permissive non-threatening environment” (Kringry et al, 1990:124).

The advantage of the focus group interview is that it places people in natural, real life situations and provides a stimulating and secure setting for people to express ideas without fear of criticism. In addition the synergy of a group has the potential to uncover important constructs, which may be lost with individually–generated data (Kingry et al, 1990:125). Also, group interaction could stimulate new ideas from participants. It was therefore my intent that this focus group interview would help to promote self–disclosure among the participants. Because the majority of the participants indicated to me that they were not comfortable speaking in a group, I had to adapt my plan and conduct individual semi-structured interviews. The plans for managing the observation sessions and the interviews are specified later in section **3.5** on pages **62** and **66**.

3.4 PARTICIPANTS IN THE STUDY (SAMPLE)

In any empirical research involving live subjects, it is important to specify how a sample was selected. My original plan included all the participants facilitating in the MCDP's health education programme. As the group of facilitators was so small it was not necessary to select a number of them to be observed and interviewed. As researcher I determined that in order to "answer" the research questions comprehensively, I would need to include all the facilitators in the sample. However as indicated above, my plan (including the involved participants) had to be adapted due to circumstances beyond my control.

The six participant community educators/facilitators finally included as part of the study consisted of three females and three males in the ages ranging from 25 to 35 years. In addition, they have three to four years teaching experience in the project and I believed they could contribute greatly in the aims and consequences of this study. My adapted plan thus shaped up as follows: I could observe four lessons for each of the six participant educators/facilitators spread over a period of six weeks, starting from the 06th February 2006 to the 24th March 2006, as per the negotiated timetable with the project co-ordinator. I would thus

be able to observe twenty four lessons broken down to four lessons for each of the six educators/facilitators. My area of focus was to investigate how these community educators/facilitators incorporate adult education principles in their teaching and learning methodology. I also planned to conduct individual semi-structured in-depth interviews with the six participant educators/facilitators to clarify issues that were not clear during observation sessions.

As this study was aimed at investigating the incorporation of adult education principles in MCDP, I began by acquiring the necessary permission from the project co-ordinator and the six participant educators/facilitators to conduct the study (see Appendices marked A and B). I explained my aim and intention and gave the project co-ordinator a letter wherein I requested the necessary required permission to carry out this study. I also requested a copy of the programme of courses to be presented. The programme provided me with a list containing names of educators/facilitators, contact telephone numbers, venues and times of lessons/presentations, as well as programme topics.

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3.5 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

Bogden and Biklen (1992:106) define data as,"…the rough materials researchers collect from the world they are studying". Data includes materials, which researchers record such as interview transcripts and participants' observation field notes.

In this section I will present a discussion of my plans for data collection and my motivations for the two chosen methods of data collection. In my research plan I identified two methods of data collection in order to explore the focus of the inquiry (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994). Data collection was to be accomplished primarily through non-participatory observation and individual semi-structured in-depth interviews. As the aim of this study was to establish how educators/facilitators at the MCDP incorporate adult education principles in their

teaching methodology, the participant educators/facilitators actions and words were very important. As indicated above, I used non-participatory observation as a main source of data collection together with individual semi-structured in-depth interviews. I went into each class "to observe to, to interview, to indwell …" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:440). I will now expand on each of the chosen methods in greater detail.

3.5.1 Non-participatory observation

The reason for using non-participatory observation as my main form of data collection was that it provided knowledge of the context, as well as the behaviour of the participant educators/facilitators and incidents that occurred during classes. I could thus record my observations thereof for later analysis in the light of the focus of the study. I set up an observation management plan to guide my activities. Please find the plan below labelled 3.1.

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TABLE 3.1: OBSERVATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

No	Observation dates	Codes	Name of person observed	Venue Room	Gender	Age	Areas of focus
1	06/02/2006 10/02/2006 15/02/2006 10/03/2006	O/TD:les 1 les – 2 les – 3 les - 4	Thoko Dlamini (Pseudonym)	C21	Female	25	Adult education principles
2	06/02/2006 09/02/2006 15/02/2006 10/03/2006	O/TS:les 1 les – 2 les – 3 les - 4	Thandi Sibeko (Pseudonym)	C1	Female	31	Adult education principles
3	07/02/2006 13/02/2006 14/02/2006 13/03/2006	O/VS:les 1 les – 2 les – 3 les - 4	Vusi Sithole (Pseudonym)	C21	Male	27	Adult education principles

4	08/02/2006 14/02/2006 20/02/2006 14/03/2006	O/PN:les 1 les – 2 les – 3 les - 4	Palesa Nteo (Pseudonym)	C1	Female	35	Adult education principles
5	10/02/2006 17/02/2006 24/02/2006 17/03/2006	O/TK:les 1 les – 2 les – 3 les - 4	Themba Khanyile (Pseudonym)	C1	Male	31	Adult education principles
6	20/02/2006 23/02/2006 03/03/2006 24/03/2006	O/SN:les 1 les – 2 les – 3 les - 4	Sithembiso Nxumalo (Pseudonym)	C1	Male	33	Adult education principles

My observations were recorded in the form of field notes as described by Merriam (1998:104-105). Merriam (1998) mentions that “the more complete the recording, the easier it is to analyse the data”. Using Taylor and Bodgan’s (in Merriam, 1998:105) suggestions for recalling data, I focused my attention on observing, taking field notes on what has been seen and heard, without any interpretation.

I have also included an example of an observation schedule in Appendix D, focusing on the following aspects which are included in the field notes:

- The physical setting of the venue, how space was used and the seating arrangements, including the number of learners present in each class;
- The role of educators/facilitators and that of adult learners in the training programme;
- Interactions between educators/facilitators and learners and among learners themselves during the lessons;
- Beginning and allocated time for each session.

Substantive field notes were maintained and reviewed at the end of each class

visit. Field notes included direct quotations of what participant community educators/facilitators said, comments I overheard learners making, as well as my own comments about aspects observed. Although my comments are interwoven throughout the field notes, these are labelled *"OC."* and written in italics to differentiate them from notes on observations (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:74). These notes were recorded in observation schedules (Appendix D) while I was observing to improve detailed recalling and recording of what had taken place for use in the analysis phase of the research.

3.5.2 Individual semi-structured in-depth interviews

An interview is a method of data collection that may be described as an interaction involving the interviewer and the interviewee (Marshall & Rossman, 1995). As indicated, my initial plan was to have conducted a focus group interview with the nine educators/facilitators at the MCDP, but I had to adjust it. An adjustment was brought about by, firstly, three of the nine educators/ facilitators indicating, for personal reasons, their unwillingness to take part in the research. Secondly, since the majority of the participant educators/facilitators indicated that they were not comfortable to speak in a group, I then settled for individual semi-structured in-depth interviews in order to interview the six participants. The main purpose of this method was to get information directly from the interviewees.

Some of the advantages of using individual semi-structured interviews are that they allow for probing or clarifying questions and issues not clearly understood during observation sessions. They also allow for the opportunity to expand the interviewees' responses. Patton (1990:324) says that "good questions should at minimum be open-ended, neutral, singular and clear". He adds "probes are used to deepen a response to a question".

Marshall and Rossman (1995:80) maintain that in-depth interviewing may be described as a qualitative method of data collection, which is like a “conversation with a purpose”. According to Schumacher and Mcmillan (1993:25), semi-structured interviews do not have choices from which the respondents select an answer, rather, “the question is phrased to allow for individual response. This format is flexible, and allows the interviewer to respond to situations at hand, to the emerging world-view of the respondent and the new ideas on the topic”.

Some of the essentials of an interview are that the data collected are regarded as credible and believable, so long as the data were forthcoming without pollutants and interpretations from the interviewer.The only provisos are that the interviewer should not ask “leading questions”, should prevent “contamination” of the data, and should not force the speaker into a “confessional mode” if the person is clearly not ready for it. Whatever the aim of the interview, the content of it is taken at “face value”. Therefore, the standard is guidance without interference or conversation from the interviewer (Henning et al., 2004:53).

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JOHANNESBURG

Once the community educators/facilitators had been informed about the topic of my study and had verbally consented to be interviewed, they were each given a letter with the details of my study (Appendices B and C) as well as a section in which they indicated their written permission for the interviews to be conducted and tape recorded. The participant community educators/facilitators were then guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. In planning the interview, I had given consideration to issues such as participation, venue and time, procedure, duration of interview, and signed consent forms.

Individual interviews were held as indicated on the interview management plan (Table 3.2).

TABLE 3.2: INTERVIEW MANAGEMENT PLAN

No	Date of interview	Codes	Name of person interviewed	Venue	Areas of focus
1	13/03/2006	T/TD: inter-1	Thoko Dlamini (pseudonym)	Woodwork centre	Follow-up on observations
2.	13/03/2006	T/TS: inter-1	Thandi Sibeko (pseudonym)	Woodwork centre	Follow-upon observations
3	14/03/2006	T/VS: inter-1	Vusi Sithole (pseudonym)	Woodwork centre	Follow-up on observations
4	14/03/2006	T/PN: inter-1	Palesa Nteo (pseudonym)	Woodwork centre	Follow-up on observations
5	16/03/2006	T/TK: inter-1	Themba Khanyile (pseudonym)	Woodwork centre	Follow-up on observations
6	24/03/2006	T/SN: inter-1	Sithembiso Nxumalo (pseudonym)	Woodwork centre	Follow-up on observations

The interviews were done in a quiet location. I made sure that I booked an appointment with each participant educator/facilitator so that the interview was conducted at a time when the interviewee was free, to avoid lack of concentration, and ensure a harmonious environment. A high quality tape recorder strategically placed to capture the dialogue between the interviewees and the interviewer was employed. Recordings were done with the interviewees' permission and they were re-assured that the information would not be used for any other purpose. I also promised to store the tapes in a locked facility.

I used English, isiZulu and Sesotho interchangeably for interviewing the six participant community educators/facilitators and I indicated to them to feel free to express themselves in one or all of the three languages. I am fluent in all three languages and this did not hinder my ability to conduct the interviews. Furthermore, in general, isiZulu and Sesotho are languages used for communication in Soweto. Patton (1990) encourages the use of a familiar

language, the interviewee's mother tongue, and this helped develop a good interpersonal relationship between myself and each of the participants.

Probing and clarifying questions were posed when answers were not clear or when I needed an example to illustrate what the adult educator/facilitator was saying and when I wanted to know more about their motivation or actions for thoughts. While conducting interviews, I would also observe the body language and moods of the interviewees. That is, I would look for the way the interviewee reacted during the interview, facial expressions and all the different non-verbal signals and clues. When the interviewee's facial expressions changed and it indicated tension, I rephrased the questions so as to put the interviewee back at ease. All the interviews were audio recorded and immediately transcribed (see Appendix E for a sample).

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

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Data collection and data analysis are tightly interwoven processes, and must occur simultaneously because the analysis directs the further sampling of data (Strauss & Corbin, 1990:59). According to Merriam (1998:156), data analysis is "an intuitive process" and its goal is to come up with reasonable conclusions and "generalisations based on preponderance of data" (Merriam, 1998:130).

