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**THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT  
IN EDUCATION**

**by**

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**B.A. HONS (UNISA)**

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**UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE**

**BLOEMFONTEIN**

**SOUTH AFRICA**

**December 2017**

**Promoter: Dr MM Nkoane**

## DECLARATION

I, Dumezweni Charles Mathibela declare that the dissertation “THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION” submitted for the master’s degree in Development Studies at the University of the Free State is my own independent work and I have not previously submitted the same work for a qualification or in other university.

I also declare that no work of other intellects has been used without the means of proper citation and that all the sources used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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.....

DC Mathibela

December 2017

## **DEDICATION**

This dissertation is dedicated to my loving children, Onkgopotse, Mmasechaba and Lesedi, and my soul-partner. I appreciate their support throughout my studies. They will always be my pillars of strength and pillows to cry on.

I would also like to express my gratitude to my supervisor, Dr Molebatsi M. Nkoane, for his professional guidance, patience with my knowledge gap and motivation throughout my studies. He did it with distinction. Keep it up, Doc! Let me also not forget to pay my respect to the co-researchers who made it possible for me to obtain the valuable data. Your contribution is acknowledged.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

# **THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

The decision to carry out this study was to find out how parental involvement can be enhanced best in education. This chapter starts by presenting the background to the study, followed by a statement of the problem, which includes the research question, research aim and the objectives of the study. The study is grounded on the critical theory approach and I will, therefore, discuss the critical emancipatory research (CER) paradigm as a conceptual framework, followed by a discussion on the research design and methodology, the data analysis and the value of the research. The chapter ends by discussing the ethical considerations applied to the study and closes with the layout of the chapters.

### **1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY**

The study is premised on the prescriptive of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996) on the right to access basic education for all citizens of the country, irrespective of their socioeconomic background or status. Based on this, it is imperative that all children must receive education on an ongoing basis and it becomes the responsibility of all parents who have children of school-going age to register them at school.

A large number of children of school-going age are seen roaming the streets during school hours. Parents are aware of this practice and it is persistently taking place. This has led to the government being consistently challenged to keep these children at school. The question is: how are they attracted to school? Community radio will therefore be explored as a tool to enhance parental involvement in education.

Wanat (1992) in Stephanie (2014: 1629) makes people aware that regarding parental involvement “[s]chools must understand that lack of involvement by parents

does not necessarily mean they are neglecting their responsibilities. They simply may not have the time, resources, or know how to help out". This means parents need to be guided in terms of making sense of how to understand parental involvement and be involved in education as parents. Vandergrift and Greene (1992) in Stephanie (2014: 1629) are of the opinion that it is also possible that parents do not have a great deal of interest in the school or their children's education. Parents may feel that education is not important. Therefore, attending school will escalate human empowerment, particularly in the disadvantaged communities and positively contribute to economic growth.

### **1.3 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

According to Chapter 2, Section 29 (1) (a) (b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, everyone has the right to education. Many children of school-going age do not attend school, resulting in a need to enhance parental involvement in education. Community radio is considered an appropriate vehicle to assist in enhancing parental involvement in education.

#### **1.3.1 Research question**

How can parental involvement in education be enhanced through the use of community radio?

#### **1.3.2 Aim of the study**

The aim of this study is to enhance parental involvement in education through the use of community radio.

#### **1.3.3 Objectives of the study**

- To demonstrate and justify the challenges to parental involvement through the use of community radio.
- To determine what the possible solutions of challenges to parental involvement through the use of community radio are.

- To determine the components of parental involvement through the use of community radio.
- To determine the threats to using community radio to successfully enhance parental involvement.
- To demonstrate the indicators of success for enhancing parental involvement.

#### **1.4 CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The study is grounded within CER, which is a conceptual framework that originated from the critical theory espoused by the Frankfurt School. The Frankfurt School was established by Theodor Adorno (1903-1969), Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979).

The study views CER as suitable and of great relevance as it tries to help people to imagine alternative social organisations that facilitate the development of human potential, free from constraints. Therefore, the study focuses on what the people on the ground experience and the social realities of the situation which the study is conducted in.

#### **1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

In order to be relevant and meaningful to the outcome of the study, participatory action research (PAR) as an approach was selected for the study. According to McDonald (2012: 34), using PAR, qualitative features of an individual's feelings, views, and patterns are revealed without control or manipulation from the researcher. The participants are considered as co-researchers; therefore, they are entitled to their own decision-making capacity and are not restrained in any way to express their personal feelings. During the PAR process, the co-researchers are intent on a certain action that is their ultimate goal.

#### **1.6 DATA ANALYSIS**

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) was used to analyse the data in this study. It examines the nature of social power, power abuse and, in particular, the ways in

which dominance is expressed or enacted in text or talk. CDA tries to pinpoint that if the dominant actions are extended to the actions and the minds of the dominated group, and are in the interest of the dominant group, then it is implied that “the dominant social group members may also exercise such control over text and talk” (Van Dijk, 1995: 20).

The choice of the language preferred was consciously done because thereby the participants were able to express their views and concerns well. In the process, the three tiers of CDA discourses, namely textual analysis, discursive practice analysis and social structural analysis are used to analyse the data. Audio recording was used to record the interviews. The co-researchers’ text and linguistic expression were then transcribed and analysed into written form.

## **1.7 VALUE OF THE RESEARCH**

The aim of the study is to explore how community radio can possibly enhance parental involvement in education. Through the community radio, parents and the communities at large will learn about parental involvement, its implications on education and academic achievement and the importance of communication in the society.

The study will contribute to the national strategy on parental involvement of the South African Department of Basic Education and inform the policy planning on regular school attendance and participation in school governance. The strategy developed from the study can be adapted and applied in communities around the country, as well as worldwide.

## **1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

A formal and acceptable process of requesting permission to conduct the research was forwarded to the University of the Free State. After approval by the university, the request was directed to the co-researchers by issuing them with informed and assent forms, which they signed after thorough explanation of the forms’ content.

The co-researchers were thoroughly informed of the purpose and nature of the research. They were informed of the procedures to be followed, that a focus group would be engaged in discussion sessions, that there would be no direct benefits from participating in this study, that the information obtained would be treated with extreme confidence and pseudonyms would be used, that there was no major anticipated risk that would be encountered by participating in this study and that participation was voluntary and they would have the right to withdraw from the study at any time.

## **1.9 LAYOUT OF CHAPTERS**

**Chapter 1:** This chapter presents the background to the study and the problem statement. This is followed by a discussion of CER as the conceptual framework, as well as discussions of the research design and methodology, the data analysis, the value of the research and the ethical considerations applied in the study.

**Chapter 2:** This chapter presents the theoretical framework and literature review on community radio enhancing parental involvement in education. This is followed by the history and principles of the theoretical framework and, subsequently, by definitions and discussions of the operational concepts.

**Chapter 3:** This chapter discusses participatory action research (PAR) as the methodology for the study. It further discusses the research design and the processes used to generate and collect the data and the different textual analysis approaches used.

**Chapter 4:** This chapter concerns the analysis and interpretation of the data, as well as the presentation and discussion of the findings. It further discusses the challenges of the use of community radio, the possible solutions thereof and other aspects that lead to the success of community radio.

**Chapter 5:** The final chapter discusses the findings, recommendations and conclusion for future usage of community radio to enhance parental involvement in education.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE ON THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

The aim of the study is to explore the role of community radio on how it can enhance parental involvement in the education of their children. This study is grounded within a critical theoretical viewpoint, therefore critical emancipatory research (CER) is used as a theoretical framework for this scholarly piece. This chapter provides a theoretical base of the theory of choice, its origin, its principles and how it relates to this study. The ontological and epistemological assumptions and how they inform the study are discussed. The study bases its argument on five objectives, which form the steel rod of the study. The theoretical framework assists the principal research to understand the role of the researcher and his relationship with the co-researchers, and how equality should be negotiated among researchers.

Furthermore, related literature is reviewed on the justification of the need to develop the framework and analyse the strength, weaknesses, threats and opportunities the framework needs to have in order to succeed. The components that characterise the framework, the conditions that will make it possible to triumph, the threats that have the potential to destabilise the community radio, and the success stories of community radio in enhancing parental involvement are thoroughly discussed.

#### **2.2 CRITICAL EMANCIPATORY RESEARCH AS A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

According to Boyles (1998: 4), critical emancipatory research (CER) is defined as research “where the participants take charge of the initial agenda, facilitate the process on their terms, decide on appropriate evaluation criteria, and directly benefit from the outcome”. Within CER, the critical researcher tries to help people to imagine alternative social organisations that facilitate the development of human potential,



free of constraints. The participants are co-researchers and are allotted the same status as the principal researcher, because they equally contribute to the quality and success of the research. Heusinger (2013: 1) further describes CER as an approach that is “concerned with incrementally removing manifested inequalities to achieve a ‘better’ world”.

### **2.3 THE ORIGIN OF CRITICAL EMANCIPATORY RESEARCH**

Critical theory started at the Frankfurt School in Germany in the 1930s. It had two origins, consisting of sociology and political philosophy on the one hand, and literary studies and literary theory on the other. The School was established by Theodor Adorno (1903-1969), Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979). According to the Frankfurt theorist, Max Horkheimer, critical theory sought to emancipate human beings from the oppressive situations they find themselves in and sought to develop an interdisciplinary social theory which will lead to social transformation. This was the first institute for Marxist studies in the Western world, with its key figures being Theodor Adorno (1903-1969), Max Horkheimer (1895-1973) and Herbert Marcuse (1898-1979).

The idea of critical theory during the establishment of the school was propelled by the prevailing social problems brought on by the capitalist system (Dube, 2016: 13) and it rose as a reaction to the exploitative nature of capitalism. The institute sought to develop an interdisciplinary social theory that could serve as an instrument of social transformation. For a long time, critical theory referred to the Marxian paradigm and social critique. The group fled Germany in 1933 because of the Holocaust and the school was reformed in 1934 at Columbia University, New York. Carl Grunberg, a Marxist legal and political professor at the University of Vienna, was the first director from 1923 to 1929. He was succeeded by Max Horkheimer in 1930.

The School focused much on the interpretation of Marxism and psychoanalysis. After the return of those who had been exiled, they “had the project of reinterpreting Marx’s work for the 20th century” (Brookfield, 2014: 418). They felt that his ideas did not address the pertinent issues of the society and they saw a need to reframe the

ideas for the industrial age and mass society. The collaboration of Adorno and Horkheimer culminated in the co-production of *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in 1947. The School was concerned with developing a revolutionary, philosophical variant of Western Marxism, opposed to capitalism in the west and Stalinism in the East, which came to be called “critical theory”. The Institute in New York was invited to rejoin the Frankfurt University in 1946.

The School tried to dilute the iniquitous propaganda fed to people that these skewed power relations were a “normal state of affairs” (Brookfield, 2014: 418). The Frankfurt School based its argument on the premise of critical theory that capitalism is a Western democracy, based on empirical realities of racism, economic inequalities and class discrimination (Brookfield, 2014), that this system is regarded as normal, despite its dissemination of the dominant ideology and, lastly, critical theory attempts to understand this state of affairs as a prelude to changing it. Ultimately, through further engagement with the theory, a new approach was born, known as “critical emancipatory research (CER)”.

Jürgen Habermas, a contemporary German philosopher, focused on the suffering of people through the concept of emancipation. He added a new dimension to the Frankfurt School by beginning to “interrogate power structures embedded in society towards the emancipation of people affected by coercion and by general problems of society” (Dube, 2016: 20).

Dube (2016) is of the opinion that CER is a theory that seeks to transform society, especially those oppressive and dehumanising structures of society and the curriculum, and replace them with the ones that emancipate people. The CER theory informs this study, because it is the intention of the study to explore ways of enhancing parental involvement in education in order to change the thinking of society towards the importance of education.

Based on Habermas’ communicative action when he interrogates critical theory, Habermas sought to ensure that there is active participation of people towards achieving collective action based on consensus. This fits well into my study because the goal in this study is to see communities reaching collective consensus in terms of

the understanding of and approach to parental involvement, instead of an approach on an individual basis.

CER is also important to my study, as I seek to enhance parental involvement to address the lived realities of parents, learners and societies. I am of the view that CER should emancipate parents so that they can move towards effective efforts of uniting communities and schools, and combat regression in education, which has become a prominent social pathology.

## **2.4 PRINCIPLES OF CRITICAL EMANCIPATORY RESEARCH**

A critical objective of CER is the emancipation of the disempowered. CER propagates this through the following basic principles: social justice, democracy, hope, peace and emancipation. These principles inform this research to justify its inclusion as a theoretical framework, as discussed below.