Merriam (1998) contends that data analysis is also the process of making sense out of the data. This involves "consolidating, reducing, and interpreting" what people have said and what the researcher has "seen and heard". These meanings or understandings or insights constitute the "findings" of a study. It involves examining the meanings of "people's words and actions" (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:121).

As mentioned previously, the interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim. I used the constant comparative method as put forth by Maykut and

Morehouse (1994:126-144) to analyse the transcripts and field notes by searching for recurring themes and patterns which formed a basis for category construction. This process will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 4.

3.7 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations are principles that guide the researcher in his/her study to avoid abusing the participant educators/facilitators (Punch in Merriam, 1998:212). The findings must be used only for the reasons that the participants were told they would be used for. For this reason I chose a code of ethics based on Patton's (1990:356-357) list of provisions for use during this research process. These included "promises, reciprocity, confidentiality and informed consent". These were adhered to as they helped in conducting an ethical study. I committed myself to establishing a relationship of trust within each interview. I guaranteed the confidentiality of the interviews to the participant community educators/facilitators of adult learners by giving them pseudonyms to protect their identities (see tables 3.1 and 3.2 above).

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JOHANNESBURG

Merriam (1998:180) indicates that the researcher should get consent from all participants to conduct the research. In my case letters for permission to conduct the interviews were written to the project co-ordinator and the six participant community educators/facilitators (Appendices A and B). I received informed written consent from the project co-ordinator and participants before observing their lessons and conducting interviews.

I arranged that feedback in the form of research findings and recommendations would be made available verbally and in writing to the participants. The tapes and transcripts would be stored in a locked facility during the research process and destroyed once the study had been completed. In conclusion I committed myself to this code of ethics with every observation and interview and for the writing up of this research.

3.8 PROVISIONS FOR ENSURING RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

For the results of a study to be trustworthy, they have to possess two characteristics: validity and reliability. Merriam (1998:198) contends that "all research is concerned with producing valid and reliable knowledge in an ethical manner". The results of a study are trustworthy to the extent that there had been some accounting for their validity and reliability. Therefore, the onus is on the researcher to argue why his/her plan would yield believable, trustworthy or valid evidence (Henning et al, 2004:146). De Vos (1998:351) suggests that when researchers conduct research they have to be careful all the time that they do not get biased at any point in time as this would influence the results. Any procedure that has been selected to collect data has to be checked critically to assess the extent to which it is likely to yield valid and reliable data.

Kvale (in Henning et al, 2004:148) argues that "validity depends on good craftsmanship in an investigation, which includes continually checking, questioning and theoretically interpreting the findings". Craftsmanship means precision throughout the research process, from design to presenting the findings. It also means that the researcher would throughout the research process ensure that quality data is collected. Therefore validity incorporates checking against biasness, neglect and lack of precision and to critically question procedures followed in the research process and the decisions thereof. It also includes addressing theoretical questions that might arise during the research process (Henning et al, 2004:148-149). I therefore argue that the design logic of my study, including the complimentary methods of data collection: non-participatory observation and individual semi-structured in-depth interviews, link very well with the research question and allowed me to collect data, that would ensure valid and reliable results.

According to Anastacy (in Gladding, 2000: 508), validity is the degree to which a test actually measures what it is purposed to measure. Merriam (1998) indicates that there is internal and external validity to be considered in any research process.

Internal validity in qualitative studies touches on two important issues (Merriam, 1989). In her discussion of internal validity, she makes reference to the confidence or trust other people have in the ways with which the study has been conducted and the findings of the study. To this end I as an instrument of data collection have tried to make sure that the results are trustworthy and make sense. As reliability and internal validity are so intertwined in research, the following measures, which I, as human instrument, have undertaken in the course of this study, aim to enhance the study's reliability and internal validity.

I began by declaring and explaining my assumptions and presuppositions at the beginning of the study. Secondly, I attempted to ensure that the inferences drawn from this study were consistent with the data collected by providing a clear, unambiguous "audit trail" (Guba & Lincoln, 1989:243). This I did by providing samples of original field notes, unitised data, provisional categories and the discovery sheet (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:146). I have also tried to describe in detail how decisions were made throughout the research process and how the data was collected. I did explain in detail that initially I had planned to observe a number of lessons conducted by each of the nine educators/facilitators of adult learners in the classrooms and also conduct a focus group interview with all of them. A number of factors beyond my control as researcher influenced my research plan. These have already been outlined earlier on pages **58 and 60**.

I also created an audit trail to show that the inferences drawn from this study are consistent with data collected. It also allows people to "walk" through my work from the beginning to the end of my research so that they understand the path I took and are thus able to judge the trustworthiness of my outcomes. Guba and

Lincoln (in Merriam, 1998:207) compare an audit trail to an independent judge who can authenticate the findings of a study by following the trail of the researcher. I also provided a rich, thick description of the study through which the reader, after studying the findings of the research, will be in a position to determine what is appropriate for his/her own situation.

The unitised data and provisional categories (see table 4.2) were utilised in accordance with the constant comparative method of data analysis as set out by Maykut and Morehouse (1994:146). Once I had completed the data analysis process and identified the categories and sub-categories, I conducted "member checks" (Merriam, 1998:204; Henning et al, 2004:149) by taking data and tentative interpretations back to the people from whom they were derived and asking them if the results are plausible. This communication process with the six community educators/facilitators of adult learners is another way of finding out whether an observation is "valid" (Henning et al, 2004:149). This idea has been theorised by most qualitative research authors–checking whether "the members" agree with the researcher's data (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Le Compte & Preissle, 1993; Merriam in Henning et al, 2004:149) Thereafter I conducted peer examination by asking a colleague to walk through my audit trail and comment on the findings as they emerged (Merriam, 1998:204).

Traditionally, reliability in a research design is based on the assumption that there is a single reality, and that studying it repeatedly will yield the same results. However, Merriam (1998:206) argues that the traditional definitions of the term reliability as the extent to which the research findings can be "replicated" is somewhat of a misfit when applied to qualitative research. In their explanation of what constitutes reliability in qualitative research she makes reference to the terms consistency and dependability, as coined by Guba and Lincoln (1989). The terms refer to whether the results of the investigations are consistent with the data collected and, also, that they can be depended on. Guba and Lincoln (1989) suggest that rather than demand an outsider to get the same results, a

researcher must wish outsiders to agree that, given the same data collected, the results make sense - they are consistent and dependable. Consequently, readers should depend on and be able to practice and implement the findings of the study in their different communities.

External validity, on the other hand, is concerned with the extent to which the findings of one study can be applied to other situations (Merriam, 1998:207). However, external validity, according to Guba and Lincoln (1989) is only possible if the study has internal validity since there is no point in asking whether meaningless information has any general applicability. In qualitative research, external validity is of importance for the reader who, after reading the research, is in a position to decide what is appropriate and fitting to his/her own situation (Merriam, 1998:211).

At the heart of external validity lies rational discourse. Research is a rationalised version of reality, through the skills of a researcher who test his/her worth through rational argumentation and assessment. Selected members of communities using, for example, seminars, symposia, and among others, conferences could debate and communicate research findings and theories. Therefore validity comes from being able to get the researcher's ideas accepted in communities by opening them to possible falsification and also to publish them for even broader communication (Henning et al, 2004:149).

Out of reliable and valid data, I foresee that, through meeting the training needs of educators/facilitators of adult learners at the MCDP, there would be improvements in as far as the presentation of a health education programme is concerned. This is in line with pragmatic validity that has to do with the usability of findings and also the empowerment of educators/facilitators in their everyday practice and lives. Pragmatic validation rests on observations and interpretations, with a commitment to action on the interpretations (Henning et al, 2004:150). This is supported by Kvale (in Henning et al, 2004:149) who says that "to

pragmatists truth is whatever assists us to take actions that produce the desired results".

To increase the external validity of the study, I have tried to provide in this research report, a "thick description" of the research context, processes and outcomes making it possible for others to understand the context and therefore experience it vicariously (Guba & Lincoln, 1989:260-264; Merriam, 1998). To elucidate this description, I will deal with the presentation of data in chapter four.

3.9 CONCLUSION

In this chapter I have presented a detailed description of the research paradigm within which this study is located. I have also provided a layout of my research plan and expanded on my decision to conduct qualitative research using non-participatory observation and individual semi-structured interviews as data collection methods. This research focused on the application of adult education principles by educators/facilitators of adult learners in the MCDP. A sample of six participant community educators/facilitators was repeatedly observed and then interviewed once thereafter, taking into account the code of ethics to be adhered to when conducting a qualitative research. Finally, I describe the provisions that I undertook to increase the validity and reliability of the research. The valid and reliable data collected was then analysed and presented as final patterns of meaning in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Analysis of data is a process that requires analytical craftsmanship and the ability to capture understanding of the data in writing (Henning et al, 2004:101). In the process, a researcher will show his/her understanding of design logic. Holliday (in Henning et al, 2004:101) says that "a researcher will be able to fit the analysis procedures with the methodological position of the study and consistently and coherently manage the analysis and interpretation process according to the principles of the study design".

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Since the initial part of data analysis was conducted during data collection, my aim in this chapter was to convert the "raw" data collected to final patterns of meaning. As I will indicate in this chapter, I used the constant comparative method of data analysis as outlined by Merriam (1998) and Maykut and Morehouse (1994). The process involved coding data pages, unitising data, discovery process, inductive category coding and formulating the rules of inclusion. Thus in this chapter I will firstly indicate how I analysed the data collected, through non-participatory observations and individual semi - structured in–depth interviews. I then discuss the process of coding data into provisional categories. Thereafter I present the provisional categories with units of meaning and the rules of inclusion. I conclude this chapter by categorising rules of inclusion into outcome statements which formed the framework of the findings described in chapter 5 .

4.2 CODING DATA

As previously mentioned, the constant comparative method was used for data analysis. At the heart of this method, is the construction of categories and sub-categories, derived from the data, which are continuously compared with incidents and, among others participant community educators/facilitators' remarks (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:127-143; Merriam, 1998:178). I followed this process of data analysis in conjunction with data collection as Merriam (1998:180 -181) advises.

Data was collected through non-participatory observation and individual semi-structured in-depth interviews. I used Taylor and Bogdan's suggestions (in Merriam, 1998:105) to record data. I paid attention and blocked out everything else when observing, taking field notes without any interpretation pertaining to the unit of analysis. As previously mentioned, I was interested in the application of adult education principles by participant educators/facilitators of adult learners in a community health education programme. The observations were recorded in observation schedules/sheets. The interviews which were tape recorded were transcribed verbatim (Henning et al, 2004:104). Maykut and Morehouse (1994:127), suggest that each observation and interview be coded to their source, in order to facilitate working with different observations and interviews. I will explain this process in the next paragraph.

My lessons observation process was conducted with Thandi, Thoko, Vusi, Palesa, Themba and Sithembiso (pseudonyms). After I had completed observations as per the observation management plan (Table 3.1), I then transcribed and coded the data to source. This was done in a way that enabled easy identification of the person whose lessons I observed. The code for observation schedules comprised of a symbol "O" which meant "observation schedule data", followed by the first letters of the name and surname given to the

participant educator/facilitator of adult learners and les -1 for the first lesson observed. For example, the code O/TS: les-1:1 means first lesson observation of Thandi Sibeko's class and 1 for the page number in the observation schedule. Since I also had an interview with her, the code comprising of a symbol "T" which meant "transcribed interview data", followed by the first letters of the name and surname was given to the same participant educator/facilitator. For example, the code T/TS-1 means transcribed interview with Thandi and 1 for the page number[1]. For lesson observation and interview dates and codes refer to tables **3.1** and **3.2.**

These codes were then placed at the top right hand of every page of the observation schedules and transcripts. Examples of an observation schedule and an interview transcript are shown in appendices D and E respectively. Similarly, observations done and interviews held with the other participant community educators/facilitators were also coded. In the same manner after coding the data, I made photocopies of the original data set. I set aside the original data set and used photocopies for unitising and subsequent data analysis. By keeping the original copy intact, I could fall back on the original data if something happened to my copy or when I wanted to go back to get the meaning in context.

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4.3 UNITISING DATA

Once the data pages had been photocopied I started the analysis on the 25/03/2006. I began this process by reading through my observation notes and the transcript of my first interview with Thandi. I read the copies several times in order to form a holistic understanding of what was contained within observations and the interview and before any formal meaning could be attributed to a single unit.

Footnote [1] In Chapters 4 and 5 I will use the following symbols to indicate reference to observation data (O/TS; O/TD; O/VS; O/PN; O/TK and O/SN) and interview data (T/TS; T/TD; T/VS; T/PN; T/TK and T/SN)

My next step was to look for “chunks” or “units of meaning” as described by Maykut and Morehouse (1994:128) a process that is referred to as “unitising the data”.

A unit of meaning is a potentially meaningful segment of data that reveals information relevant to the study (Zwane, 2005:38). By using a marker, units of meaning (that included a number of sentences) were marked and labelled (Henning et al, 2004:104). I separated one unit of meaning from the next by drawing a line across the page and writing a word or phrase, which contained the essence of the unit of meaning in the margin. The same process was followed for both the field notes from the observation sessions and the individual interviews. For example, during observations in Thandi’s classes, I picked up that although the environment was conducive to learning, the set up of chairs and tables did not allow for easy formation of groups for group activities and interactions among learners at any given time of a lesson. I wrote “physical setting of venue: conducive learning environment; chairs and tables in fixed rows” in the margin. Again, in most or all of Thoko’s lessons, I noted that while she spent all class time talking, her learners appeared bored and were passive for the entire duration of lessons. I wrote the phrase *“Top-down methods and approaches used by facilitators”* in the margin as descriptive of this particular unit of meaning.

Also, during observation in all of Sithembiso and Vusi’s classes, I noted that most learners arrive late in the mornings for classes and that regular absenteeism among them seemed rife. The phrase *“multiple roles of learners ignored : late coming and absenteeism of learners”* was extracted and written in the margin as descriptive of this particular unit of meaning.

The same process was followed for both the field notes from the observation sessions and the individual interviews. For example, Thandi’s response: “*I normally ask learners questions towards the end of lessons to find out if they*

have understood what I was teaching", to my question of how and to what extent she actively engages learners in her teachings or lessons was separated and a phrase describing its meaning was written in the margin. The words *"strategies to promote active participation"* were written in the margin as descriptive of this particular unit of meaning. Another example of a unit of meaning from the transcript of Themba is *" …. we need to change teaching styles because learners become bored if you teach them in a similar way, everyday like children ……"*. I extracted the phrase *" strategies to eliminate boredom and disinterest among learners"* and wrote it in the margin as a unit of meaning.

From the transcript of Palesa I picked up her response, *"the multiple role involvement of adult learners in this programme leads to drop-outs. Most learners have always complained that they could not perform well let alone be punctual, because they have to prepare and take their children to nurseries and schools, and in the afternoons they have to do house work".* The phrase *"learner drop-out due to multiple roles"* was extracted and written in the margin as a unit of meaning.

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After having completed identifying and marking units of meaning in the field notes and transcripts linked to Thandi, Thoko, Vusi, Sithembiso, Themba and Palesa, I then proceeded to categorise them accordingly. These units of meaning were cut out of the original field notes (observation schedule) and transcripts and pasted on A5 cards to facilitate further handling. Additional information was written at the back of the cards to help me to remember certain conditions that might influence that unit of meaning later on (Merriam, 1998:161). All the units of data pasted on cards were then transferred to my discovery sheet, where I could begin the process of linking emerging words, concepts and ideas, to find recurring themes that could then form the basis for provisional categories.

4.4 DISCOVERY PROCESS

As Maykut and Morehouse (1994:132) put it, "the discovery process is a beginning search for the important meanings in what people have said to you in interviews and/or what you have observed in the field, in documents ……" I started searching for meaning by re-reading the units of meaning I had identified from the observations and follow-up interviews with the participant educators/facilitators of adult learners. While doing this I kept in mind the list of groupings that I had extracted from the first transcript and observation schedules/sheets with Thandi. During this process I was checking to see if there were recurring words, phrases and themes that I observed and what the interviewees were saying. This formed the basis of the provisional categories.

From the observation of twenty–four lessons and follow-up individual semi-structured interviews with the six participant educators/facilitators, approximately twenty provisional categories emerged. Some of these are listed in Table 4.1.
The knowledge I acquired from my study of the theory of adult and community education and my own experience in education helped in the construction and naming of these categories.

TABLE 4.1 SOME PROVISIONAL CATEGORIES FROM OBSERVATIONS AND INTERVIEWS WITH THE SIX PARTICIPANTS

• Lack of active participation by learners	• Learners not involved in designing a programme
• Adult educators do most of the talking and demonstrations	• Learners not consulted in deciding what is to be learnt
• Lack of respect by learners towards other learners and facilitators	• Lack of group activities
• Learners are passive in class	• Little learner interaction
• Top-down method	• Learners seemed bored
• Environment conducive to learning present and psychological environment absent	• Learners seem disinterested
• Learners appear reluctant to answer	

4.5 INDUCTIVE CATEGORY CODING

Using the discovery sheet of recurring concepts and themes, I selected one as a provisional category, for example “lack of active participation”, and wrote it down on an index card attached to a large A2 sheet. I then carefully looked through the all unitised cards to see if I could find a card that fitted with this provisional category. For example: no apparent engagement with learning (O/VS: les -1:2). (Observation schedule / Vusi Sithole lesson 1, page 2). I then placed this card on the A2 sheet mentioned above. During this process, I used the “feels like” or “looks like” criteria to decide on cards that could be placed into this provisional category. Lincoln and Guba (in Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:136) indicate that the “look/feel–alike” criteria can be used to describe the emergent process of categorising qualitative data. These units of meaning (data cards) were placed under the “lack of active participation” category. I followed the same process with all other provisional categories and unitised cards. Data that did not fit into a particular provisional category, was categorised elsewhere, or tentatively named to begin a new provisional category. I continued with the process until I had several cards in a number of provisional categories.

4.6 FORMULATING A RULE OF INCLUSION

Once each provisional category contained approximately six to eight units of meaning, Lincoln and Guba (in Maykut & Morehouse, 1994 :138) suggest writing the rule of inclusion in the form of a propositional statement, which conveys the meaning contained in the data cards collected under a category name. A rule of inclusion is the rule that serves “as the basis for including (or excluding) subsequent data cards in the category” (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:139). Also, the rule of inclusion was a critical step in arriving at my research outcomes. For example, from observations, I clustered together: learners sit passively; learners appear to fall asleep; learners seemed bored; learners seemed disinterested; learners seemed lost; learners showed unwillingness to get involved; no group

interactions into a provisional category entitled "lack of active participation by learners". Using this example, the rule of inclusion I formulated for this provisional category was as follows: "facilitators spend most of class time talking and very little in promoting learners' engagement in learning" (see table 4.2). Table 4.2 is an excerpt of a provisional category, including the rule of inclusion as well as direct quotes from the interviews and observations I made to enable a clearer understanding of the data analysis process. I followed the same process with all the unitised data cards clustered together under other provisional coding categories.

The purpose of the rule of inclusion was to clearly define and refine the emerging categories. I kept going back and forth to check whether there were any cards that overlap in categories. In instances where I found that there was an overlap, I had to refine those categories and where necessary the rule of inclusion. I used this process to analyse and classify all the data from the interviews and the observation field notes. All subsequent data cards were thus allocated to categories on the basis of the refined rule of inclusion for each category.

TABLE 4.2: EXCERPT FROM A PROVISIONAL CATEGORY, WITH UNITS OF MEANING, AND THE RULE OF INCLUSION

Lack of active participation by learners	Rule of Inclusion: Facilitators spent most of class time talking and very little in promoting learners' engagement in learning.
Learners seemed lost, bored and disinterested	OT/TS : les - 2 "I tried to catch a nap as the facilitator was trying to explain something". *This is a comment noted from one learner during observations in one of Thandi's presentations.*
Very few group interactions and activities	O/TD : les – 1 to 4 I observed in Thoko's four lessons that there were very few group activities, and the same situation prevailed in the presentations by other facilitators.

Facilitators spend all class time talking	T/TK : inter - 1 : 2 In a follow-up interview with Themba he commented: " I have a lot of work to do and learners are to sit attentively and listen with very minimal questioning". O/TK : les - 1 In Themba's class I noted a comment from one learner showing signs of boredom "*this guy likes talking too much".*
Learners showed unwillingness to get involved	OT/PN : les – 1 to 4 I observed in all of Palesa's four lessons that learners sit passively, showing signs of unwillingness to get involved except when writing something.
No learner engagement / no opportunity to practice skills acquired	T/SN : inter - 1 "Our programme does not make provision for learners to do practical work in hospitals and even with paramedic institutions".

These rules of inclusion were then compared to identify those that stood alone and those that formed salient relationships and patterns. The table above is an example of the process I followed in analysing and categorising all the data collected in the course of this study. The outcomes of these comparisons were then written as outcome statements (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:144), and formed the framework of the findings. Outcomes were prioritised according to the outcome proposition in the light of their importance in contributing to the focus of the inquiry and their prominence in the data (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:158). The frequency with which the units of meaning and categories recurred was an indication of their importance. Excerpts or quotations, which contributed significantly to each outcome statement, were identified and selected for use in the next stage of the report.