### **2.4.1 Social justice**

According to Donkor (2010: 25), social justice incorporates principles of fair treatment, shared benefits and justice uniformly applied throughout society. It is a precondition for democracy, where resources are fairly distributed, especially in education. This right to education is enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996), in Chapter 2, Section 29 (1)(a), where it is stated that “[e]veryone has the right – (a) to a basic education; including adult basic education”. Social justice is denied if there are no fairness, equality and democratic practices, particularly toward the disadvantaged. Due to the practice of inequality, oppression and unfairness to others, CER therefore “seeks to abolish social injustice” (Dube, 2016: 34) in order to remove discrimination, human rights violation and the denial of basic economic opportunities.

Social justice will ensure parental involvement, where social institutions fail “to meet the existing human needs and when new materials suggest better ways of meeting human needs” (Patil, 2012: 205). Social justice will also ensure sustainability of a conducive education environment. Within the emancipatory research approach,

social justice is applicable in the issues of power and the generation of knowledge when dealing with co-researchers. According to Nkoane (2013: 394), social justice becomes a norm in this kind of relationship because it is about respect and it addresses issues of equity, freedom, peace and hope. The principle will, therefore, suit the study because the status of critical practice has, according to Ledwith (2007: 597), a transformative social justice intention.

The importance of social justice in communities becomes relevant to the study because radio as a tool for social justice effectively responds to a real need to be informed, which is a fundamental right. It is relevant to the study because it wants equity in the sharing of information and fair treatment of all community members. This right to information, whether it is expressed or not, is a need that is always felt by a population.

#### **2.4.2 Peace**

The Oxford Pocket School Dictionary (2007: 489) defines peace as “a time when there is no war, violence, or disorder”. Peace will only prevail if an imbalanced social, economic or political situation is corrected in order to accommodate those who do not benefit from the dispensation. From a critical theory perspective, the focus must be a “scrutiny on the effects of power on the differential ability of actors to control their own circumstances” (Patrascu & Wani, 2015: 389). Opportunities must be afforded to those who are marginalised, so that they can determine their own destinies. Stability will be achieved if the needs of those who are perpetually on the move of survival are given the required attention. Inequality breeds tension in the society and leads to instability, which ultimately ends in civil war, where the poor will, once again, be the most affected. Peace breeds co-operation and yields profound changes in the direction of justice, empowerment and well-being for all.

Therefore, within the study, critical emancipation strives to ensure equality, tranquillity and social justice in society. Where equality does not prevail, it becomes difficult for parental involvement to be effective or to succeed, because too few state resources are equally shared and allocated. Peace will be critical to the study

because it creates a harmonious atmosphere where everybody is free to express him- or herself.

### **2.4.3 Democracy**

Masango (2002: 52) describes democracy as a people-driven process, which public participation plays a crucial role in. Its guarantee will be determined through genuine participation by all. Democracy ensures the voices of the voiceless to be heard through participation, state resources to be equally distributed, and education and economic opportunities to be created for all. Democratic practices, respect for the Constitution and social justice bring hope in the society, especially the disadvantaged and marginalised members of the society.

The study will benefit from CER because it ensures adherence to the rule of law and participation by all in the decision-making of social matters. CER has been chosen for this study to maintain democracy by advocating political socialisation, which shall, through education, transmit values, beliefs, ideas and patterns of behaviour pertaining to the generation, distribution and exercise of power.

### **2.4.4 Hope**

People without income, education and support from those who are able, lack hope and lose their self-esteem as human beings. In order to strengthen hope in their social drawbacks, Patil (2010: 207) is of the view that education “is the most important single factor for economic development as well as social emancipation”. Hope emerges if collective responsibility is exercised by all, and those in power respond positively to the needs of the society. This collective responsibility will make responsible parents and good teachers embrace parental involvement, once they understand it. This will make children develop hope in their future if they see their parents getting involved in their education.

The outcome of the study is to bring hope to the people by advocating for access to information without people becoming a liability to the system. CER does not view

marginalised groups as a liability, but as a beacon of hope, and wants to see them change into an asset, and collectively involving themselves in education.

#### **2.4.5 Emancipation**

From a critical theory point of view, Maschietto (2015: 168) refers to emancipation within a social order, as the critique of the system and the revision of the status quo in such a way as to eliminate oppression. Oppression emanates from being denied basic human rights, being marginalised or being denied access to resources such as water, education and technology. Therefore, from an Apartheid point of view, emancipation will “change and contribute towards the social justice agenda, and give hope to an unequal society ruptured by apartheid” (Tshelane, 2013: 429). Social emancipation brings about equality as a value, which may ultimately “lead to compulsory and free primary education, [and] to expansion of primary educational facilities to all children” (Patil, 2010: 208). Emancipation is about having the opportunity to participate in social programmes, decision-making and education, and enjoying human rights. It is about, as stated by Maschietto (2015: 169), unveiling the dynamics of oppression and the questioning of dominant discourses of power that reproduce these dynamics.

Horkheimer advocated the CER approach to liberate human beings from the circumstances that enslave them by avoiding manipulation of the group that is socially disadvantaged. CER, in its strife to emancipate a socially skewed situation, is acceptable in using education as a means towards the attainment of a transformed society and liberating the human being in its unfortunate situation.

The ultimate objective of the study is to emancipate communities from situations that are unequal and suppressive. Therefore, CER will inform the study on the path and the systems to follow.

## **2.5 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE CHOICE OF CRITICAL EMANCIPATORY RESEARCH IN THIS STUDY**

This theory orientates the researcher around an emancipatory standpoint; therefore it is important to treat the co-researchers neither as objects, nor as subjects, but as equals in knowledge creation. Valdez Hacia (in Elizondo, Zavala, Alvarado, Suazo & Verónica, 2013: 425) sees the co-researchers as a group that is not a simple object of observation and manipulation anymore. CER creates conditions that are conducive to working with other people as co-researchers in a cordial manner. The good relationship with the co-researchers will promote social justice, bring hope in them and bring peace of mind throughout the research process. CER will provide ideas on how undemocratic practices must be challenged to enhance parental involvement in the education of their children, and to change the needed paradigmatic shift of the oppressive systems in society.

### **2.5.1 Ontology of theoretical framework used in this study**

Ontology is defined by Gray (in Dube, 2016: 46) as the study of being, that is, the nature of existence and what constitutes reality. Ontology is used by researchers to reveal social truths by uncovering how their perceptions are influenced by the approach they adopt. This is done when reality is explored and constructed through human interactions and meaningful actions. The interactions will reveal how people make sense of their social worlds in the natural setting by means of daily routines, conversations and writings, while interacting with others around them. The format of the writings could be in text or visual pictures.

Ontology deals with the nature of reality, a belief system that reflects an interpretation of an individual about what constitutes a fact. The ontological perception of the study is to examine the reality of the state of poor parental involvement in education and the grounds for that.

### **2.5.2 Epistemology of theoretical framework used in this study**

Mouton and Marais (1990: 4) define epistemology as the study of human knowledge. It is a theory of knowledge, which is concerned with the question of what counts as valid knowledge. People's knowledge is informed by their subjective experiences of the external world. Expression of the knowledge of reality is a mental process of interpretation informed by interaction with social context. Through interviews with the focus group and observations, the researchers socially construct knowledge by experiencing the real life or natural settings. Cowie (2015) stated that how we know the world, is dependent on our 'system of thought', of which there are many throughout the world. No one system of thought can claim it knows the 'universal truth'.

### **2.5.3 Role of the researcher and relationship with the co-researchers**

The principal researcher should respect the people involved in the study. The researcher does not exclude the co-researchers from the process of generating knowledge, but involves them in the "work of producing knowledge about themselves and their own world... [so that they can] be free to define themselves" (Bless, Higson-Smith & Sithole, 2013: 90). Their membership within the team will be highly regarded and valued as equal to that of the researcher. Regarding status, they will not be regarded as participants, but as co-researchers because, as argued by Nkoane (2012: 99), in CER, both the researcher and the participants are immersed in a quality of conversations and intersections as interpreted from their informed position. The co-researchers' inputs are just as valuable as those of the principal researcher. Without their inputs, this research exercise will neither be possible, nor will it be a true reflection of events and of good academic quality. This concept of equality will break down the dominance mentality, and the co-researchers will be granted equal status.



## **2.6 DEFINITION AND DISCUSSIONS OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS**

### **2.6.1 Community radio**

Without any doubt, radio is one of the forms of media that contributes heavily to access of information and simultaneously creates a positive platform for communication. Schramm and Roberts (1972: 19) call communication “the great relating tool... [that] relates individuals to each other, making it possible for groups to function and for societies to live together harmoniously”. In other words, community radio promotes community participation and working together in achieving an equal society.

According to Myers (2008), community radio is best for reaching and empowering the poor, depending on the context. It is no wonder that people tend to convert that information to advance human development. It is on this basis that Teer-Tomaselli and De Villiers (1998: 147) describe radio as having a personal and unique character, which makes it one of the most appealing and universal mass media forms for participatory communication and development. Therefore, from a simplistic perspective, which is borne out of radio, Fraser and Estrada (2001: 4) describe community radio as a radio station established and operated by the people of a specific community to advance, promote and protect the community’s common interests and objectives.

Taking the communities’ diversified cultural background into consideration, Thakur (2016) perceives community radio as a dynamic and vibrant community broadcasting system, which enhances pluralism and diversity. He further states that community radio is truly a people’s radio that perceives its listeners not only as receivers, but also as active citizens (Thakur, 2016). UNESCO (2002: 11) describes community radio as radio that is operated in the community, for the community, about the community and by the community. Community radio is a short-range radio station that caters to the information needs of communities living in surrounding areas, although it is just like a normal AM or FM radio station. The IBA Act (South Africa, 1993: s1) in Oosthuizen (1996: 410) describes it as a service which is fully controlled by a non-profit entity for non-profit purposes in order to serve a particular community.

Community radio stations serve geographic communities and communities of interest. According to Berman (2008), through their interests as a community, community radio allows ideas to be shared and beliefs critically questioned, and empowers people to become agents of change. Their programme contents are popular and relevant to a local and specific audience, and allow people to participate in social issues, express themselves in their own language and co-produce educational programmes.

According to Shrivastava (2014: 16), community radio perceives listeners not only as consumers, but also as active citizens and creative producers of media content. People develop their programme production skills through using the medium of the community radio by co-producing radio programmes together with the community radio crew. Radio broadcasts are often the only effective way to solicit important information to a large audience, especially in poor areas where the means of reaching the information destinations are limited. Communication is a means of socialisation, and through the community, communication becomes the most important factor shaping human destiny. Community radio will fulfil the objective of the study by “bringing the outside world into our immediate environment or circumstances” (Oosthuizen, 1996: 328). It conveys important information among the parents, the school and the educational authorities.

### **2.6.2 Parental Involvement**

Parental involvement is defined by Lemmer, Meier and Van Wyk (2006: 132) as a dynamic process whereby teachers and parents work together for the ultimate benefit of the learner. The ultimate goal is to see children progressing smoothly in their school work, without any negative external distraction. Parental involvement is described by Alderman and Taylor (2007: 3) as “collaboration”. They define collaboration as “formal working partnerships between schools, families, and various local organisations and community representatives” (Alderman & Taylor, 2007: 3). Therefore, parental involvement in this view, encourages relationships among parents, community and the school to improve schools, strengthen families and neighbourhoods, and lead to a marked reduction of young peoples’ problems.

Parental involvement is important in all structures of communities, whether marginalised, poor and/or poorly educated. The closing of the gap can only be overcome if active involvement of parents in their children's schooling takes place. Furthermore, schools should be serious about playing their part, instead of treating parental involvement as 'customer satisfaction'.

Parental involvement is a "potentially powerful approach to school improvement and improving students' academic learning, and it demonstrates a commitment to civic responsibility and positive, long-term community and nation-building strategies" (Donkor, 2010: 25). Parental involvement is, therefore, a nation-building mechanism.

### **2.6.3 Education**

Education is simply defined as "The process of learning" in Webster's Family Encyclopedia (1992: 830). In other words, it is a process by which people acquire knowledge, skills, habits, values, or attitudes. These attributes of education are daily learning processes, which empower people to achieve their social and individual objectives of development. Onwughalu (2011: 5), in his study, views education as more than schooling. He describes education as "learning", which occurs both within and outside school settings and focuses on the development of the individual, who, in turn, contributes towards meeting the needs and the development of society. Education is the liberating force of human development and every individual has a right to it. Education brings dignity into people's lives, and is seen by Steinberg and Kincheloe (2010: 40), in a critical theoretical context, as every individual being granted dignity, regardless of his or her location in the web of reality.