4.7 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I indicated how data collected, through non–participatory observations and individual semi-structured interviews was analysed. Thereafter,

I discussed how the analysed data was coded into provisional categories, which were then presented with units of meaning and rules of inclusion. Rules of inclusion were then formulated into outcome statements which formed the framework of the findings to be presented in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE
FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

As stated in chapter one the aim of this study was to investigate how adult education principles are incorporated by educators/facilitators of adult learners in a health education programme offered by the MCDP. The observations I made and the follow-up interviews held assisted me in arriving at a deeper understanding of the incorporation of adult education principles in an adult and community education programme. They also enabled me to "walk a mile in the participants' shoes" and experience the world in a similar way (Maykut & Morehouse, 1994:18).

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In this chapter, after having identified a number of themes or categories and sub-categories from the data analysis process, I will present them as they reflect the purpose of the research and serve as a basis for the findings of this study. The consolidated, analysed data will be presented in order of priority (Table 5.1), against the background of the theoretical and conceptual framework. Then I will discuss the research findings and their implications in the light of the research questions. Also, with reference to the training needs of the MCDP facilitators, I will give a short description of a proposal for training. This chapter concludes with a summary of findings and a few recommendations that are based on them.

In this section, **Table 5.1 Table of Categories and Sub-categories and the Outcome Statements as derived from the process of data analysis**

CATEGORY AND SUB-CATEGORY	OUTCOME STATEMENT
1. Most or all adult education principles are neglected • Multiple roles of adult learners ignored • There was lack of engagement - no evidence of active learning strategies - lecture method dominates - no group work - no evidence of praxis • The psychological safety of learners overlooked - little respect for adult learners - no sound relationships • There was little or no immediacy of learning	In the MCDP health education programme it appears that the prescribed syllabus and the lack of training of facilitators resulted in most or all of the adult education principles being ignored. To a large extent the following important principles were neglected: the multiple roles of adult learners, a lack of learner engagement, an overlooking of learners' psychological safety and little immediacy of learning.
2. Training needs of facilitators • Planning and facilitating learning events for adult learners - Generalised characteristics of adult learners - Implement adult education principles	Based on the empirical research of the study, it appears as though the facilitators in the MCDP's health education programme require in - depth training in planning and facilitating learning events for adult learners.

The findings in table 5.1 (above) will now be dealt with in turn.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the research it appears that several factors hamper effective teaching and learning in the MCDP's health education programme. Based on classroom observations and interviews with six of the facilitators, it emerged that most of them feel that they have not achieved their specific lessons and learning outcomes. This could impact negatively on the project and its outcomes. In the following sections I will discuss the findings in the order in which they are presented in table 5.1 above and weave the applicable literature with my findings

and intersperse this with comments/extracts from participants so that the reader may "hear" the voices of the participants throughout.

5.2.1 MOST OR ALL ADULT EDUCATION PRINCIPLES ARE LARGELY NEGLECTED IN THE PLANNING AND EXECUTION OF THE COMMUNITY HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME

In my view, based on twenty-four classroom lesson observations made over a period of six weeks (from 06th February 2006 to 24th March 2006) and the semi – structured individual interviews conducted with the participant educators/facilitators, the use of adult education principles in the MCDP's health education programme appear to be largely neglected. Also, it was evident that facilitators did not, either through lack of knowledge or inability to implement, take into consideration the generalised characteristics of adult learners and adapt their teaching approaches accordingly (O/PN: les.; O/TD: les. ; O/SN: les.).

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5.2.1.1 Multiple roles of adult learners are ignored

From the resultant findings in this research it appears that facilitators in the MCDP have largely ignored the multiple roles of adult learners. From my observations of all the lessons conducted by Sithembiso, Vusi, Palesa and Thoko, I have found instances that reflected ignorance by facilitators of the multiple roles that adult learners have to fulfill. For example, on one occasion before a lesson (O/SN: les-1) could be conducted, I overheard one learner asking if the facilitator would give her extra lessons the following day because "*she needed to get home to attend to other matters".* The facilitator, Sithembiso responded to the request by saying, *" I have work to cover and I have to finish the section today because tomorrow I have something else to do and I would not be able to help you".* The facilitator was seemingly driven by the content to be completed. In addition there didn't appear to be any support systems in place for

adult learners who miss some lessons due to other commitments or responsibilities.

Another instance that reflected ignorance of the multiple roles that adult learners have was when Thoko, after conducting a lesson (O/TD: les-2), gave learners homework. Learners protested to the homework being given to them on a Friday and had to be submitted the following Monday. One learner said : *"We don't have time over weekends to do homework, please we request to submit it on Tuesday or Wednesday. We need to attend to funerals, ensure that clothes are washed and have other obligations to honour".* Another learner quickly stood up and said: *"I will not be there to do homework over the weekend. I am going to Rustenburg. There is death in the family".* In response the facilitator said : *"I need this homework in the morning … eh!!….I will not accept anything that comes after Monday. If you don't submit my assignment ….You do it at your own risk. Remember, we are working for a certificate that will help you to find employment….".*

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In a follow-up interview (T/TD: inter-1) with Thoko on the issue of giving homework to adult learners on a Friday, amid their other weekend commitments, she was still adamant and she said : *"look …. teaching and learning are daily processes …. you do not just decide when to teach or learn, there is a programme that needs to be adhered to. Even on homework, learners cannot choose days on which to do homework …. If people are serious about this programme, they will do homework and present it according to schedule … and that's it".* Through her responses, Thoko did not seem to understand that adult learners, as adults by definition (Gravett, 2001), have many other multiple roles to fulfill particularly during weekends as cited by one learner who requested for a postponement in submitting homework. Also, by not listening to the request by the learner and the protest from the class, the facilitator neglected one important adult education principle: multiple role involvement of learners (Vella, 1994).

In addition, some female learners have families - with multiple work loads and apart from their role as learners, most women shoulder the responsibility for home maintenance and child care (Collins, 1998). Almost all women with children share their time between caring for their children and performing their work as adult learners. On this matter, I noted that female learners had to make compromises in certain roles. I believe that a woman cannot be 100% committed to her academic studies on the one hand and her family responsibilities on the other. The above finds support in Dirkx and Prenger (1997:2) who state that adult learners enrolled in developmental education programmes face pressure and competing demands, such as child care needs. Hence the need to take into consideration the multiple role involvement of adult learners in community programmes is expressed by learners themselves. For example, in one lesson conducted by Sithembiso (O/SN: les-1), one learner who had other responsibilities said : *"I am unable to do homework. I have to take care of my children as they come from school".* In response, Sithembiso (T/SN: inter-1) stated that, *"I have learners in my class who will never submit homework, instead they will make excuses of eh!....not having done homework because they had to take their children to hospitals, they had to cook or they had other things to do. There is no single day without excuses".* The facilitator did not seem to understand the extra burden that female learners carry. These multiple work loads of adult learners have a detrimental impact on families and personal lives, as Lorber (1994:187) noted in relation to women having to cope as learners and still do house work and child care.

Generally, an adult learner would be somebody whose main life task is not related to education and therefore have many other responsibilities or life tasks. Therefore, an adult's life situation is characterised by various roles such as worker, employer, spouse, parent, etc (Gravett: 2001:6). Adults typically add the role of learner to their other full time, multiple roles (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). They bring these roles with them into the educational setting, making the multiple role involvement of adults a significant element to be considered in the teaching

and learning processes (Squires in Gravett, 2001:6-7).Therefore, adult and community education programmes, the MCDP included, should take these roles into consideration in terms of facilitating meaningful learning in adults. This bears out the observation of Gray (1994:81) that community education programmes, the MCDP included, fail to recognise the multiple roles played by adult learners. Failure to take the multiple roles of learners into consideration may result in the programme not achieving its outcomes.

Another problem that appeared to arise as a result of learners' multiple roles and that wasn't sufficiently considered by the programme facilitators was the staring time. Most of the participant educators/facilitators indicated their inability to commence lessons at 08H00 in the mornings, as a result of late coming. Thoko (T/TD: inter-1), a facilitator, had the following to say : *"Oh!* (shaking her head), *I don't know how to explain it ….. it is so difficult to cope with all the work I am faced with. Sometimes I get so confused not knowing where to start as a result of most learners arriving late".* Late coming and absenteeism were a serious matter caused by the facilitators' inability to take cognisance of the multiple role involvement that needed to be addressed by, among others, applying and implementing adult education principles. Through the lessons that I observed, learners appear to have time management problems due to, among others, family responsibilities. This commitment to other roles, apart from being learners, impacts negatively in the teaching and learning processes and in as far as completing the syllabi is concerned. Caffarella (1999:157) stresses that it is important for programme planners and facilitators to ensure and take care that the times chosen for lessons fit into the learners' personal schedules as adults. Some learners had indicated to participant educators/facilitators that they had to take their children to nursery schools and that the starting time of the programme was problematic. Some facilitators also seemed willing to address this issue. For example Vusi remarked *"I wish the MCDP had its own nursery school so that we minimise late coming and be able to start on time".* Also, Themba (T/TK:

inter-1) proposed that "*maybe we need to start our day at 09H00 instead of 08H00 to accommodate late comers".*

Yet another facilitator, Palesa (T/PN: inter -1) stated that *"Most learners have always complained that they could not perform well let alone be punctual because they have to prepare and take their children to nurseries and schools and in the afternoons they have to do house work".* Another facilitator, Sithembiso (T/SN: inter -1) complained of child and family care as a possible factor that may result in the MCDP programme not achieving its outcomes. He said *"child and family responsibilities is the main reason for not progressing at the MCDP. Learners show no commitment to punctuality. If you ask, they will tell you about their family problems. As a result they are regularly late and ultimately absent from class to attend to other obligations".* Therefore, the more compelling the commitments are, the more an educational programme has to display its worth or significance and take into account the multiple roles of adult learners, if interest and involvement are to be sustained throughout its life span. (Galbraith, 1991:98). To this effect, he and others like Tight (1996:40) and Dirkx and Prenger (1997:2) argue that in order to capture and sustain the motivation of adult learners, facilitators and planners of adult and community education programmes have to realise that adults have multiple roles and responsibilities to cater for and therefore face pressure from competing demands, such as family and employment, for their time, attention and effort.These demands compete with the provision of education for part of the time and involvement that an individual may possess (Galbraith, 1991:98). These according to him, are factors to be taken into consideration when designing educational programmes for them. Late coming and absenteeism were a serious matter caused by the neglect of the multiple role involvement that needed to be addressed by, among others, applying and implementing adult education principles.

Therefore, based on the findings mentioned, I argue that adult learners, as adults by definition, should have time to attend to their other multiple roles – which of

course should not impact significantly on engagement in their educational programme. If their roles are not taken into consideration, they might end up dropping out of the education programme because, unlike children, education is not their first priority.

5.2.1.2 Lack of engagement of learners

It seems that theorists in the field of adult education (Brookfield, 1990; Vella, 1994; Gravett, 2001) are in agreement that, in order for learners to appropriate new knowledge, they must be actively engaged in the learning process. To some facilitators such as Thandi (O/TS: les-2), Palesa (O/PN: les-3) and Themba (O/TK: les-1), active engagement meant forcing learners to do or say something during lessons. By "force" this study refers to instances where facilitators hand picked and/or singled out a learner(s) from the entire class, and whether the learner was ready or not, s/he had to respond to a question asked. For example, in one of the lessons conducted by Thandi (O/TS: les - 2) learners were forced to give answers to questions asked, *"You….. answer the question",* pointing at one learner at a time, which then resulted in that particular learner looking embarrassed as the rest of the class waiting for a response from him/her. Through her actions, Thandi did not create an environment conducive to learning because learners, possibly, felt unwelcomed, threatened and unsafe. Consequently, hand picked learners lose confidence in themselves and could definitely fail to give the "right" answers. In the absence of an environment conducive to learning, effective teaching and learning cannot take place.

Other situations I observed in Themba (O/TK: les -1) and Palesa (O/PN: les–3) classes respectively, were that adult learners were required to demonstrate an activity related to first aid. This proved to be unsuccessful as adult learners unwillingly took part in the demonstrations. The facilitators had to use "force" to make them demonstrate the activity by pretending that one learner instantly collapsed after knowing her HIV status and the rest of the class were required to

assist her in recovering. Learners appeared unwilling and reluctant to do the exercise. Although Gravett (2001:32) states that learning depends on the active involvement of adult learners, active engagement and/or learning by doing does not imply forcing learners to participate. Adult learners, as adults by definition, should have the freedom to decide for themselves whether they want to participate or not. Facilitators have to maintain an inviting climate for adult learners to engage willingly and freely instead of forcing them. In the absence of an inviting climate, one important principle of adult learning, that adults learn better by doing or through active engagement with the learning content, is ignored.

In most of the lessons I observed, I went in to check the application of active learning strategies such as dialogue, demonstrations – which of course were lacking. Also, on the same issue of lack of engagement of learners, and in a follow – up interview Thandi (T/TS: inter-1) said: *"I normarly engage learners by asking them questions towards the end of lessons".* In another interview with Thoko (T/TD : inter - 1), she responded to the same question by stating *" I don't have time to make all learners demonstrate an activity or allow them to conduct an experiement or engage in a dialogue ….there is no time. This is a six – month programme and it needs to be fully completed …… otherwise learners will exit the programme with very little information from me".*

In addition, from my observations of classroom practice it is clear that active learning strategies such as learner participation and involvement through, among others, dialogue, learner presentation and small group work followed by reporting (Knowles in Vella, 1994; Gravett, 2001), were lacking in most of the lessons (O/SN: les-1 to 4; O/TK: les-1 to 4 : O/TD: les -1 to 4). Instead of guiding, mediating and being co-learners (Gravett, 2001:21) in their lessons, I observed that facilitators such as Sithembiso, Themba and Thoko spent all class time talking and neglected the application of active learning strategies. Vella (1994:27) states that adult learners can create knowledge by engaging in various forms of

learning such as dialogues, learning groups, community action and study groups. This implies that facilitators should do a lot of listening and facilitation instead of spending all class time talking.

Based on classroom observations I made, it is clear that most or all of the participant/facilitators used the lecture method, which dominated classroom interactions. In one lesson conducted by Themba (O/TK: les -1),I noted how one learner, clearly annoyed and showing signs of boredom said "*this guy likes talking too much"* referring to the facilitator. Themba (T/TK: inter-1) had this to say in regard to facilitators dominating their lessons, *"…we need to change teaching styles because learners become bored if you teach them in a similar way, everyday like children …..".* Also, in most of the lessons I observed there were learners, who by their body language suggested that lessons were uninteresting and boring.

Incidents that indicated that lessons were uninteresting and boring included: some learners were looking outside through windows; in the middle of a lesson, learners asking to go out of the classroom; learners talking among themselves and others dozing off. I also noted one learner answering a cell phone call during a lesson conducted by Vusi (O/VS: les -3). Immediately after the lesson I confronted the learner about cell phone conversations during lessons and she said : *"These lessons are so boring that I switch my phone on and when I receive a call, I answer. I don't miss anything significant in the lesson".* From my observations of these lessons, it will appear that active learning strategies should be applied during class times to eradicate the incidents mentioned above. It appeared this was as a result of the dominance of the lecture method.

In most of my observations of the lessons conducted by the six facilitators, teaching and learning in the mentioned health education programme is characterised by an educator/facilitator centred approach. As already mentioned a top-down lecture method was mostly used where the educator is regarded as

the sole provider of knowledge and information. The facilitators gave instructions and decided on what had to be done using their authoritative powers in, among others, the content of the course to be learned and the applicable methods/strategies. This leads to a violation of the generalised characteristic and principle: that adult learners are ready to learn what is related to their life tasks and life roles and that they learn best by doing. What I observed in the classrooms was confirmed by Sithembiso (T/SN: inter -1) who said *"I believe in a teacher centred approach to teaching and learning. I am the one with knowledge and I must share that knowledge with the learners. Yes, learners have knowledge but not as much as I have. Adults are here because they want knowledge …..so let's give them the knowledge".* It would appear that Sithembiso, although he acknowledged that learners do have knowledge which they bring through accumulated experience into learning activities, implied that there were like empty vessels that needed to be filled with information that they wanted by having registered for the programme.

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The dominating authority of the educator/facilitator in teaching and learning processes was also confirmed when, in one lesson (O/SN: les-1) conducted, one learner asked a question in isiZulu, about the chances of surviving on using African or traditional herbs *"u muthi wo ku lapha isifo se nqulaza"* to cure the HIV and AIDS epidemic. Sithembiso answered very quickly and said: "You *are not going to tell me about your African herbs* (*u muthi we sintu*) here*, is that clear!, I am telling you about counseling to be provided to victims of HIV and AIDS and that the disease is incurable ….. eh!! but you still talk about herbs to cure the epidemic. You must learn to listen".* Through his response, the facilitator ignored that the adult learner was bringing in learners' prior knowledge and experience, accurate or not (Gravett, 2001) about the traditional/african way of attempting to cure the disease and neglected to incorporate this into the discussion or lesson. This is some evidence that, most facilitators, using the lecture method, appear to act as the sole "owners" and providers of knowledge and information. Also, the facilitator neglected using this opportunity as a generative theme/springboard for

learner participation to dispel myths associated with AIDS, which could have important implications for the spread of the disease in this community.

Also, one facilitator (Vusi , O/VS: les -3) conducted a lesson about resuscitating an unconscious person who had just been told by a doctor that s/he is HIV positive. The facilitator gave instructions on how he expected the unconscious person to be resuscitated, step by step, with no deviations allowed, even after learners have voiced their dissatisfaction by simultaneously shouting *“ no!! no !!”.* By objecting to what Vusi was saying, their actions indicated that they knew of other methods or resuscitating an unconscious person. They wanted to engage in learning by bringing in their accumulated knowledge and experience into the discussion. Vusi, it appeared, regarded himself as the sole “owner” and provider of knowledge and information, thereby implying that views and suggestions from learners, with their quality knowledge and experience on regaining consciousness, were not welcomed.

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

In one other lesson conducted by Thoko (O/TD: les -1) on the topic **“Effects and consequences of rape”** I noted her explanation that rape occurred mainly after people have indulged in a drinking spree with strangers. She indicated to the class that she was not going to accept any comments or views outside “liquor and rape”, even after some learners had indicated that there are other factors that may lead to rape. This is what she said *“look guys …. the majority of rape cases in the townships are deliberately caused by males and females who go drinking until late in the night. When the female (victim), after enjoying drinks, wanted to go home, the male would refuse and the whole scenario would end by having the two sleeping together without consensus….and that’s rape due to liquor and drunkenness”.* She stood her ground in an authoritative voice and refused to acknowledge the experience and knowledge that learners might have on rape matters. When learners wanted to comment or respond, the facilitator would immediately stop them before they could say a word.

Also, in a follow-up interview held with her (T/TD: inter-1), she was still adamant that most rape cases emanated from excessive drinking and that she was not prepared to accept anything to the contrary by having said : *" I will not allow class time to be wasted by all sorts of debates, arguments and stories. Remember, my area of focus is mainly HIV and AIDS which to a certain extent emanates from rape incidents. These incidents add to the escalating HIV and AIDS related deaths. We, therefore need to accept that the whole issue around rape is liquor. I understand that there are other factors that might lead to rape, but those are very few for us to refer to them in the context of that lesson you observed".* Her response was after I had asked her "why didn't you give learners (on the 06/02/2006) an opportunity to bring in their experience and knowledge of rape matters into the discussion?". These situations are an assertion of the authoritative powers that most facilitators at the MCDP work with and a neglect to acknowledge that adult learners bring in their accumulated knowledge and experience into learning events (Gravett, 2001).

UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG

Based on these observation notes and the mentioned interview, my view is that adult learners were being treated as mostly ignorant learners in a school classroom with the educator telling them what to do and treating them as submissive learners merely following instructions. Facilitators did not ask adult learners to share among themselves their own experiences about a particular topic or educational setting with the aim of engaging them as subjects of their own learning. It was also clear that most of them did not first establish how much learners knew about the content to be taught as a base for the forth coming lesson This is evident in lessons conducted by Thoko (O/TD: les-2 to 3) on **"Counseling HIV and AIDS infected victims"** and **"Provision of home based care to the aged"** respectively. In her introduction of the first lesson she stated that: *"I know that although you might have brothers, sisters and relatives who are HIV infected, you have never counseled and supported them".* The facilitator assumed that the adult learners had no prior knowledge on counseling and providing support to HIV infected victims. Also, in her other lesson, she showed

learners how "to prepare a bed" before inviting them to engage in the activity. Through her actions, I assumed that she thought learners have never prepared beds in the way in which she wanted them to do, thus disregarding their experiences in that area.

Disregarding the experiences of learners in particular areas was also evident in a lesson conducted by Palesa (O/PN:les-4) on, **"HIV and AIDS patients in a hospice"** in which she remarked to the learners, *"I know most of you have never been to a hospice and do not possess any knowledge and experience thereof"*. In the process, she neglected a valuable opportunity to engage learners, as adults and through their roles in the community, in accessing the knowledge and experience they might have in relation to a hospice. This resulted in a one way communication from facilitators to learners.

In most or all of the lessons I observed, learners were hardly given a chance to talk, make presentations and ask questions. Instead one facilitator, Themba, during teaching time, would only involve learners by asking *"do you understand?"* and the answer would usually be a doubtful *"yes"*. Also, in a follow-up interview I held with Thandi (T/TS: inter–1), she indicated, *"I normally ask learners questions towards the end of lessons to find out if they have understood what I was teaching"*. In her teaching and learning approach she would teach and not give learners time to comment or ask questions, thus neglecting one most important principle of adult education: active engagement of learners in learning events.
Learners would sit and listen to the facilitator for the entire duration of the lesson.
From my observations of most lessons conducted, the majority of the learners seemed bored and appeared disinterested in what facilitators were teaching and I conclude that it was because of the teaching approaches (O/TK; O/TD; O/PN) used. It would appear that boredom and disinterest emanated due to, rote and non-reflective learning of what was taught, a lack of dialogue and, among others, the absence of group learner activities in the classrooms. In those lessons it was apparent that learners were merely "empty vessels" waiting to be filled with

knowledge. Learners were treated as objects resulting in a lack of interest and boredom.