From a critical emancipatory point of view, education, when fairly and equally allocated, creates human and social capital within the society. It is the best legacy a nation can give to her citizens, especially the youth. The development of any nation or community depends largely on the quality of education of such a nation. Acquiring new productive skills, whether technical or intellectual, to suit social development, is enhanced through education. Nation states eager to participate in the new knowledge-based, global economy, should provide the educational infrastructure needed to launch and sustain their human capital. After Steinberg and Kincheloe

(2010) had reconceptualised critical theory, they were of the opinion that it helped them devise questions, and strategies for exploring them, and they further contemplated the nature of the moral actions that might be derived from such explorations. From this point of view, the society will consciously engage with reality and will develop a sense of knowing how to engage with the challenges it encounters.

## **2.7 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE ON PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT THROUGH THE USE OF COMMUNITY RADIO**

The literature review is based on the CER objectives of how community radio can free communities from undemocratic practices of accessing information. During the literature review, the study intends to identify challenges experienced by community radio in enhancing parental involvement, and how to circumvent the challenges through identified solutions. It also reviews the suitable components and conditions needed to enable the enhancement of parental involvement by community radio. Threats to community radio to achieve its goal are touched upon and successful stories of how community radio has contributed towards the attainment of parental involvement in education are pointed out. In the context of the study, radio is mentioned time and again to refer to community radio, based on the context of a device meant for the dissemination of information.

## **2.8 CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY RADIO TO ENHANCE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

### **2.8.1 Community radio programmes**

A common challenge for community radio is to ensure sufficient local content and to maintain a consistent quality of programmes. Radio programming with acceptable standards is one of the pillar stones that will determine if radio attracts listenership. Poor quality production or demoralising programmes are a recipe for losing listenership. Various factors that contribute to the unacceptable standard of radio programmes are discussed in the reviewed literature. These include a scarcity of

skilled personnel, ineffective radio programmes and poor management of radio stations.

Programmes are presented by unskilled people who need to “acquire the necessary journalistic skills to produce quality programming” (CIMA, 2007: 13), or are produced by programme developers who still need training on how to produce quality programmes. Unskilled personnel render radio programmes ineffective, irrelevant, and of little educational purpose, because they do not play an expansionary or a qualitative role in the improvement of education.

Poor quality programmes are perceived not to address people’s everyday life issues or are of poor quality due to non-involvement of communities in the co-production of programmes. Ineffective programmes due to poor production are considered by Myers (2008) as a broadcast with an unconsidered opinion and trivia. Ineffective programmes have an impact on community participation, parental involvement and are unattractive to schools. Listeners seem to “like and appreciate community radio stations especially when subjects that they care about are aired” (AMARC, 2007: 50) and are relevant to their everyday lives. If not, they perceive community radio as either meaningless, or less interesting.

Another attribute identified by Shrivastava (2014) that leads to ineffective radio programmes, is poor management of the radio station. Management does not reflect on the satisfaction of communities on the programmes, because they do not evaluate the reaction by the target audience on how they accepted the programmes. Reflection, in terms of monitoring and evaluation, is critical in the sustenance of listenership.

In India, poor management caused “the decline in the number of volunteers over the years” (Shrivastava, 2014: 21) and capable presenters and listeners were lost in the process. Poor planning by management has an impact on the ability of the community radio to sustain listenership, coupled with poor financial control and a lack of financial transparency. It also contributes to the decline of the programme standard. Poor management style demotivates the flexibility of presenters and

programme developers, which, according to Order (2012: 63), has always distracted community radio practitioners from their primary tasks.

### **2.8.2 Basic radio infrastructure and resources**

Limited range coverage denies communities the opportunity to access information. Limited range is due to problems of spatial development and scarce resources. Dalene (2007: 28) also notes that “long distances from rural to urban areas are obstacles for people to consume information”, and this includes communities that are just next to the radio station. Little effort has been made to allocate more basic infrastructure to community radios by either the government or the private sector. This inadequacy causes unsustainability of community radio stations.

Unsuitable equipment and appliances adversely affect performance and sustainability of community radios, and “radio programme reception can be interrupted thus causing loss of continuity” (Kaye & Garille, 1983: 121) when incorrect equipment is used, although “media owners often tailor news and advertisements to promote their own agendas rather than meet the needs of citizens” (Macharia & Mukhongo, 2016: 1). Unfortunately, alternative media tend to deliver “partial and to an extent, deceptive information to the people” (Abrol, 2011: 1) –the vulnerable communities. Parents are not able to choose their desired programmes due to manipulation or being bombarded with junk information. Their freedom is curtailed and manipulated, and they are “pressed into playing the media underdog” (Dukor, 2015: 13) by a medium, as stated by Mills (in Van Schoor, 1988: 129), that fails as an educational force, but rather is a malign force. The impact inadequate resources have on parental involvement is that parents will find it difficult to access radio and, as a result, will be less informed on the latest educational development. The critical emancipatory objective of hope will not be realised.

This clear marginalisation is undemocratic and promotes social injustice. It does not promote social cohesion and harmony among the community members, especially where parents are concerned, in order for them to enhance their involvement in education.

### 2.8.3 Community participation

According to Miche'l (2015: 9), "participation is the engagement and interaction of community radio listeners in their local community station". Therefore, the power of community radio lies in its "participatory nature, as both its content and technology are people oriented" (Shrivastava, 2014: 6). Although it is people-oriented, there is a challenge of poor community participation in community radios, due to what Savacool (2011: 5) term "the big disconnect between schools and families", because of communication barriers and busy lifestyles. The big disconnect makes communities shy away from establishing radio clubs, coordinating school radio programmes, promoting cultural activities, and creating opportunities for parents to be present at the radio station, whereas the "power of a community is inherent in participation" (Tufte & Mefalopoulos, 2009: 4). Poor community participation in community radios hinders "social awareness and facilitating public democratic dialogue" (Hovland, 2005: 1), so that parents can also feel an important part of a greater "whole" (Forde, Foxwell & Meadows, 2009: 18) among the community members.

Community participation will also become effective if the local language is used as a medium of broadcast. Language has become a barrier to positive community participation because even migrants regard it as a "relevant factor for the development of every nation" (Diedong, 2014: 348). The strong desire to know one another's language, culture and values will be a plus factor to good relationships if community radio can attempt to promote it. A study by Forde *et al.* (2009) in Australia, found that, particularly for the indigenous and ethnic audiences, community broadcasting facilitates social cohesion and harmony within the broader understanding of culture. Community participation is democracy in practice, and denial of that will render the principle of emancipatory research ineffective.

## **2.9 SOLUTIONS TO THE CHALLENGES OF COMMUNITY RADIO TO ENHANCE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

### **2.9.1 Possible solutions towards community radio programmes**

The view of Krüger, Monji and Smurthwaite (2013: 46) is that the point of any station is to broadcast programmes that are interesting and engaging and appeal to listeners. This assessment needs to look at the programming policy and schedule, try to estimate the proportion of music to talk, and compare this to the requirements of the licence. A critical question asked by Krüger *et al.* (2013: 46) centres around the proportion of good, local content, that is, how difficult it is to assess. However, an attempt at this needs to be made. They hold the opinion that in this context, it is particularly important to look at news and current affairs programmes, and that the technical quality thereof is also an important consideration (Krüger *et al.*, 2013).

A community radio station “needs to offer programming that is appealing to its audience, and that is distinct from commercial and public offerings” (Krüger *et al.*, 2013: 28). Therefore, community radio requires people with skills in areas such as finance, human resources, marketing and promotion, law, IT and media to be on board. This type of team will boost the competence and expertise of the community radio. Krüger *et al.* (2013: 28) also add that programming is an essential component of the success of community radios, therefore the following essentials should be critically considered: programming should be focused on the community and its interests; it should allow for maximum participation by community members, and it should be of high quality, both in content and technically. An important indicator of the health of a community radio station and one that makes a significant contribution to its sustainability, is effective community participation in programmes.

TMC Training Academy is a body in South Africa, which empowers community radio management teams. According to Bratt (2016), this academy has a programme that imparts knowledge to a new generation of radio talent by providing module sessions on radio management and programming at the Wits University Radio Academy. Presenters and programme developers are trained to be confident, to produce interesting programmes and to develop a sound



relationship with the community. MISA, a community radio in Lesotho, also provides training to the newly appointed radio presenters. The purpose of the training is to equip volunteers with skills in programme production and management. The Independent Communications Authority of South Africa (ICASA) promises to facilitate participation by stakeholders for capacity building and institutional support for community broadcasting services based on their social agenda (Madamombe, 2005).

Two community radios, Garhwal and Kumaon Himalayas in India, emphasise that at least 50% of the community radio content must be generated with community participation, and programmes should ideally be in the local language or dialect. This will give parents the opportunity to engage with the radio station, which will be a good reflection on the acceptance of the programmes by the communities. In Britain, an effective programme by Otoo, Agapitova and Behrens (2009), called the “Capacity Development Results Framework (CDRF)” was implemented to effect transformation at community radio stations and to assist with identifying problems that impede on the production of quality programmes and the training mechanisms to capacitate personnel and develop capacity.

Another way to circumvent the challenge of poor programming is through training. Madamombe (2005) mentions how in southern Mali, local technicians, facilitators and producers, as well as board members, took a training course, run by a rural radio centre in Burkina Faso, on how to operate equipment, produce programmes and manage a station. The training was favoured, because the station personnel developed confidence and took the station to a higher level of performance.

Kruger *et al.* (2013: 35) state that in the United States of America, a powerful way of getting feedback on the community radio programmes is to go to the communities and hold feedback meetings in town halls, community centres, schools, and so forth. Where feasible, reporters, presenters and other staff conduct surveys on listeners in shopping centres, taxi ranks and market places to get feedback on the programmes and the performance of the community radio station in general.

All these successful indicators prove that the effect of training, commitment and passion on the success of the station can transform community radios into valuable tools of social development and can be “firmly anchored in development paradigms and linked to the development process of individuals, organisations, institutions and societies at large” (Walters, 2007: 1). Based on the CER principle of equity, the training programmes will have an impact on human capabilities and empowerment, and build on the just allocation of resources to community radios and fair and equal access to information as their democratic right.

### **2.9.2 Possible solutions towards basic radio infrastructure**

Any community radio without adequate resources is bound to fail and be closed down. A community radio in Lesotho nearly closed down due to lack of resources. According to Mats'asa (2012), Moeling FM, a community radio, did not have standard equipment and was operated from Lerole's (owner of the radio station) family home, with the antenna mounted on a tree in the backyard of the house. The transmitter was made of a DVD player. The UNESCO Commission in Lesotho intervened by advancing a helping hand with funds, but approached MISA Lesotho to oversee the project.

Typical infrastructure that is adequate and sustainability are the backbone of a successful radio station. This is clearly explained by Krüger *et al.* (2013: 24) when they state that the resources at the disposal of any station determine what it is able to do as a broadcaster within its particular broadcasting environment. Good quality infrastructure is the foundation on which everything else is built; without it, a radio station cannot exist. Great programming requires great transmission, excellent capacity and proper equipment, or it cannot be heard.

Inadequate resources may cause the range coverage to be limited. Stakeholders in South Africa wants ICASA to consider expanding the coverage area to increase the audience base and, as a result, attract more advertising. However, the authorities suggested that expanding the footprint of the stations could have an unintended consequence of increasing transmission costs and might not yield the anticipated audience figures. Therefore, suggestions of expanding the

coverage of the stations should be balanced against the transmission costs and the wider impact they could have on other broadcasters. Donors must be involved to sponsor “suitable radio receivers and adequate sources of power to receive the signal clearly” (Thomas, 2001: 3), and to assist with expanding and upgrading the infrastructure.

Madamombe (2005) is of the opinion that the cost of setting up communications infrastructure is steep; therefore, the government and the private sector must be petitioned to allocate resources. In that decision, the interests of the community must be considered, valued and the allocation of resources prioritised. The provision of resources will enable radio to go to the people, although most stations experience problems of transport and telephones.

The closure of unsustainable community radios due to a lack of resources is a threat. Unfortunately, not all communities are able to sustain community radios. According to UNESCO (2015: 11), the World Association of Community Radio Broadcasters (AMARC) promotes the concept of mixed funding sources, rather than a single source, to ensure sustainability of community radio stations. Donor intervention has built a bit of scepticism around their gesture of philanthropy because community radios are scared to compromise their neutrality and sovereignty. That is why, according to Bratt (2016), radio stations and their management companies must be subjected to regulatory scrutiny to assess if they are in the best interest of the licensee. It is sufficient to say that communities are not able to sustain community radio, but there is sufficient evidence that they need regular information through inexpensive digital means. Then the community radio must be maintained without compromising its independence.