Therefore, one way of engaging adult learners in what they are learning is to take into account their accumulated and prior knowledge in a particular field and utilise that as part of a lesson. Baert and Jansen (1997:227) emphasise that any community education process that takes into account active involvement in the actual delivery of programmes should promote and incorporate adult learners' experiences.This would mean that all facilitators at the MCDP should at all times when conducting lessons, assess the learners′ prior knowledge and experiences in that particular field which in turn would instill confidence in learners and might feel psychologically safe in class. This is supported by Gravett (2001:13) when she says that learners' existing knowledge and experience play a crucial role in learning by adults.

5.2.1.3 The psychological safety of learners is overlooked

UNIVERSITY
JOHANNESBURG

Cookson (1998:50) proposes that a climate conducive to learning is a prerequisite for effective teaching and learning. He also states that there are two aspects to a learning climate, namely physical on the one hand and psychological on the other. The physical climate is concerned with factors such as room size, temperature, lighting, seating and how technology is arranged and used in the learning space. Also, according to Gravett (2001), the physical climate is concerned with how people interact with the physical and spatial environment. The MCDP is housed at Lamula Jubilee Secondary School, where the project is allocated three spacious and warm classrooms with enough furniture (tables and chairs for an average of 13 learners per class) for the learners. The physical conditions in classrooms successfully created an environment conducive to learning. This was clearly demonstrated in most of the lessons I observed. For example, I noted in Palesa's lessons (O/PN : les), *"the room was sunny and warm".*

Cookson (1998:50) indicates that the physical climate shall not refer to a typical classroom setup, with chairs in rows and a lecturer in front (as is the case at the MCDP). This physical arrangement of furniture in the classrooms allocated to the MCDP announces to anyone entering the rooms that for most of the class time, learners sit passively and listen to one way transmissions from the facilitators. However, apart from the physical climate, most of the lessons I observed did not achieve or reach out to their learning outcomes, as a result of a non-conducive psychological climate. This other aspect to a learning climate is contributed to by, firstly little respect for and among adult learners and, secondly, non - existence of sound relationships between facilitators and learners and among learners themselves.

Merriam and Caffarella (1991:149) mention that the environment in which learning takes place plays an important role in attaining meaningful learning. Flowing from this, one of the requirements for meaningful learning is the creation of a safe and non-threatening learning environment. Cookson (1998:51-52) presents a psychological climate as one of mutual trust, collaboration, respect, sound relationships, pleasure and humanness. Instead, from my observations the environment at the MCDP was unwelcoming, threatening and non-supportive due to, among others, little respect by facilitators towards learners and neglect of the relationship among learners themselves. This I believe results in a non-achievement of sound relationships in the learning environment. Learners are more open to learn if they feel respected. The relationship between and among learners and facilitators should be of respect and commitment to a joint venture in the spirit of *“masakhane”* (let’s build one another), through trust, respect and healthy relations.

According to Vella (1994:8) respect is one of the positive affects that support learning in adults. Hence the importance of respect in adult and community education programmes can never be overemphasised. However, in most lessons conducted by the six facilitators, signs of disrespect were apparent and these were noted in my observations. In one lesson conducted by Thandi (O/TS : les – 4) I noted *"two learners who were busy talking and laughing for the entire class time, not paying attention to what the facilitator was presenting – thus showing no respect for the facilitator and the class".* In another lesson conducted by Thoko (O/TD: les - 4) I noted that learners just sat and looked at the facilitator for the entire duration of the lesson. The general response of the learners I noted *"through their body language to be an expression of how they were feeling. Some were yawning and others were chatting among themselves"* indicating disrespect to the facilitator and among learners themselves.

In a lesson held by Themba (O/TK: les - 4) I noted, *"one learner falling asleep while the facilitator was talking, every now and then she opened her eyes and tried to keep awake but to no avail" and* another *"learner kept yawning amid being reprimanded by the facilitator".* I also noted *"some learners who were looking outside through windows".* In my view, these incidents constitute disrespect by the affected learners to others including the facilitator. On the basis of my observations, in most of the lessons there is lack of respect by both parties, that is, by learners towards facilitators and amongst learners themselves and by facilitators towards learners. Without respect no meaningful teaching and learning processes can take place (Rogers, 1992; Cookson, 1998). Therefore, lack of respect influences and is also influenced by lack of learner involvement. If facilitators do not respect and allow learners to comment or ask questions during teaching time, learners will in turn not respect facilitators. Instead of engaging in lessons they will, during teaching time, show disinterest by chatting among themselves, leave the classroom at any given time or as they wish, sleep or look outside through windows.

Daloz (in Farquharson, 1995:53) puts it in a nutshell when he states that “teaching is most of all a special kind of relationship”. Sound relationships can only be built on respect. This is in line with Knowles’ (1980) thinking that respect is the prime factor in adult learning. According to Vella (1994), the violation of the principle of respect results in learners not learning what they were supposed to learn because disrespect undermines their humanity.

As mentioned, I noted in lessons conducted by Vusi (O/VS: les -1 to 4) Palesa (O/PN: les -1to 4) and Sithembiso (O/SN: les -1 to 4) that relationships among facilitators and learners and among learners themselves were unhealthy, and characterised by threats, disrespect, displeasure and no happy moments. As this study assumes that respect develops sound relationships, Wlodkowski (1998:60) says that without respect, “the only reason one does something for another is out of fear, obedience, ignorance, love or lust”. The above scenario could result from the fact that the knowledge was being delivered from the *“top”* with the learners as passive recipients of transmitted information.

Cohen (2003) mentions other prerequisites for maintaining sound relations and a conducive psychological learning environment. These include empathetic listening to learner needs by educators. Adult educators should identify with and make themselves available as learner resources. This sentiment is also echoed by Vella (1994) that a sound and respected relationship between a learner and an educator/facilitator will enable the learner to recognise that the educator is an available resource for the provision of information that will have immediate impact and consequences on learners. Instead, there was a lack of the promotion of sound relationships among facilitators and learners at the MCDP.

5.2.1.4 There was little or no immediacy of learning

My observations of classroom practice led me to believe that, because there were no immediate practice sessions, (for example visits to hospices to counsel aids patients or old age homes to prepare beds), of what they were learning and was also confirmed in the interviews I held with the facilitators, there was little or no immediacy of learning in the MCDP's health education programmes. In contrast, adult education literature (Vella, 1994; Wlodkowski, 1998; Gravett, 2001) indicates that adults need to see the immediate usefulness and relevance of new learning, as most adults do not have time to spare due to their multiple roles since adults, as adults by definition, learn best what is related to their life tasks and life roles (Gravett, 2001). They want to spend their time studying something or engaging in programmes that will have immediate impact and consequences.

Farquharson (1995:64) says that adult learners like to feel that what they are learning is useful and relevant in their daily lives. Therefore, it is my view that if learners see the immediate usefulness of learning, they would be highly motivated to learn because they would wish to acquire skills and knowledge which they can use in immediate and practical ways (Rogers, 1989:48).

Without the incorporation of the principle of immediacy, I argue that the learning process can be valueless and a dull and de-motivating atmosphere can develop. For example, in lessons conducted by Vusi (O/VS: les - 3), Palesa (O/PN: les - 2), Themba (O/TK: les - 2) and Sithembiso (O/SN: les-1) respectively, I noted that *"the lessons appeared boring and uninteresting and learners were passive and merely listened to information being transmitted by the facilitators".* Therefore, it is my view that if learners do not see the immediate usefulness and relevance of learning through immediate and active engagement in what they are learning, as it is the position at the MCDP, they will not be motivated to learn and might possibly drop out of the programme.

5.2.2 TRAINING NEEDS OF FACILITATORS

In my observations of teaching and learning processes it was clear that most facilitators mainly used a lecture method and neglected the generalised characteristics of adult learners which are: that adults are adults by definition; that they bring vast amounts of quality experience and knowledge to the learning situation and that their readiness to learn is linked to their life roles and life tasks (Rogers, 1996; Gravett, 2001:6-7). Therefore, taking these generalised characteristics into consideration, facilitators have to teach/facilitate in ways that differ from those used to teach children (Lewis in Husen & Postlethwaite, 1989: 29 -32). According to Vella (1994), adults learn better by doing.

Based on these generalised characteristics, facilitators did not establish how much the learners already knew about the content to be presented prior to teaching (**refer to page 97** for details of the lesson conducted by Palesa (O/PN: les - 4)) on **"HIV and AIDS patients in a hospice"**. As the MCDP's programme is a non-formal health education programme aimed at adult learners in the field of health services with an HIV and AIDS focus (Merriam & Brockett, 1997) the status and needs of these learners as adults should have been taken into consideration in terms of the generalised characteristics of adult learners.

According to Edwards, Hanson and Raggatt (1996:83), "skillful educators of adult learners have known for a long time that they cannot teach adults as children have traditionally been taught". It is therefore important that community educators of adults be trained in adult education teaching methods, adult learning and design of appropriate instructional activities. Most community educators of adults have in-depth knowledge and experience in the context of a specialised field but little preparation in the design of appropriate learning situations for adults (Grabowski, 1981:4). This proved to be the case at the MCDP (under inquiry).

As a result of neglecting the generalised characteristics of adult learners by facilitators, teaching and learning in the mentioned community health education programme turned into a top-down approach, with facilitators dominating classroom interaction. An interview with Themba (T/TK: inter -1) confirmed that the top-down lecture method needed to be reviewed. The facilitator said : *" …. we need to change teaching styles because learners become bored if you teach them in a similar way, everyday like children…. ".* Still on the issue of a need for training facilitators, Thoko (T/TD: inter -1) who seemed to base her teaching on the question and answer method said : *"….learners must know the content that I have given them, to make sure that they know it, I ask them some questions about it and they must know the answers".*

From my observations of classroom practice and confirmed in the follow-up interviews with facilitators, it is clear that all or most of the community educators of adult learners have not been trained as adult education facilitators. This has resulted in effective and meaningful teaching and learning being compromised. Vella (1994) reminds us that most educators teach in the same way as they were taught, that is through rote learning. This seems to be the case with most of the lessons I observed, conducted by Thoko, Palesa and Sithembiso and it was confirmed in interviews I held with them that, due to lack of proper training as community educators, they could not adapt their teaching approaches accordingly. Facilitators mainly used a top-down model of teaching which is, as I have argued not a viable option for promoting effective learning among adult learners. Firstly, it ignores the generalised characteristics of adult learners (as mentioned) and secondly, it encourages memorisation without understanding (rote learning). Based on the mentioned lesson observations made, it appears as though facilitators in the MCDP's health education programme require training in planning programmes and facilitating learning events for adult learners.

One important area in which training is needed is to apply teaching and learning methodologies that are based on the generalised characteristics of adult learners

and, also incorporate adult education principles (mentioned in chapter 2). Teaching and learning approaches which take the generalised characteristics of adult learners into consideration incorporate, among others, dialogic teaching and use the accumulated experiences of learners. Knowles (in Vella, 1994:3) tells us that adult learning is best achieved in dialogue. Knowles contends that adults have enough life experience to be in dialogue with any educator/facilitator about any subject, and will learn new skills, knowledge and values best in relation to that life experience. Dialogic teaching refers to a respectful relationship with educators/facilitators and learners thinking and reasoning together (Gravett, 2001:35). This implies that the community educator/facilitator of adult learners does not assume the role of unilateral authority, thereby reducing learners to passivity. In a dialogic teaching approach, educators/facilitators of adult learners serve as a guide, facilitator and mediator, and learners become subjects of their own learning (Gravett, 2001).

The dialogic teaching approach implies that the adult educator relinguishes the role of unilateral authority (Shor, 1996) and is likely to diminish the powerful and authoritative voice of the adult educator, thereby allowing him/her and adult learners to think and reason together in teaching and learning processes (Gravett & Petersen, 2002)

Gravett and Petersen (2002) view dialogue as a communicative educational relationship characterised by commitment as an essential element in establishing a dialogic relationship. This commitment is gradually established through the creation of a context that fosters engagement in an educational setting. They further indicate that dialogue is marked by an attitude of reciprocity among participants, underscored by interest, trust, respect and concern for one another even when encountering disagreements or misunderstandings.

5.3 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this section was to give a detailed report of the findings that emerged from observation made and follow-up interviews conducted for this study. I discussed the two main categories and their sub-categories in detail, namely, most or all of the adult education principles are neglected and discussed the training needs of facilitators. I drew on the applicable literature discussed in the literature review in order to support or substantiate my findings. In my discussion of each category, I included direct quotes of the participant educators/facilitators and quoted from my observation notes to allow the reader to experience it vicariously (Guba & Lincoln, 1989:260-262).

5.4 CONCLUSION

My aim in this study was firstly, to explore how adult education principles, complemented by the generalised characteristics of adult learners, are incorporated into the MCDP's health education programme by educators/ facilitators in their teaching and learning methodologies, and secondly, the need to train facilitators of adult learners.

- The results of the study have shown that *unless the MCDP embarks on the incorporation of adult education principles* in their health programme, the chances are slim that meaningful learning will take place. Therefore, there is a need for educators/facilitators of adult learners to bear in mind the centrality of adult education principles to the success of the MCDP's community health education programme. These have to be implemented at all times. Also, that the implementation of skills, knowledge and values will reach the success desired only if facilitators are trained effectively in the application of adult education principles. The study has also shown that many of the assumptions and presuppositions with which I entered the study have in fact been confirmed.

- The main findings in this investigation have confirmed the *disregard of adult education principles as the main reason for the unsuccessful implementation of the MCDP's adult and community health education programme.* This is due to the fact that the underlying assumptions about teaching and learning of educators/facilitators of adult learners are contrary to adult education principles and *they are not able to promote and improve the teaching and learning processes*. This study had found that *facilitators who presented lessons* in the health programme *lacked adequate knowledge* and understanding of adult education principles. This was evident in the way in which they approached and presented their lessons and it was apparent that there was no clear plan to include adult education principles. The importance of implementing adult education principles cannot be overemphasised in teaching adults as this could lead to *empowering learners rather than disempowering them*.

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- Another aspect from my view it seemed, was the *content–oriented* emphasis of the programme that did not include approaches that involve learners to be part of the construction of knowledge. Learners were not given a chance to participate, examine the content, argue and share their different values and perceptions with facilitators in an exciting learning environment. As seen from the observation notes and the discussion of findings, it was clear that minimal effective teaching and learning took place. In my view, this was a clear demonstration that facilitators were not effectively, if at all trained as adult educators. Hence, almost all the facilitators that I observed and interviewed were transmitting and depositing knowledge to learners. *Lack of active participation* in what learners were learning denied them opportunities in areas such as self direction and responsibility. These opportunities are related to all the principles discussed in the literature review which support active involvement of all adult learners.

- Despite the lack of knowledge and understanding of adult education principles by the majority of participant facilitators, some *lessons were successful.* The success of these lessons seemed to depend, firstly, on the *personality* of the facilitator and, secondly, on the use of adult education principles instinctively. In summary, facilitators did not have proper and enough training, including the necessary knowledge and information required to teach adults. To this end I have made some recommendations which I hope will be of benefit to members of the MCDP and other community education projects and programmes.

5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS

The fact that the findings from this study show that the application of adult education principles in the health education programme offered by the MCDP was neglected, is not encouraging. Based on the findings mentioned, I would like to offer a few recommendations, which I believe would assist the process of incorporating adult education principles in teaching and learning methodologies.

- The MCDP should, possibly, implement a training programme like the one proposed for facilitators (see section 5.5 below)
- The MCDP should employ or utilise the services of people who have been trained as educators/facilitators of adult learners. People who have never been trained to teach adults, including those trained to teach non adults, cannot automatically become educators/facilitators of adult learners without proper training
- Facilitators have to be engaged in the planning and monitoring of community education programmes
- More staff development training programs should incorporate some of the following aspects :

- ❖ Methods for dealing with adult learners appropriately, taking note of the plethora of current adult education literature
- ❖ In-depth training in a more meaningful way for its facilitators. Facilitators should undergo intensive training to familiarise themselves with ways of teaching and approaching adults
- ❖ Planning community programmes for adult learners that will facilitate a move away from those that emphasise content instead of understanding and application

- As a result of the inflexibility of many adult and community education programmes, the majority of learners will either discontinue their studies in the programme or perform poorly. One option would be to provide time management sessions to assist learners in prioritising things that need to be done. This will include making lists of and allocating certain times for various activities regarded as important and not allowing other pressures to interfere with these activities. This would however, imply that community educators need to be trained in time management skills which should be shared with learners.
- Research has found that many female learners have difficulty in attending education programmes due to family responsibilities. This study supports that adult and community education centres should positively respond to the multiple roles of women by, among others, considering establishing child care facilities within their premise or very close to them.
- Lastly, the most prominent concerns in as far as the findings of the study are concerned, namely that adult education principles are largely neglected in the planning and execution of the community health education programme and the need to train facilitators in adult and community education should be deeply looked into as these are sure to impact negatively on the implementation and the future of education programmes in teaching and learning as a whole. However, these concerns would be easily attended to if facilitators are given the necessary training, as these form part and parcel of

the adult education principles. All these recommendations imply that the planning, organisation and training of community educators/facilitators of adult learners need a closer look and amendments.

When engaging in dialogic teaching, this study proposes that facilitators and programme planners should focus on designing a specific training strategy within the framework of teaching as dialogue (using the seven steps of planning) put forth by Vella (1994) and Gravett (2001). This strategy, which serves as a proposal for the training of MCDP facilitators is provided:

Training in planning programmes and facilitating learning events for adult learners

WHO (target group)
Teaching staff (community educators/facilitators) and project facilitator in the MCDP. Training consultants to lead the training. Expected number of participants : 10.

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WHY (motives for training)
Pre-situation: Community educators need to adapt /change the current applicable teaching and learning methodologies used in the delivery of the health education programme targeting adults.

Intended outcomes : At the end of this training programme, facilitators will be able to : plan and design community programmes that will take into account the generalised characteristics of adult learners. They will engage in dialogic teaching and incorporate all or most of the adult education principles in their teaching methodology.

WHEN (times)

08:H00 – 16H:00 (includes an hour for lunch and two tea breaks) = seven hours daily x 3 days)

WHERE (Venue)

A classroom with movable tables and chairs for activity demonstrations, group interactions and to facilitate movement in dialogic teaching and learning.

WHAT (Details of a training programme)

- Research findings on the incorporation of adult education principles in the MCDP by facilitators
- Definition of adult learner
- Planning and monitoring of community education projects and programmes
- Generalised characteristics of adult learners
- Adult education principles.

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WHAT FOR (Objectives/outcomes)

By the end of this training, facilitators will have

- Named their expectations of this training
- Indicated implications of research on the role of dialogic teaching and learning for the MCDP
- Identified the generalised characteristics of adult learners and most or all adult education principles
- Designed a lesson plan in which they have indicated the incorporation of adult education principles.

HOW (Resources, group work and programme)

Materials

- Hand-outs on the generalised characteristics of adult learners and on adult education principles and practices
- A whiteboard (chalkboard) to record learner inputs and responses
- Transparencies
- Flip board charts to record group activity inputs

Procedure

Learners will work in groups of three (learning teams)

Programme

Learning task 1: Your expectations
Examine the programme for the three days meeting. In groups of three, identify personal expectations that you will have for this programme. All the groups will be given a chance to present their expectations.

Learning task 2 : Research findings : implications for the MCDP
Examine the research findings on the incorporation of adult education principles (in the hand-out). In groups of three, write down at least two implications that you see for the MCDP. Present findings to the rest of the groups.

Learning task 3: Definition of adult learner
Based on your experience, in groups of three, write your definition of an adult learner.

Learning task 4: Planning and monitoring of community projects and programmes

- In groups of three, enact a needs assessment activity (for individuals and community)
- Plan a detailed community education programme based on needs assessment done (refer to specimen displayed on a chart)
- Confirm community education programme with target group
- Develop an assessment and monitoring tool to assess progress.

Learning task 5: Generalised characteristics of adult learners and adult education principles

- Examine the lists of, firstly, the generalised characteristics of adult learners and thereafter, adult education principles
- Based on your experience, in groups of three, identify more generalised characteristics of adult learners and adult education principles for effective teaching and learning of adults. All groups will present their findings.

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Learning task 6: Incorporation of the generalised characteristics of adult learners and adult education principles in the delivery of a community education programme

- In groups of three, prepare health education lessons to be presented to the rest of the facilitators and the programme coordinator
- Draw up a lesson plan/s in which you indicate how your teaching methodologies incorporates the generalised characteristics of adult learners and the applicable adult education principles.

Learning task 7 : Closure

Individually, share with the rest of your group, your experiences and achievements (based on your expectations) in this three day training programme.

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APPENDIX A

225 SOUTH ROAD
LINDHAVEN EXT 1
ROODEPOORT
1ST MARCH 2005

THE PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR
MEADOWLANDS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT
P.O.BOX 78
MEADOWLANDS

SIR

REQUEST TO UNDERTAKE RESEARCH

I kindly request your office to grant me permission to do my research, at your institution. My research is in the area of Adult and Community Education.

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Permission is sought, firstly, to engage in participant observation and then in focus group interviews, as a means of data collection. Dates of visits are still to be confirmed.