This point has also been postulated by Madamombe (2005) that a scarcity of funding does mean, however, that small community radios generally operate with the barest of equipment. Communities must assist the other donors in generating funds, as an option, although it has its shortfall if the socioeconomic situation of the community is wanting. In order to motivate the community, outcomes of monitoring and evaluation of the impact community radio have on society, must always be reported and reviewed, together with the community.

### **2.9.3 Possible solutions towards community participation**

The chances for the survival of community radios are also determined by the support they get from the community they serve. A needs analysis must be conducted to avoid “social exclusion that can create vicious cycles that entrench feelings of unworthiness, embarrassment – and shame” (Goldin, 2010: 3). The outcome of the needs analysis will lead to a certain determination of whether participation in the community radio will be viable and successful. Taking the community into consideration during the planning phase will develop a good relationship and a sense of belonging.

It is essential that the radio station itself must be innovative by designing means and strategies of how to survive. Therefore, as suggested by Krüger (2013: 36), fun events, such as fun runs, football competitions, music concerts and performances organised by the community radio station are good ways to get all segments of the community involved. From such events, it is important to assess if the engagement did have an impact. The results of the assessment will be determined through an assessment process conducted by the station.

The assessment can also consider, as pointed out by Krüger (2013: 47), the extent to which the station really ‘belongs’ to the community; in other words, that there are mechanisms for community participation, through elections at annual general meetings, through ways to provide input on programming decisions and the likes. It also involves looking at the extent to which programming is relevant to the community, and whether community members participate in programming and other station activities.

According to Gonzalez (2017), in Argentina, certain collectives help community groups set up low and medium power radio stations. The projects not only offer information, but also a way of uniting residents in a common project, as they learn how to set up, run and programme a station. These projects will motivate the community members, especially when their social needs and interest are met. Serra (in Gonzalez, 2017) states that in rural areas where there is no internet or cell phone service, radio offers a way to communicate between villages and organisations to

learn about what is happening. It can have a large impact on people's daily lives because they can choose what they listen to.

Through participation and good relationship, the community radio must unite the community by "fostering social awareness and facilitating public democratic dialogue" (Hovland, 2005: 1), and making them understand the "burden and responsibilities attached to their rights to free information" (Pate & Abubaker, 2013: 14). They can enjoy the freedom if allowed to participate in the community radio from the planning phase to the implementation and evaluation phase of the project. Through this type of participation, they will make decisions about the contents, duration and programme schedule, as well as the management and financing of radio programme projects.

Community participation can be encouraged through the production of relevant and sustainable programmes that "appeal to the interest, tastes, and desires of its audience" (Fraser & Estrada, 2001: 57), for instance, religion, culture, sports and entertainment. Community participation must be focused on facilitating "change, social progress, and better living conditions" (Fraser & Estrada, 2001: 57) for the community. Community participation and co-management will ensure collaboration and make future investment into the radio station attractive.

The type of language used on the community radio is another aspect that brings people together, as long as it is understood by all. Language promotes cultural tolerance and creates opportunities for parents to communicate with schools, with other community members, their children and participate in radio programmes. Community radio ensures that members of minority groups learn the language of the majority without abandoning their home languages. It encourages parents to transcend the cultural barrier by sharing their cultural stories, folk songs, cultural food and dramas in their own languages through the medium of radio in order to generate awareness about various schemes and to discuss the problems faced by the community.

## **2.10 COMPONENTS OF COMMUNITY RADIO**

In this section, the study takes a view on the important components of community radio, which are informativeness, civic participation, parental involvement and capacity building. The specific component aspects of community radio and what role the community radio should play in parental involvement are discussed. The approach is based on what Professor Anthony Everitt (2003) calls “social gain” in his Community Radio Toolkit. From the perspective of Everitt, social gain includes the following: the provision of radio services to the excluded; public engagement, debate and discussion; improvement in the image and self-belief of communities; delivery of education and training; and access to information. However, different sub-headings are used to capture the components of the community radio in this section.

### **2.10.1 Capacity building and empowerment**

Community radio is a dynamic and vibrant community broadcasting system that enhances pluralism and diversity because it is “characterised by an active community participation in all the structures of the organisation” (Mtimde, Bonin, Maphiri & Nyamaku, 1998: 22). As a gesture of social responsibility, the community radio shares its resources with the community where the need arises, by allowing them access to its premises and using its resources. It is a medium that empowers people by creating a platform and opportunities to express themselves regarding pertinent social, political and economic matters.

Through the implementation of radio projects, it organises capacity development programmes on management and modern technology and broadcast them in order to create “opportunities for community members to learn new skills, thus improving prospects for employment at commercial stations” (Madamombe, 2005: 20). Madamombe (2005: 21) states that in the training programme and workshops of the radio, the participants learn how to operate equipment, produce programmes and manage a station, so that community members can become skilled and absorbed into the station. Through a democratic process, people participate in talk shows with government officials, school officials and community leaders, where they can vent their concerns and challenges.

### **2.10.2 Informative**

As far as social gain is concerned, the provision of radio services to the excluded by the community radio is a priority, and it delivers social objectives such as access to information (Everitt, 2003). An informative community radio is one that contains discussions on topical issues, such as education, health, sports, religion, culture, politics and the environment, which are broadcast on talk shows. However, according to media scholar Banda (in Myers, 2014: 28), the mainstream media have offered more access and a stronger voice to the rich and powerful, and serve commercial interests more than that of rural and marginalised groups. Community radio is just the opposite because it is non-profitable and serves the immediate community.

Community radio respects cultural values and offers parents important information to “promote cultural diversity of communities” (Patil, 2010: 6). Knowing and understanding one another’s cultures sow respect and promote indigenous knowledge. It uses the local language understood by the local community and imparts “the latest news or any message” (Mohammed, 2013: 6) on education development on time. Although it emphasises local language, it does not “exclude some of the ethnic languages from being a means to communicate” (Mohammed, 2013: 4) for the sake of tolerance and social cohesion. In the well-engineered system of availing information, community radio ensures social justice where communities have the opportunity to become aware of their surroundings and vent their concerns.

### **2.10.3 Civic participation**

Within the parameters of community radio, civic participation ensures the sustainability and growth of the radio through public engagement, debate and discussions. Participation implies the citizens’ direct and autonomous involvement in both producing stories in the media and mediating their social experiences through the media. According to Everitt (2003), civic participation is the corner stone of democracy and attempts to ascertain the improvement in the image and self-belief of communities.

The ultimate aim of civic participation in the community radio is not only to bring about pluralism and diversity in broadcasting, but also to make sure that the radio delivers real, substantive civic and media freedom to the public. In the words of Moyo (2012: 486), freedom of expression, although clearly enshrined in the Constitution, is useless if people do not have access to the strategic medium of broadcasting.

Participation and community radio are highly interwoven, and cannot exclude the one from the other. Community radio must also be construed as being more than the mere dissemination of news and images by ordinary people, because “it also embodies a philosophy of communication that seeks to emancipate the citizen from state and corporate propaganda” (Moyo, 2012: 489). Community participation is important because the community will be able to take its own decisions without any major manipulation.

#### **2.10.4 Parental involvement**

In order to improve the contribution of community radio to the community, Everitt (2003) states that the best way is to improve the image and self-belief of communities, and must be an indicator when reflection is done on social gain. Nadine, Finigan-Carr, Copeland-Linder, Haynie and Cheng (2014: 2) describe parental involvement as parents’ commitment of resources and time to the academic sphere of their children’s lives, which Sreekanth (2010: 37) passionately regards as the “silent revolution”. Parental involvement is a revolutionary strategy that exposes the lack of social justice and is robustly used to advocate democratic practices.

Therefore, as a strategic move, community radio can guide and motivate parents to be productively involved in the education of their children and to have a positive influence on students’ academic success and their sustainable stay at school. Community radio can, therefore, play a prominent role in this regard, through the broadcast of programmes and other activities that advocate parental involvement in education. The information, lessons and advocacy received from the community radio are directly influencing informal education within the community. Parental involvement is an approach whereby parents share their views on education as a



whole, school activities and their children's performance at school, and how to intervene with the purpose of assisting by way of occupying the public sphere through community radio. Through their involvement, parents have become the voice of the voiceless, and the custodians of the indigenous language and culture of the community. Their involvement means their children's rights to basic education, as stated in the Constitution, are practised and the benefits derived from education will emancipate them from the imbalanced economic benefits in future.

## **2.11 CONDITIONS FOR A FUNCTIONAL COMMUNITY RADIO**

The community radio environment is conducive for parental involvement in education where there are skilled personnel to deliver the required services needed, appropriate infrastructure and resources to enable the community to access the services of the radio, and active community participation to ensure sustainability and growth of the station.

### **2.11.1 Skilled personnel**

Skills development is described by Elphick-Moore (2012) as the intended output of education and training efforts and an enabler for growth. Skills development is there to ensure the consistent and professional operation of institutions on the basis of effective delivery of services. Sturgess (2012) emphasise that skilled people are measured by their learned ability to bring about the result you want, with maximum certainty and efficiency in the performance of their tasks with the competency required. The owner of Fleet Dynamics, James Moore (in Elphick-Moore, 2012), points out that skill development enhances the capability of employees to (hopefully) improve an institution's efficiencies in the employee's specific sphere of influence. Therefore, a lack of skilled personnel at a community radio is disastrous to the sustainability and effective functioning of a community radio and the needs training of its personnel. Community radio needs highly skilled technicians, presenters with good communication and articulatory skills, a highly professional management team with competent capabilities in planning and organising, and team leadership that can monitor and evaluate the processes at the radio station.

### **2.11.2 Adequate and sustainable infrastructure**

An adequately resourced and well-managed radio studio is one that has sufficient and skilled human resources, office equipment and field work resources. These are the resources and infrastructure that will enable the station to deliver quality service, attract listeners and create confidence in the community. It will serve their corporate stakeholders if donors are coming from the community and educational institutions. An adequately resourced station will be able to share its resources with the community, for instance, during emergency calls for the police, ambulances or the fire brigade.

### **2.11.3 Active participation**

Active participation implies that communities are engaged in a meaningful way in the daily running of the community radio station. This active community is always willing to participate in all activities of the community radio, on the condition that the community radio serves their social and personal interests. The efforts for active participation is not only the responsibility of the community, but also of the community radio through certain unifying intervention programmes.

## **2.12 POSSIBLE THREATS TO ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT THROUGH COMMUNITY RADIO**

### **2.12.1 Shortage of skills**

A shortage of management, presenting and technical skills is a serious threat to the sustainability and survival of community radios. Presenters with limited articulation of the local language and poor knowledge of the subject matter of their programmes risk losing listeners. Poor managerial, financial, planning and monitoring skills is a threat to the maximum performance of the station. Technicians with poor skills are unable to keep the technical operations working.

### **2.12.2 Inadequate revenue to sustain programmes**

Revenue is needed to sponsor programmes, as well as to sustain them. The risk of losing the existing programmes due to a lack of revenue, creates possibilities of alternative media to come into the picture and “bypassing traditional media outlets such as radio” (Sherwood, 2015: 61). Peter Rice, the Programme Manager of Radio Riverside, in the study by Pather (2012: 33), added that he sees funding broadly as the main dilemma for community radio and believes the danger is that most community stations will become more commercial in orientation to keep afloat.

### **2.12.3 Poor community participation**

Community participation is the back-bone of the survival of community radio because of their being engaged in its daily operations. Communities can participate in generating funds for the station, organising training and workshops, volunteering in the studio and doing the field work. Community members are sometimes the face of the radio because they engage government officials and the private sector during talk-shows.

## **2.13 EVIDENCE FOR THE SUCCESS OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT**

Success stories of community radio are testimony of their impact on changing the lives of many people. What follows, are the success stories of community radio on parental involvement in education around the world.

Berman (2008: 3) cites the success of the community radio in Asia in the rural area of Kothmale, Sri Lanka. The station was started in 1989 by the Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation to provide communication facilities to 3,000 families displaced by the construction of a dam. Three Internet points were established, so that the radio could serve as a bridge between the World-Wide Web and the rural community in central Sri Lanka. Regular radio programmes relay information located on the Internet and of interest to the local people. In addition, listeners call in with queries, and the station staff searches the Web for answers. As a result of this

innovative radio/Internet project, community members in Kothale have begun to build webpages in the local languages to provide their youth with training in Internet skills. Computer usage at the Internet points has been quite high with, on average, approximately 200 users accessing the two computers of the service during any 14-day period.

In 2016, an Australian community radio in Bankstown, called “2MFM”, developed an existing Community Connect programme with a Community Based Forum grant support through the production of significant community events, such as educational forums, government and community workshops, and religious and social festivals. This programme told vital, local stories to the parents and their peers to ensure that they have a vibrant Australian culture and a strong democracy. By understanding their democratic rights, they were able to exercise citizenship fully and effectively. It assisted the parents to understand the essence of education.