I agree to abide by your stipulations and conditions in as far as conducting research is concerned. Furthermore, I will submit a copy of my research proposal to your office, after agreement by the faculty of Education at the University of Johannesburg.

Your co-operation is appreciated.

John Mahange
Researcher – M.Ed Adult and Community Education

APPENDIX B

225 South Road
Lindhaven Ext 1
Roodepoort
1724
10th February 2006

Dear: Participant

I am currently studying for the Master's Degree in Adult and Community at the University of Johannesburg. In this degree I have to do a research study which looks into the application of adult education principles in the teaching and learning methodology by adult educators/facilitators at the Meadowlands Community Development Project. The research study can make a valuable contribution in bringing about improvements in the presentation of the programmes offered at the MCDP. That is why I am asking for your permission to observe your teaching/facilitation and interaction processes with learners and to conduct follow-up interviews.

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You will be allocated a pseudonym in the research to protect your identity. All the information collected will be stored in a safe locked facility.

I would appreciate if you could sign the consent form, indicating that you would participate in my research study.

Thank you

John Mahange

(M. Ed Student – University of Johannesburg)

APPENDIX C

CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS PARTAKING IN RESEARCH ON THE INCORPORATION OF ADULT EDUCATION PRINCIPLES IN THE MCDP'S HEALTH EDUCATION PROGRAMME.

I, the undersigned ---, do hereby indicate that I have read and understood the conditions for participating in the above mentioned research as indicated in the attached letter. I hereby give my written consent to be visited in my classes for observation purposes and to be interviewed by John Mahange on the following conditions:

The observations of the teaching and learning process may be recorded.
The interview may be recorded on tape.
That I may withdraw from the study at anytime without having to furnish reasons for such a withdrawal.

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That confidentiality will be respected and I will be allocated a pseudonym in the research process and that my identity will be protected.

______________________ ______________________

Signature of Participant Date

APPENDIX D **O/TS1**

EXTRACT OF THE OBSERVATION NOTES FROM MCDP'S HEALTH EDUCATION LESSONS

TOPICS	:	Treatment of diseases Care giving to HIV and AIDS Victims Affected and infected people (HIV and AIDS) First Aid Course
VENUE	:	Lamula Jubilee Secondary School (Room C1)
DATES AND TIMES	:	06/02/2006 (09H: 00 – 10H: 00) 11/02/2006 (10H: 00 – 11H: 00) 15/02/2006 (13H: 00 – 14H: 00) 11/03/2006 (09H: 00 – 10H: 00)
NUMBER OF LEARNERS	:	13 (Average attendance)
FACILITATOR/EDUCATOR	:	Thandi Sibeko (Pseudonym)
CODES	:	F – Facilitator AL- Adult Learner OC – Observer's comments

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PHYSICAL SETTING OF VENUE

The classroom (Room C1) is located at Lamula Jubilee Secondary School in Meadowlands, Soweto. There was enough furniture (20 chairs and 10 tables) to accommodate 20 learners. To accommodate more than the specified number would be impossible since the rest of the furniture in the school is allocated to the high school learners. The room has no overhead projector and screen. A chalk board is available with adequate lighting and the room was warm.

The venue was inviting and it was conducive and safe for effective teaching and learning to take place. Gates are kept locked at all times. Entry into the school premises is controlled. The only exception is a high level of noise when high

school learners change periods and classes on an hourly basis. All the learners (except those who were absent on the mentioned dates) sat facing the facilitator who was teaching from the front. (**OC**) Tables and chairs were arranged in a manner that reflected a top down teaching approach (monologic approach). This position displayed the authoritative role of facilitators. (**OC**) The classroom set up (chairs and tables in rows) did not allow group formation and interactions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING PROCESS – IMPLEMENTATION, ACTIVITIES, INCIDENTS AND FORMAL INTERACTIONS

I observed that the facilitator (Thandi Sibeko) spent about 90% of her time in the classroom talking. There was learner passivity. To a very large extent there was no active involvement from the side of the learners – except when they were asked to write something down or take notes. The facilitator did not give learners the time to get engaged in the lessons by, for example, making inputs or comments and by asking questions. (**OC**) This was a display of the authoritative role of the facilitator. (**OC**)

(**OC**) Learners were viewed as empty containers that had to be filled in with knowledge. The role of learners in these particular classes that I visited was just to listen to information disseminated to them. They were not treated as adult learners who could decide on course content and what they wished to learn and what should be related to their life roles and experiences. (**OC**) In the same light the roles of facilitators were not clearly defined and outlined to them – because they acted more like school teachers who would promote rote learning.

In most of the lessons I observed, learners seemed bored and appeared disinterested in what the facilitator was teaching. Others seemed lost and were not following what the facilitator was saying. Therefore, adult learners were

treated like pupils with no experience and knowledge of the subject matter at all. (**OC**) This was an indication that learners were dependent on the facilitator.

I can indicate that in these particular classes/ lessons, the generalised characteristics of adult learners were not taken into consideration.
(**OC**) The facilitator did not take into account the experiences and knowledge of the learners in as far as, provision of first aid, HIV and AIDS and other diseases and how to deal and cope with them is concerned. (**OC**) To me, the content on treatment of diseases, care giving and among others, affections and infections of HIV and AIDS could be linked to what the adult learners already know.

Furthermore, because the facilitator spent most of her time talking and learners seated passively, reflected a lack of the dialogic approach. There were no conspicuous dialogue situations between learners and the facilitator except when they had to respond to questions. There were very little dialogue situations among the learners themselves. (**OC**) There were no group activities and interactions to justify a dialogic approach. In addition, the facilitator kept on asking learners “do you understand?” and the answer was “ yes” in a manner that depicted doubts, reluctancy in answering, boredom, disinterests and that they appeared lost. (**OC**) Based on the above mentioned observations, one could conclude that those lessons were of a monologic approach with no accountability at all from the side of the learners. Furthermore, I do not think there was going to be a reflection of what and how learners have been engaging in the health education programme.

APPENDIX E **T/TS1**

INTERVIEW WITH THANDI SIBEKO (Pseudonym)

VENUE	:	Lamula Jubilee Secondary School (Wood work Centre)
DATE AND TIME	:	11/03/2006 (14H:30)

This interview was a follow-up of observations made in Thandi's Sibeko's classes/ lessons conducted on the following dates:

- 06/02/2006 (09H:00 – 10H:00)
- 11/02/2006 (10H:00 – 11H:00)
- 15/02/2006 (13H:00 – 14H:00)
- 11/03/2006 (09H:00 – 10H:00)

The aim of the interview was to get more information on issues that were not clear in as far as the incorporation of adult education principles in her teaching and learning methodology is concerned.

CODE	:	R – Researcher
	:	I – Interviewee

R Thank you very much for allowing me to take a few minutes of your time to get more information on the four observations I made in your classes/ lessons (i.e. It was on the 06/02 ; 11/02 ; 15/02 and 11/03/2006). Please feel free to respond in English, IsiZulu and/or SeSotho.

I You are welcomed

R For effective teaching and learning to take place, there is a need for active participation at all times by learners. How and to what extent do you actively engage your learners in your teachings or lessons?

I I normally ask learners questions towards the end of lessons to find out if they have understood what I was teaching.

R How do you engage your learners in group activities based on the fact that chairs and tables are arranged in rows facing the front?

I I used to engage the previous year's group of learners in many group activities, but I could not get what I wanted out of them. Most learners do not play their part in group work, activities, research and so forth. The whole group's work is left to one or two individuals to do. The rest get points as a group but in reality for having done nothing. For this group I haven't started with group activities.

R I have actually observed very little or no interaction between yourself and learners and among learners themselves. Is that correct?

I Honestly speaking, these learners are passive. You have got to force them to talk. Normally I force them to interact with one another through demonstrations. For example if they have to role play an injured or sick person suffering from a harmful disease. They would role play how the sick or injured is helped in a clinic or hospital ward.

R Furthermore, it would appear there is no dialogic approach in your teaching and learning methodology. Any comment?

I As I have just indicated, the group that I have in this programme is passive. Discussions and dialogues are enforced by means of, for example role plays, reports and when I ask them questions. Even in such cases they are very brief.

T/TS3

R Thandi, since well you do most of the talking when conducting lessons, are you familiar with the principles of adult education?

I I might be aware but have forgotten them. May you mention one or two?

R Adult education principles will include learner participation, engagement of learners in what they are doing, group activities, needs assessment and accountability in what learners are doing, to mention a few. Can you think of others?

I Eh!!! I would need to think about them.

R Would you need training in the future in the methodology of teaching adults?

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I Why training?

R Remember, your aim is to meet community needs in the field of health services – which is an essential service field. Therefore there is a need to go for training or workshops based on the incorporation of adult education principles in the teaching and learning of adults.

I It's a good recommendation. I think the project co-coordinator should arrange that I attend such workshops and or training sessions.

R Well, thank you so much for your time and I'm looking forward to seeing you attending those workshops and or training sessions.

I Thank you. I have benefited a lot in this interview.

R It's a pleasure.

APPENDIX F

DESCRIPTION OF THE MEADOWLANDS COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT

1. Introduction

Before I give a description of the role played by the Meadowlands Community Development Project, I will briefly provide the reasons behind the formation of the project. I will also outline the nature of the project and its links with the community.

2. Formation and ownership of the project.

The Meadowlands Community Development Project was formed by a few members from the African National Congress Youth League, Meadowlands Zone 4 and 5 branch. These members saw that there were many youths who had dropped out of school and were adding to the unemployed numbers. Many of these were girls/young women who, presumably, would fall pregnant and would also be victims to the HIV and Aids epidemic. These members of the youth league formed the project with the purpose of saving the youth from the harmful consequences of teenage and youth pregnancy and the epidemic.

The mentioned members then formed an institution that was to impart certain skills to the mentioned youths. The aim was to use these skills in their communities and could also be shared with members of their communities, including friends, relatives, brothers, sisters and their neighbours. This was an offer that the unemployed and drop-out youths could not resist.

3. The role of the Meadowlands Community Development Project in community education intervention

The role of the MCDP flows from its vision and mission which is to provide a platform to develop the youth, women and the community at large through health trainings, with the ultimate aim of having a community that is free from harmful consequences of HIV and Aids. Furthermore, the MCDP aims to empower communities to be health brigades and fight the epidemic.

The organisation's main roles are to:

- Render home based care to the aged and disabled who cannot help themselves or go to hospital.
- To take care of the casualties by applying First Aid to members of communities in cases of, among others, accidents.
- To promote health education in areas such as HIV/Aids and cancer.

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The organisation's secondary roles are to:

- Create employment opportunities for its adult learners and adult educators/facilitators
- Render quality service in areas of health to communities
- To develop skilled people through sharing and teaching of skills, attitudes and values.

In order to achieve in the mentioned roles, the MCDP offers the following six months programmes and courses; life skills, general home nursing, advanced home care, advanced first aid, anatomy and philosophy, nursing theory, basic HIV/Aids and related disease's education.

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