According to McCabe (2015), an orientation session is held for teachers, parents and community leaders about the need for children’s clubs and rights to education, as outlined in the Right to Education Bill. Through the community radio, 100 schools across eight districts and 4,500 teachers, parents, journalists and community members were reached.

Community radio has been used by the Interactive Radio Community (IRC), an educational initiative lobby group in Pakistan, to increase public knowledge about the educational sector and to strengthen the coordinated civil society and community action.

In Mozambique, in the Macomia district of the northern province of Cabo Delgado, with the support of United States Agency International Development’s Media Strengthening Program, the Macomia community radio station produced the Woman’s Voice radio programme. The programme teaches the local women leaders how to read and write and to become involved in community activities. The women offer personal stories of overcoming the challenges of early marriage and share words of empowerment for other young women looking for ways to improve their lives and the lives of their families. The Media Strengthening Program, which ran

from 2012 to 2017, was implemented by the International Research and Exchanges Board or IREX. The programme was aimed at developing an open, diverse and self-sustaining Mozambican media sector that promotes debate, accountability and development. Among other activities, the programme supported 32 community radio stations, reaching an estimated nine million Mozambicans.

In KwaZulu-Natal, at a local Community Empowerment Project called Re-imagine Zee Project, a local community radio engaged the schools and parents in creating leadership and visionary thinking. The family, school and community found the occasion very validating.

## **2.14 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER**

Chapter 2 is based on the theoretical framework and review of the related literature on the role of community radios in enhancing parental involvement in education. The chapter focused on critical emancipatory research (CER) as a theoretical framework, its origin and principles. The justification of choosing CER as the framework for the study was explained with a brief explanation of its ontological and epistemological background. The operational concepts were defined and discussed, as well as how they suit the theoretical framework.

In the literature review, the related literature was discussed, based on the challenges, solutions and successful enhancement of parental involvement. The components that would characterise the community radios and the conditions that would be suitable for the implementation of the solutions were discussed. The reviewed literature indicated the possible threats to the community radios and the evidence of the best practice for the success of the community radios to enhance parental involvement.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

Chapter 3 focuses on the research design and methodology that are informed by critical emancipatory research (CER) as a theoretical framework and its principles. The CER method has been chosen because it provides the opportunity to interact with the community under study, which, according to Heusinger (2013: 1), with their cooperation, will incrementally remove the manifested inequalities in order to achieve a 'better' world. CER assists the principal researcher to generate the data from the co-researchers using critical discursive analysis (CDA) and its three levels, namely textual, discursive and social structure analysis. The chapter furthermore involves an explanation of PAR as a methodology that opens the communication between the co-researchers and how PAR conceptualises the research design. The historical background of PAR is discussed, followed by the conceptualisation of the research design and how the data were collected. In order to find dependable evidence, an explanation on how the data were analysed by using CDA and its three levels, is provided.

#### **3.2 DESIGN (OF RESEARCH) STRUCTURE**

According to Hamunyela (2008: 95), the research design indicates the way a researcher interprets and understands the world and the associated rules of investigation to determine the research methodology. It is the logic or master plan of a research study that elucidates how the study is to be conducted. The researcher is able to accommodate the co-researchers by acknowledging and respecting their inputs and experiences and walking the road with them to reveal the realities of a socially constructed situation that is beyond their control.

In this study, the qualitative approach was used to gather the data. It assisted to see "the social sciences as a place for critical conversation" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), and to explore the life worlds of the co-researchers, their attitudes and aspirations in

their natural settings. It is a form of social inquiry that focuses on the way people interpret and make sense of their experiences and the world which they live in. This method provided an opportunity to gain an overview of the context under study, its logic, its arrangements, and its explicit and implicit rules. According to Streubert and Carpenter (1995 in MacDonald, 2012: 1), the purpose of the qualitative methodology is to describe and understand, rather than to predict and control. It also assists with interpreting a “critical view to methodology, promoting social justice, and engaging with systems of education by seeking to identify and address the problems within them” (Watson & Watson, 2011: 63). The qualitative methodology is a genuine reflection of the experiences of the co-researchers.

For the study, a focus group of six co-researchers was chosen. The small number of individuals in the focus group “facilitates an environment for optimal communication amongst all participants, thus increasing the potential for useful data to be generated” (MacDonald, 2012: 41). A focus group is described by Kitzinger (1995: 299) as a form of a group interview that capitalises on the communication between the research participants in order to generate the data. The researcher created a supportive environment in which the discussion and differing points of view were encouraged. In-depth interviews were conducted and took the form of a conversation in which the researcher probed deeply to uncover new clues, to open new dimensions of a problem and to secure vivid, accurate and detailed accounts that were based on the personal experience of the subject. These interviews were conducted in cooperation with two community radio presenters, a teacher, two parents and an official from the Department of Education. Forde *et al.* (2009: 23) see the essence of a focus group as a cycle of “shared activities and understanding”, enabling the participants to offer various perspectives on the same topic. It allows a more democratic process and strengthens the researcher and the researched relationship if the researched are given the opportunity to share their knowledge and experiences.

This well-considered, selected focus group of potential people with educational, radio and parenting backgrounds, enabled the facilitator to “gain access to [the] intersubjective experience” (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2008: 304) they possess. They were selected on the basis of having first-hand knowledge of their respective life

experiences. Their inputs were valuable because they understood and related their thinking processes, which were extremely informative. Each discussion session with the group took two hours to complete at a venue chosen or determined by the group. The reason for allowing them to choose the venue was to make them feel less intimidated by other, unfamiliar group members.

The interaction was an open-ended question session where probing questions were used to extract information. Access to this type of experience helped the principal researcher to understand the “differences between people whom we might previously have thought of as a homogeneous group” (Terre Blanche *et al.*, 2008: 304). It respects the different experiences and opinions of the co-researchers based on the heterogeneity character of the group.

### **3.3 CONCEPTUAL PHASE**

The conceptualisation of the study is based on a balanced relationship with the co-researchers whereby their participation is equal to that of the main researcher. Social structures are differently formulated and lead to imbalanced structures in society. The imbalanced social order needs to be addressed in order to create a just society.

The study aims to assess how possible it is to enhance parental involvement in education through the influence of the community radio by including various stakeholders in the information-seeking process.

#### **3.3.1 Credentials of the co-researchers**

Pseudonyms have been assigned to protect the identities of the co-researchers. This is in line with the ethical principles informing this study.

- **Kishe** is a programme producer at the community radio. He is a staunch churchgoer and uses the radio to preach the gospel.
- **Betsi** is a presenter at a local community radio. He uses radio to motivate parents to be actively involved in their children’s sports activities.



- **Chana** is an official at the Department of Education. He was a teacher for 30 years and was appointed to the Examination and Assessment Unit in 2015. He possesses the necessary experience of parental involvement in schools.
- **Abizim** is a teacher at the local school. She has 20 years' teaching experience. Her input on the performance of learners is academically valuable.
- **Mumaza** is a parent in the area. Her child attends the local school. She is employed as an auxiliary nurse at the local hospital.
- **Meiyo** is a single parent with two children and one grandson attending a local school.

### 3.3.2 Ensuring common understanding with other co-researchers

Schumacher and McMillan (2006: 344) describe the role of the researcher as “a relationship acquired by and ascribed to the researcher in interactive data collection”. In the case of the current study, the researcher mainly fulfilled the role of an interviewer. The six co-researchers were perceived as “*co-participants* rather than mere informants and/or recipients of knowledge” (Kearney, Zuber-Skerritt & Wood, 2013: 118) because they possess a wealth of experience in the matter under study. A consent form was issued to the prospective members of the focus group to read and understand the purpose and objective of the research and their roles in the research process because the researcher is “ethically responsible for protecting the rights and welfare of the subjects who participate in the study” (Schumacher & McMillan, 2016: 339). At least three meetings were planned to discuss and unpack the purpose of the research, to assure the group that their participation is voluntary, to provide them with the conditions of participation, to assure them that they are free to terminate their membership at any time, to implement the decided programmes and to provide feedback to the group. The language factor was discussed and agreed upon before the commencement of the data collection.

### **3.4 METHODOLOGY**

The methodology chosen to conduct the research successfully is participatory action research (PAR). PAR is empowering, as it promotes the capacity development and capacity building of all who participate (McTaggart, 1991). The co-researchers who participated in the process benefited because PAR “empower[s] people at a second and deeper level through the process of constructing and using their own knowledge” (Reason, 1998: 71). It involved the participants, who are known as the ‘co-researchers’, in all or most phases and processes of the research as equal partners. This methodology is aimed at reaching an intersubjective agreement and a mutual understanding of a situation in order to “fundamentally question and rethink established interpretations of situations and strategies” (Bergold & Thomas, 2012: 1). The process opened the communicative space between the co-researchers and created self-esteem. The co-researchers were afforded the opportunity to express themselves freely and develop a sense of “what people achieve together will be *legitimate* not only for themselves but also for every reasonable person” (McTaggart, 2007: 296). The researchers did not impose ideas or follow assumptions, but gave accounts of reality as seen by others. Although nearly all the social research studies are based on some form of social change as motivation, the PAR approach is embedded on change and action.

The method involves a constant evaluation of its processes and modifications to adjust the research problem articulation and research practice. This is determined by the agreed outcome of the research and accountability towards the consensus reached by the co-researchers. Although PAR has a number of strengths, it also presents a number of challenges for the researcher and the participants. The challenges, identified by Gillis and Jackson (2002), is that the community members in the research team may struggle to maintain their commitment to the research project over time. There may also be misunderstandings regarding the participants’ perceptions and the social matter to be addressed, as well as the conflict between the interpretations and the analysis of the research.

### **3.5 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH**

The origins of PAR can be traced back to the social psychologist, Kurt Lewin, between the 1940s and 1950s. According to Kemmis and McTaggart (2007: 272), it was Lewin's work and reputation that gave impetus to the action research movements in many different disciplines. Lewin was interested in conflict resolution and advocated that people must live in peace and practice democracy as a philosophy of their core social existence. PAR, as a concept and practice, was originally developed for the community engagement in developing countries and was used to solve and unravel practical problems that would assist in larger progressive social change. According to Vollman, Anderson and McFarlane (2004), the purpose of PAR is to foster capacity, community development, empowerment, access, social justice and participation.

After the 1970s, PAR was used to motivate workers in the decision-making on matters that concern them at work. The workers, even by then, were regarded as one of the groups that were extremely disadvantaged and their situations needed intervention through emancipatory means. It was on that score that Paulo Freire, the pedagogue, embarked on a mission to highlight the plight of the workers by believing that "critical reflection was crucial for personal and social change" (Maguire, 1987). The PAR approach of Freire was concerned with empowering the poor and marginalised members of society about matters pertaining to literacy, land reform analysis and the community. According to Selenger (1997), one trend that was of importance to the PAR approach was the view of adult education as an empowering alternative to traditional approaches to education. This strengthened the importance of collaboration between the researcher and the participant. The PAR philosophy was embodied by Lewin, a Prussian psychologist and a Jewish refugee from Nazi Germany. The philosophy encapsulates "that people would be more motivated about their work if they were involved in the decision-making about how the workplace was run" (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006: 36). This practice created a common vision between the employees and the employers. Although extensive academic research was conducted in the field, the researchers actually wanted to empower the ordinary people through research.

Based on the goals of PAR, the study allowed the co-researchers to participate freely in the research process and share their knowledge of the social ills and how

they were afforded the opportunity to exercise their democratic rights, and to bring hope and peace to the different communities.

### **3.6 PROCESSES OF DATA COLLECTION**

The data were collected from a small number of six focus group co-researchers, who were engaged and actively involved, as proposed by Greenwood & Levin (1998) that they must be active participants throughout the entire research process. An open-ended questions method was used, with questions arranged in a logical sequence. The effective probing of questions to reach the depth of the experienced world of the co-researchers was used with the objective of obtaining information on the participants' beliefs and their perceptions of the topic under study.

The interaction sessions were originally scheduled to take place at a local school in a classroom after school hours, but later changed and were held at different venues. The agreed scheduled programme was adhered to. The venues were central, accessible and convenient in terms of their locality.

A voice recorder was used to capture "the actual words of the person being interviewed... actual quotations spoken by interviewees" (Patton, 1990: 347), instead of taking verbatim notes during the interview. The co-researchers were seated in a comfortable, half-circle type of arrangement, in a permissive established environment. Text transcription, which is "the process of transforming the audio recording of interviews into a transcript" (Hamunyela, 2008: 101), was immediately done after each session to "construct integrated data sets to analyse" (Hamunyela, 2008: 101) the similarities and differences in the language and emotional expressions.

The group members were welcomed to the venue and introduced to one another. The title, aims and objectives of the proposal was introduced and the purpose of the focus group discussion was explained. Permission was requested and granted by the co-researchers to voice record the procedures and to take notes. The group was assured of the equal participation of each member of the group. At the end of all the

sessions, they were thanked and assured that they would receive a copy of the report generated from the discussion.

### **3.7 DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **3.7.1 Critical discourse analysis**

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is an analytic approach that “focuses on (group) relation of power, dominance and inequality and the ways these are reproduced or resisted by social group members through text and talk” (Van Dijk, 1995: 18). The co-researchers are the subjects of a bigger machinery of state control and are, therefore, also equally subjected to questionable power relations. CDA assisted with identifying how to deal primarily with the discourse dimensions of power abuse, which results in the practice of injustice and inequality. This is done against the background that “powerful social actors not only control communication actions, but indirectly also the minds of the recipients” (Van Dijk, 1995: 21). From the study’s point of view, CDA analysed the real meaning behind the spoken words of the co-researchers and the written words of the principal researcher during the interviews. It further unmasked the written words that brought about different perspectives and a deeper understanding of what was mentioned by the co-researchers from a power relation perspective and how their interests were served. That is why CDA studies “the ways in which such influence and control of the mind is socially or morally illegitimate” (Van Dijk, 1995: 22).

In the context of the study, CDA explored how the research group members, who have backgrounds in education, parental involvement and communication, connected the languages they use and the social and political contexts in which it occurs. According to Masias (2010), CDA gives researchers a fruitful opportunity to understand the machinery that arouses and excites change in societies. It considers the type of text, frames it and describes it in a deeper sense of understanding the texts.

### **3.7.2 Theoretical origin of critical discourse analysis**

CDA is naturally embedded within the critical theory, a paradigm developed in the last three decades and whose critical impetus originates from the Frankfurt School, especially Habermas, Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse. CDA began to gain momentum in the 1970s in a series of publications which initially set out to bring Halliday's systemic functional linguistics into a more "broadly social perspective capable of taking in political issues of power and control" (Breeze, 2011: 495). It stems from a critical theory of language which sees the use of language as a form of social practice and how discourse is implicated in relations of power. Its development was to provide the means both for producing research questions and for analysing data. According to Tenorio (n.d.: 188), the philosophical and linguistic bases on which CDA is grounded, are certain branches of the social theory and the earlier discourse analysis, text linguistics and interactional sociolinguistics. CDA offered a theory of language that took the social functions of language seriously.

### **3.7.3 Textual analysis**

From Widdowson's (2004) perspective, text can be written or spoken and must be described in linguistic terms and in terms of their intended meanings. Therefore, the data collected from the co-researchers are analysed and interpreted to bring meaning to what is discussed and understood, taking into consideration matters of social injustice, inequality and domination.

According to Tenorio (n.d.: 186), texts are the only evidence for the existence of discourses. It is thus clear that such a discourse can be talked about, and how it is talked about and by whom should be mentioned. The goal of analysis at this level is to study the spoken text to pinpoint the reason why parental involvement is minimal in education.

### **3.7.4 Discursive practice analysis**

The discursive analysis is about taking a critical and oppositional stance against the powerful and the elite, and exercise "solidarity with dominated groups" (Van Dijk,

1995: 18). In the discursive analysis, the objective is to analyse and compare how the co-researchers respond to what others raised or said, and checks whether a common comprehension of the situation is expressed and analysed. The analysis examines the matters that perpetuates the construction of the power imbalance and the characteristics used to maintain the *status quo* in order to explore how to contribute to the transformation of the imbalanced situation.

The outcome of the analysis indicates whether to discern between the production and reproduction of the status quo of social inequality in society. Using this level of analysis during the focus group, the researcher tried to explore the text in the discussion that seemed to suggest the construction, maintenance and reproduction of disempowerment.

### **3.7.5 Social structure analysis**

The researcher observed during the focus group interaction how the different co-researchers expressed their different experiences of life in terms of how the “dominant in society have invented structures and technologies that seek to construct and maintain undesirable social structures that marginalise other people in the community” (Dube, 2016: 133). During the process, it was observed that the co-researchers excluded themselves from or included themselves textually in the undesirable imbalanced situation. Their historical backgrounds determined whether they are affected by the imbalanced social structure or not and these expressed sentiments were the reflection of the community they represent. It was examined whether this disadvantaging situation could impede the realisation of successful parental involvement in the education of their children.

## **3.8 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER**

In Chapter 3, the focus was on the research design and methodology and expatiated on the qualitative approach as the chosen point of departure. It pointed out the conceptual phase of the study, and the credentials of the co-researchers were briefly discussed, as well as how to ensure a common understanding with the other co-researchers. In the section of methodology, PAR was selected and its historical

background was thoroughly deliberated. After the corroboration of the group's texts, an in-depth analysis of the focus group's texts was conducted, based on critical discourse analysis with its three levels, namely textual, discursive and social structure analysis.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA, PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

The data were collected based on the participatory action research (PAR) method. Critical discourse analysis (CDA) with its three levels, namely textual, discursive and social practice, was used as a technique to analyse the data. The interaction with the focus group was to seek a strategy that would enhance parental involvement in education. The development of the strategy was strengthened by the knowledge and background of the co-researchers in the radio industry, education and their experiences as parents.

In this section, the focus is on the best practices and challenges of the community radio, the presentation of the data based on the experiences of the co-researchers, the interpretation of the texts deduced from the discussion with the co-researchers, and the analysis and discussion of the findings.

#### **4.2 CHALLENGES IN ENHANCING PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT BY COMMUNITY RADIOS**

##### **4.2.1 Community radio programmes**

Community radio programmes ensure that the listeners are empowered with the relevant information. The programmes must be informative, educative and address the needs and interests of the audiences. In order for the communities to embrace community radio programmes, the programmes must have “pedagogical importance” (Chandar & Sharma, 2003) and are used effectively when targeting the parents and other adults in the community. It was noted by Kische of X-K FM, a tribe member of the San clan in Platfontein, that at their radio station there are educational programmes that target both the adults and the children in their own language and

share ideas on health, education, culture and civic matters. Some of the community members are trained as programme developers, technicians, and station managers.

According to Betsi, a presenter at Teemaneng FM Studio in Kimberley, the challenge is that most of the new presenters at the station are not trained because they are volunteers who were never exposed to radio jobs. As a result, there is a high level of poorly presented programmes.

**Kishe:** *“We take in matriculants as internship after they wrote their mid-year and final examinations.”*

**Kishe:** *“They are not skilled, but the job creates skills development and employment, although it is not permanent. Here in our area, there are no projects to give our people employment.”*

**Betsi:** *“With in our case, we are empowered by attending radio courses in Gauteng.”*

Kishe expresses disappointment when she says, *“They are not trained in radio work”*, meaning that the programmes will stay of a low standard if training is not offered to the presenters, programme developers and management. Nevertheless, he also expresses his joy of having a community radio in their area because it *“creates skills development and employment”* opportunities sponsored by the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC). The training programmes that Betsi speaks about, allow them to attend *“radio courses in Gauteng”*, which are promising towards upgrading the standard of the radio programmes and also avail the opportunity to meet with experts and other people in the radio industry.

The focus group, especially those from the radio, is of the view that many programmes that are supposed to uplift the people are not broadcast. They suspect that either the programmes are deliberately withdrawn or there is really no funding for them.

According to CER as a lens for this study, the people need to be removed from the disadvantaging imbalanced situation of a lack of opportunities to empower them in terms of skills and to receive programmes that address their shortfalls.

#### **4.2.2 Basic infrastructure and resources**

Studies have indicated that the radio has “the widest geographical reach and the highest audiences compared with TV, newspapers and other ICTs” (Myers, 2008: 8), and will make accessing of information to become possible by the allocation of adequate radio infrastructure. The study of Froehlich *et al.* (2012) has found that a lack of funds is seen as the most severe constraint for an increased participation of the communities in all the regions covered by the community radio. This affects the allocation of sufficient resources and infrastructure to the operation and management of the community radio in order for the community radio to perform maximally.

If the radio fails to reach the people in remote areas, their chances of accessing important information on all the aspects of life will be denied. It will deny the parents information in the mechanics of parental involvement in education. Community radio is regarded by the group as the bridge between the community and itself. This has been emphasised by Kishe, Betsi and Abizim in their texts:

**Kishe:** *“When someone is needed at the radio station, announcement is done and within a few minutes the person is there at the station. But when the power is off, the announcement cannot be made because there is no power.”*

**Chana:** *“But it is funny. The other community radios have a more extended radius than X-K FM. How comes. Daylight robbery.”*

**Kishe:** *“X-K FM reaches a 100 km radius, and is also accessed internationally through internet. Unfortunately, there are local people, meaning people in the vicinity of more than 100 km who cannot reach us.”*

Kishe points out that messages are able to reach people very fast, especially if radio stations are well resourced. However, unfortunately, *“the announcement cannot be*

*made because there is no power*” and this is a disadvantage to the listener. Community radio stations are used as ‘one-stop’ stations by the communities and are effectively used when people are made aware of the opportunities thereof. The community radio can make things simpler for the parents by disseminating information to them on a continuous basis. The community members on the ground cannot understand the imbalanced allocation of resources and this is expressed by Chana when she says, “*The other community radios have a more extended radius than X-K FM*”, meaning a skewed provision of opportunities. Kishe cannot understand that the people closest to the station cannot access it, but it can be “*accessed internationally through internet*”. Although it showed some ignorance, he vented his frustration.

Failing to allocate adequate resources and to upgrade the infrastructure, will compromise the value of the community radio. The community will perceive it as a toothless bulldog. The listeners will opt for alternative media platforms to access information. This is what has been pointed out by Moyo (2012: 488) when he stated that a theoretically sound and rigorous framework of community radio as an alternative media platform must pay attention not only to its organisational structure, but also to the content and how it is produced, financed and distributed.

From a CER point of view, the denial of opportunity to access is denying the communities their human rights that allow them the right to information.

#### **4.2.3 Community participation**

Community participation has been regarded as one of the backbones of community radios. The poor participation of the community in the community radio is tantamount to disaster. The community radio is identified and hailed as one of the mediums that avail opportunities to communities to heavily access information and simultaneously creates a platform for communication. It empowers the communities with important information which can build the communities, parents and school relationships. The radio organises school projects, community sports activities and educational radio programmes.

Unfortunately, the challenge is that the community radio does not reach all the sections of the communities due to infrastructural constraints. The constraints discourage the communities to participate in the radio activities. Some broadcasts are not consistent and are suspended any time of the week without notifying the community. Keshi and Betsi expressed their frustration over the opportunities that do not reach the adults and youth of the community due to these challenges:

**Keshi:** *“We have school athletics, rugby, and soccer players, young boys and girls. Parents participate to show the children how fast they were in those times. They encourage children to participate in sports. We cannot go there and cover the event and come and promote at the studio.”*

**Betsi:** *“We at Radio Teemaneng are independent. We do not need the permission of SABC to take the radio to the village. Unfortunately, we are just short of money to do that.”*

Keshi’s frustration is illustrated in the text when he says, *“We cannot go there and cover the event and come and promote at the studio.”* The funds are withheld by the station managers for their own selfish interest. It is echoed by Betsi when he said, *“Unfortunately, we are just short of money to do that”* (that is, to cover the games in the community). The revenue of the radio also dries up and some of the programmes are suspended. In terms of the government and the private sector interventions, there are conditions attached. For instance, the government will not sponsor a community radio if there are no contractual obligations, or contributions by the private sector.

A community radio needs the support of the community in order to attract sponsorships and other donations. The relevance of a community radio is measured against the support it gets from the community.

CER is concerned with the communities who are denied access to the community institutions. The right of access to these institutions is a constitutional right which will empower the individuals to address its disadvantaged positions in society.

### **4.3 POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION**

#### **4.3.1 Capacity development as a solution towards community radio programmes**

In order to address or minimise the level of the production of a low standard of radio programmes, capacity development in the community radio is needed and must be “in step with the anticipated environment” (Maliehe, 2007: 1) to ensure the in-depth capacity building of the radio personnel. Capacity development will ensure that the presenters are well capacitated in their different fields, the management team is trained to monitor and evaluate the programming and the programme developers are well versed in how to co-produce programmes and its importance. The capacity development of all the radio staff will allow them to work as a team and produce programmes that are accepted and embraced by the community. The obstacles of illiteracy and language must become things of the past in relation to radio programmes.

Kishe says in Platfontein, the majority of the residents are not educated and depend on the community radio for general information and news on current affairs, in particular. The news broadcast, documentaries and stories need to be simple and comprehensible to the community. The language used in the broadcast is of great importance. Presenters who are not familiar with the language used in broadcasting compromise the significance of the programmes. Kishe pointed out to the group that the parents, particularly those who are illiterate, find it difficult to comprehend and relate to the programmes because sometimes the language used, sounds too technical and foreign to them.

**Keshi:** *“I cannot write. You must go to school to be my eyes. We must speak pure Xun. I do not understand the language used on radio.”*

**Kishe:** *“In Platfontein there is a language body in the village. They attended a workshop in Bloemfontein for Xun and Khwe. They are busy with a dictionary*

*but is not yet completed. The dictionary will assist them to increase their vocabulary.”*

Keshi expressed his gratitude to what the radio does to the development of their language by encouraging the dictionary developers to proceed and not stop with the project. Since the parents do not understand the language and want to listen and engage in the programmes, they encourage their children to go to school to learn the new languages, English and Afrikaans, when he indicates that some parents say “*you are my eyes, you must read for me*”. The children translate for the adults during the news or when they have visitors at their homes. During the day when the children are at school, the parents listen to the radio on their own. That is when it becomes difficult to interpret or understand the language.

Meiyo added to this by suggesting as follows:

**Meiyo:** *“If broadcast is presented in location, use their language. Maybe 98% will understand you. Adults will be attending. You will explain to them according to your knowledge and education. Ask questions in language they understand. Parents will be prepared to give their opinions.”*

The parent is in a dilemma and very frustrated and concerned. Kishé states that the elder said, “*We must speak pure Xun*”, because he or she is worried about the dwindling status of their local language, its deliberate exclusion and its isolation by the radio stations. The community realised the backlog, and became innovative and started their own language body because, according to Kishé, “*They are busy with a dictionary but is not yet completed*”, which will assist with the backlog. The dictionary will preserve the language for the future generation to avoid the extinction of the language when the radio is not using the required language. Servaes and Malikhao (cited in Hemer & Thomas, 2005: 91) are of the opinion that “[people] are ‘voiceless’ not because they have nothing to say, but because nobody cares to listen to them.” Therefore, the preservation of the language is in the right direction. It will allow parents to regularly participate in radio activities. Meiyo suggested the following: “*Ask questions in language they understand. Parents will be prepared to give their*

*opinions.*” It will give the community the urge and interest to participate in the radio programmes.

A needs analysis must be conducted to determine the community’s needs and interests and from the analysis outcome, the co-production of the programmes must be prioritised. The presenters must be trained in voice articulation, the usage of the required local language and how to familiarise themselves with the subject matter of the programme.

Most communities that do not have access to alternative media platforms, depend on the radio for updates on current affairs, especially the communities in the poor areas. They need relevant programmes that address their needs and interests. The community radio is the answer to their problems, provided that the radio uses the language understood by the people who are in need of the radio, the presenters are competent in their presentations and the programmes are reliable by not being suspended at any time of the day without notification. Parental involvement is enhanced when the parents are able to access the information that will motivate and educate them to participate in the education of their children.

#### **4.3.2 Provision of adequate resources as a solution towards basic infrastructure and resources**

In order to make it possible for the community radio to reach most of its listeners and to be sustainable and adequately maintained, adequate and suitable resources must be provided. The funds must be generated to pay stipends to volunteers, replace broken operational facilities and pay the rent. It is accepted that the community radio resources and infrastructure are expensive to procure, especially when the government and the private sector do not come to the party, but means should be devised in order to operate with ease. Committees can be established and given the responsibility to secure donations, resources and infrastructure on behalf of the community radio. Although contributions from the community are minimal, due to the economic circumstances, it must nevertheless be collected and added to the coffers of the community radio. Sometimes the government and the private sector donate



resources to or sponsor community radios that are already in existence or at the initial stage of operation.

Although communication for the purpose information is a constitutional right, the most of the local governments do not allocate resources to the community radios. That is why it is so expensive to run a community radio and it is made worse because of the expensive technical parts that have to be ordered from overseas and need special technicians to install.

The other setback with donations from outside is that the people become sceptical and fear that the donors will take over.

**Betsi:** *“At our radio station we have a functional Board of Directors. They are responsible in securing funds and implementing all the policies. Taking-over of the station by outsiders will not happen.”*

**Kishe:** *Community members must volunteer to be in the management to ask for sponsorship and guard against the so-called take-over.”*

**Kishe:** *“We go to the people and ask them: Why is radio there? What do they need from the radio? They cannot allow to lose it.”*

**Chana:** *“Mobile radio stations must go to the people. Broadcast from trucks and donkey cars.”*

The group realises the importance of resources and its procurement. That is why Betsi feels confident due to the presence of *“a functional Board of Directors”*. They fear sponsorships from outside, which will expose the community radio to manipulation and takeover by outside forces. Community radios are underresourced, therefore, they are open to takeover by outsiders. The co-researchers are vigilant when it comes to safeguarding the independence of the community radio. Betsi expressed his view confidently that *“[t]aking-over of the station by outsiders will not happen”*. Therefore, he is confident that nobody from outside the community will take over their radio station. He supported Kishe by emphasising volunteerism from the

community members when he says, “*Community members must volunteer to be in the management to guard against the so-called take-over.*” It is pretty clear that they staked a claim in the radio station as a community institution, therefore, the plea for community participation.

Securing basic resources and infrastructure from donors or communities is possible if communities can work together and in partnership with the board of directors of the community radios. The funds generated from the government, private sector and communities must be banked and used sparingly for the stipulated purpose. The station can also improvise by using conventional ways of visiting the communities, for instance, “*trucks and donkey cars*”. It will save the station money and resources. Increasing resources builds confidence in the communities and they will work towards sustaining their community radios. The community radio will be perceived as relevant by the community and the parents will get the opportunity to learn plenty from the radio programmes.

#### **4.3.3 Notion of common good as a solution towards community participation**

In order to make parental involvement possible, an effective approach, which will educate the parents on the importance of education, transform the communication space and promote the community participation, is needed. Apart from other intervention strategies, the notion of common good is one of the best approaches that can be used by the community radios to bring the communities together. It is considered an “intervention strategy of choice for deepening participation and community ownership” (Da Costa, 2012: 17) and creating societal cohesion and human dignity. The common good notion originated more than 2000 years ago in the writings of Plato, Aristotle and Cicero, and according to Velasquez, Andre, Shanks and Meyer (2014), it consists primarily of social systems, institutions and environments on which all humans depend, and working in a manner that benefits all the people.

Establishing and maintaining the common good require the cooperative efforts of some, often many, people because “no society of human beings is possible without what binds them together, what they seek communally” (Dukor, 2015: 51). Through

the notion of the common good advanced by radio, the cooperation of the community, school and parents will motivate them as the agents of change to achieve the advancement of education in society. Through the notion of the common good, the private media, according to Paul van der Veur (cited in Myers, 2014: 27), can play an important role in the development of democracy by informing and educating the public. The private media in the form of the community radio will allow parents to interact with the various stakeholders in society and “establish trust among members of the community, and provide an atmosphere for development to thrive rather than an atmosphere of mistrust, speculations and deception” (Pate & Abubakar, 2013: 12). The community radio must offer platforms for radio talks, educational programmes and community forum partnerships in order for parents and community members to build what Fairchild (2010: 24) calls “constituency relationship”. It can call community meetings, announce school activities and talk on the latest developments in education. It creates a “network of social relationships that is more likely to reinforce positive ‘behavioural’ change” (Banda, 2007: 143).

Community participation makes community radio “a very significant potential medium for social development” (Mohammed, 2013: 6) because it shares critical information on social matters, including how parents can be involved in their children’s education. This companionship is sowed on fertile soil for parental involvement to blossom and grow to a higher level.

In the absence of any other electronic media, parents depend on radio for information, but unfortunately, not all the community members own or have access to a radio. This notion was confirmed by Abizim and Chana when they mentioned that the neighbours could also share a radio and have parental responsibility to look after their neighbours’ children:

**Chana:** *“Because of the good neighbourliness, from my experience, radio has managed to unite people. Where there is no radio in a home, people will converge in that home where people will listen to stories, folklores, news or soccer match. Everybody will be happy. People will always club together.”*

**Abizim:** *“It is true. It can’t only be in the hands of the school to mould the child. It has to be the parents, the school, the community, the whole society, and everyone else, and the Department of Education, and even the radio. Parents in particular are very important in the moulding of the child.”*

The element of sharing and parental responsibility is indicated in Chana’s statement when she says that *“people will converge in that home where people will listen to stories, folklores, news or soccer match”*. Converging in a particular home to listen to radio also has a positive spin-off because it unites people. The neighbours’ participation is a recipe for a sound neighbourhood and a good spirit of peace among the community members. Some of the parents in the neighbourhood might not know or get the opportunity to share their knowledge on parental involvement or the lack thereof. Abizim argued that from an African perspective, it is not only the responsibility of the parent to raise a child, but it *“takes a whole village to raise a child”*. Abizim was again of the opinion that the intervention and contribution of the radio are also important when she said that not only the other stakeholders but *“even the radio”* can be part of the process.

The radio promotes social cohesion and the spirit of community participation. The radio stations must develop their own unique social responsibility programmes that will advocate togetherness and the sharing of information. The programmes must target the intended groups, for instance, parents, the youth and the unemployed. Kishe and Betsi gently noted as follows:

**Kishe:** *“In our area, parents are also taking part in sports during the holidays when radio organise tournaments. They want to show the children that they are still physically fit. They take part especially in athletics. ‘You know mos how fast the San people can run?’”*

**Betsi:** *“The tournament will bring the parents nearer to the schools. Parents might appreciate the efforts of the schools in engaging their children in sports during school holidays.”*

Parental involvement is not only about helping the children with their homework, driving them to school and paying their school dues. It is also supporting them with their schools' extra-curricular programmes, for instance attending soccer matches, debate sessions and assisting teachers with fund-raising projects. This has been indicated by Betsi when she said, *"In our area, parents are also taking part in sports during the holidays when radio organise tournaments."* Sports events that are covered by the community radios get the necessary exposure they deserve.

Keshi and Mumaza shared the sentiments of the others that, at least, the radio can be taken to them. Community members who are not able to access the radio due to their own difficult circumstances, need to be visited at their villages and/or homes. It has been posited by Sherwood (2015: 29) that "the relationship between the DJ and the listeners is about the exchange of ideas, events", therefore, the necessity of the disk jockeys (DJs) and listeners rubbing shoulders. Sherwood further says that the radio is in the process of adapting to ever-changing technology and the new media landscape is to go where the listeners are.

#### **4.4 COMPONENTS OF THE COMMUNITY RADIO**

##### **4.4.1 Capacity building and empowerment**

Community capacity building is defined by the United Nations (1990) as the process of developing and strengthening the skills, instincts, abilities, processes and resources that the organisations and communities need to survive, adapt and thrive in the fast-changing world. The staff is trained by an expert in communications, management and technology to ensure the top performance of the radio. The staff, in return, empower the community by training them as well that they can be absorbed into the radio. The community is trained on social responsibility, information sharing and institutional management. The information provided through the news, phone-in programmes and educational programmes by the trained staff confidently addresses the needs of the community.

Unfortunately, the demand for absorption into the station is too huge to accommodate all the community members. It will create an unnecessary congestion

and cause underperformance. The group sentimentally refers to the radio when mentioning community radio. It has been hailed by Chana as being very convenient because it is cheap and simple to maintain –

**Chana:** *“Radio is a school. It conducts informal education through broadcast and literally training people in workshops. The nicest part again about the radio is that; it is capable enough of reaching out to the people, and in as far as language is concerned.”*

**Meiyo:** *“Radio is more cost-effective, radio uses batteries. If you miss education programmes when power is off, then you can use batteries. You can take the battery out and put it in the sun, as opposed to television which needs decoder, aerial and dish involved.”*

The socioeconomic state does not allow everyone to have access to the media, whether printed or digital media. Therefore, the radio is a convenient device because it is affordable and accommodate even people who are illiterate. Chana and Meiyo pointed out the long-held belief that radio is easy to maintain because it can use a battery instead of electricity. In the past, people also used to remove the radio’s battery and recharge it in the sun.

#### **4.4.2 Informative**

The community radio occupies the space of media that cannot be accessed by the community by informing, educating and entertaining them. Wherever the community radio is available, it can be accessed because a radio is cheap to own and always available in stores that sell furniture and other household goods. Community radio can reach individuals or group of people at the same time. It is an interactive and two-way communication system. It broadcasts the news, hosts talk shows and competitions for the community in order to promote community participation and empowerment through information dissemination.

The challenge faced by the community radio is the competition it encounters with the social media, particularly Facebook and WhatsApp. This so-called alternative media

platforms have become a threat to the dissemination of information in the conventional way and are on the brink of declaring community radio irrelevant. The social media is difficult to access because it is not cheap to own, but is controlled by heavyweights who can manipulate the communities easily. Television is also a problem because children tend to switch off the radio in order to watch television and deny parents important information disseminated from the radio. The group stated the following:

**Chana:** *“Community radio is informative, although it is threatened by other media houses.”*

**Chana:** *“By the way, the cell phone has also taken over from radio. Most of the time people are using it to play music and watch movies. Parents are no more able to listen to radio together with their children.”*

**Meiyo:** *“When parents are still listening to the radio children switch off the radio because they want to watch television. The adults lose out from important information. Maybe the programmes must [be] broadcasted in the morning.”*

In the study, it was established that the radio has proven to be a better option to the modern devices in terms of affordability, portability and accessibility, although the influence of technology is powerful and will probably take over the reins.

Chana pointed to the threat of *“other media houses”*. Meiyo acknowledged the threat of social media on the radio. She even suggested that *“[m]aybe the programmes must [be] broadcasted in the morning”* when the children are at school. She is supported by Chana that *“the cell phone has also taken over from radio”* and most of the time, during their leisure time, people watch television or are on their cell phones.

Parents still recognise the community radio as a force to reckon with, although parents and the community at large have been turned into commercial slaves by the communication industry. They are deliberately denied access to information, only to find themselves craving for the alternative media.

Owing to poverty and other impediments, parents find themselves at the receiving end. Based on the objectives of CER, the communities must be emancipated from the conditions in which they find themselves.

#### **4.4.3 Community relationship-building**

It has been realised that, through radio, good neighbourly relationships can be built by listening to the radio together, discussing information and sharing ideas. The radio engages the communities in talk shows, where they debate, criticise and advise on social matters. The community members will either phone in on the talk shows or personally go to the station to speak on the air. School activities that are announced on the radio are attended by the parents who participate in the activities. This engagement and participation build a good relationship with the community and empower the parents with more information on the different activities in the educational space.

Through the community radio, the community relationships are also enhanced by the common language that is used to broadcast. The local and common language used on the community radio also accommodates the foreigners who are new in the community and even enhances the spirit of embracing in the communities. Social cohesion is developed by the radio through the information in its programmes.

Three participants answered the question, “What social programmes can be planned and successfully implemented to begin and sustain everlasting community relationships?”, as follows:

**Chana:** *“Teachers can form committees to engage parents.”*

**Mumaza:** *“Engage community leaders in the committees. No politicians, please!”*

**Abizim:** *“All stakeholders must be involved. Doctors are having Doctors Without Borders. Why can’t education also have the same and use radio to*



*advocate that? We dedicate one day to meet with the parents at a certain village. We talk to them about education and its importance.”*

Abizim related an idea of “Schools Without Borders”, which the researcher found valuable. The communities need to build relationships and do away with the ‘us and them’ mentality. They need to be friends and share ideas on how to be involved, as parents, in the education of their children. She said that they needed to have a school without borders and bring the school to the community.

The group is serious about community relationships that can result in motivating the parental involvement in education. They suggested, as Chana said, that “[t]eachers can form committees to engage parents”. Chana’s statement can be understood that teachers are the nation builders and the middlemen in the community. Obviously, the community leaders were not forgotten by Mumaza when she proposed, “Engage community leaders in the committees” and no politicians.

Community relationships are only achieved and sustained if a regular exchange of information and a sharing of ideas are sustained. Nothing beats a committed neighbourhood when it wants to build relationships on peaceful grounds through listening to the radio together. Engaging the community leaders, such as teachers, priests and traditional leaders, is imperative to the sustainability of the relationship. This engagement and commitment were expressed by the co-researchers. Language and culture are the binding forces that can create a harmonious and peaceful atmosphere within the community. Therefore, the community radio has a huge responsibility on its shoulders to broadcast in a language understood by all.

#### **4.5 CONDITIONS FOR THE SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY THAT RESPOND TO CHALLENGES**

##### **4.5.1 Skilled personnel**

An institution such as a community radio with trained and skilled personnel will enable the institution to perform well and achieve its objectives with ease and to the benefit of its listeners. Competent programme developers will produce programmes

that are attractive to the community and will inspire them to participate in the radio's broadcasts. Through the cooperation of the presenters and programmers, the presentation of the programmes will be of a high standard because they will be presented by the people who know and understand their work. For the community radio to function optimally, the technicians must ensure that the studio and other technical aspects are always in working order.

It is obvious that the parents in the community do not respond positively to the programmes of the community radio when they do not know the presenters or location of the radio station.

In order to reach that level of performance, the management must arrange regular training and development. Betsi mentioned that they are sometimes sent outside their area of jurisdiction for training, which is a positive move because it exposes them to how other presenters are conducting their trade. It is motivating and will sustain their spirit of volunteerism. Kishe indicated the following:

**Kishe:** *"They are not trained in radio work"*

Kishe cried foul of the level of competence of their presenters. What he meant by *"not trained in radio work"* is that they need training, such as attending workshops and other effective intervention programmes, to be able to perform to the best of their abilities.

The community depends on highly organised information from the media. The community will be happy if the information delivered is of a high standard. The personnel will also be eager to convey the information from a platform of confidence. Therefore, training is the core requirement for the optimal performance of the radio personnel.

#### **4.5.2 Adequate and sustainable resources**

Skilled personnel, coupled with adequate and correct required resources, ensures that the radio performs optimally. Adequate and sustainable resources allow the

radio to operate effectively and are a recipe for social gain for the community. More listeners, donors and sponsors are attracted to the radio and boost the confidence of the radio personnel.

Nevertheless, it becomes a challenge if competitors with personal interests in the community radio sway away people. They will use their resources to manipulate the community radios and feed wrong information to the community. Betsi vented his frustration on what seems to be kept from them:

**Betsi:** *“We are denied the opportunity to visit the communities, because money allocated by sponsors to use for that purpose are kept away from us. We do not know if they are looted or what”*

**Mumaza:** *“Community radios do not have resources to use to reach the people.”*

Betsi’s suspicion of the unavailability of resources was vented when he said, *“We do not know if they are looted or what.”* This statement shows that there is a threat that the communities will not receive any satisfactory service from the radio station because the resources that make it possible, are withdrawn from the operational space. This was reiterated by Mumaza when she pointed out that *“[c]ommunity radios do not have resources to use to reach the people”*.

Sherwood (2015: 29) observes that the withdrawal of resources, automation and budget cuts has resulted in the reduction of local news departments to shadows of themselves. The staff cannot reach the people because the station manager makes it impossible and the station manager is not transparent when he deals with the radio station resources. Krüger (2013: 44) takes the point further when he states that without functional, good quality equipment and without good financial management, which means the capacity to control spending of the core staff, job descriptions, staff performance contracts and annual review reports, monthly station reports to the board, minutes of management meetings, human resources policy and procedures, including volunteer and training policies, the station will not be able to produce quality programming.

By failing to allocate resources to the community radio, the communities are denied opportunities of information. This goes against the grain of not denying access to information, as enshrined in the Constitution of South Africa, 1996 (Act No. 108 of 1996).

### **4.5.3 Cooperative community**

Community radio is the radio for the community, by the community. Communities work together to sustain the community radio because the community radio has become the pillow on which to cry. Therefore, the success of a community radio relies on how the communities relate to it and how the community radio responds to the needs and interests of the communities. Not all the community radios are state-owned or fully sponsored by the private sector. They need to raise revenue to operate optimally and be sustainable in order to serve the community with ease.

Keshi said the people in his community mostly enjoy radio over weekends when they are free and enjoying their leisure time. They jive to the music played by the community radio and listen to the stories, folklore and sports broadcasts.

Meiyo and Mumaza suggested that in order to promote community cooperation, festivities must be held at the shopping malls where the messages of education are infused into the activities of the day. Mamuza and Meiyo highlighted on this by saying as follows:

**Meiyo:** *“Radio can stage gigs on Saturdays or Monday and during the week. “I want to see what is happening there”, they will say. They will also be given the opportunity to speak. They are asked questions and win for every correct answer given.”*

**Mumaza:** *“At Kimberley Hospital they invited the Revival Radio. Most of the presenters that is loved by listeners went there to read the Bible. Majority people attended to see their favourite presenters.”*

The statements by Meiyu and Mumaza show that the community is ready to cooperate and support the community radio. This is indicated by Meiyu when she says the community, out of curiosity, would jump and say, *“I want to see what is happening there,”* It is further taken by Mumaza when she said the *“majority people attended to see their favourite presenters”*.

In the process, the festivities during the radio roadshow can be used to preach the gospel of parental involvement in education. This was supported by the following comments:

**Mumaza:** *“Radio can meet the people by having competitions in the public where people win prizes. They are called question around the theme of the day, for example, education.”*

**Meiyu:** *“I was thinking that we use the local station to campaign and meet at the arena. The theme should be ‘parenthood’. They will go there to listen. It must be motivated by the radio.”*

**Chana:** *“It is true. Radio must meet with the people. If technology can enable people to access radio whilst driving a car, working at home, at farms, at school, and even riding a bicycle, then it can also be physically taken to the people.”*

**Abizim:** *“Radio is there to bridge the gap. Let’s bridge the gap. There is a river here between parenthood and a learner. There is a river...and radio or media is one of them. Let’s use the media to bridge the gap.”*

The co-researchers were pleading for the closure of the gap between the community and the community radios because they are too far from each other. The plea was made by Mumaza when she said, *“Radio can meet the people by having competitions in the public where people win prizes.”* Community radio station managers should request for sponsorship and meet the people because, according to Abizim, *“Radio is there to bridge the gap”*, and she concluded by saying, *“Let’s*

*use the media to bridge the gap.*” That is the only way to realise the benefits of the community radio.

The people must be taught the importance of information, community radio and community participation. They must, in the future, pass that knowledge to their children, communities and schools.

#### **4.6 THREATS TO COMMUNITY RADIO TO OVERCOME PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN EDUCATION**

##### **4.6.1 Shortage of skills**

Community radio stations with skilled people are a recipe for informative programmes, effective management teams and competent technicians. However, the opposite is disastrous, rendering the community radio ineffective, unattractive and losing listeners. Where there is a lack of merit, people tend not to relate to the radio station and its programmes, and will ultimately withdraw their allegiance. Betsi expressed an opinion on the poorly skilled radio personnel:

**Betsi:** *“At our radio station, we struggle to recruit competent presenters because there a very little who are trained. All of us are volunteers. We learn in the process.”*

**Chana:** *“I hear them ... their tongues. They need a lot of brush up. Even the programmes stop haphazardly.”*

The situation needs attention because the radio will lose listenership. It was worrisome to hear Betsi saying that *“there are very little who are trained”*. It seems Chana is somewhat accommodative and does not paint the situation with the same harsh brush when he says, *“They need a lot of brush up.”* Staff must be trained and station managers must not be afraid to spend money on training and workshops.

The situation is a reflection of how the communities are short of skills development programmes, especially with regard to the communication industry. Parents need

first-class and reliable information from skilled presenters and competent station management.

#### **4.6.2 Inadequate revenue to sustain radio stations**

It has been established that countries with sound economic environments are able to fund their community radios in order to ensure that their communities stay on par with all the latest developments in the country. This also implies that community radios would experience a long-term impact on its performance and sustainability if little funding would be directed towards them. Countries with socioeconomic problems have a problem to carry their community radios. Therefore, it is also not feasible for community members to donate towards the coffers of the community radios due to their economic status. Therefore, the little revenue generated for the community radios by the communities in poor socioeconomic conditions will not be able to sustain the community radios.

Politicians and other sources with good resources come forward to volunteer in supporting the community radios with an ulterior motive. They impose their programmes on the communities and feed them with propaganda. This happens to radio stations with dilapidated resources and infrastructure. Nevertheless, Mumaza had a different opinion on this –

**Mumaza:** *“However, politicians are there to attract the people to their parties, so I do not believe that politicians can become a threat to the radio.”*

However, she was contradicted by Chana and Meiyo –

**Chana:** *“Look, it is a common norm. Presenters choose stories of politicians who can sponsor the radio station.”*

**Meiyo:** *“Anyway, donation must come from somewhere, although I don’t know from where”.*

It is clear from the statements by Mumaza and Chana that the elite takes advantage of the radios that are struggling to make ends meet. They use the presenters to

broadcast their agendas. This is highlighted by Chana when he said that *“it is a common norm. Presenters choose stories of politicians who can sponsor the radio station”*. It is clear and obvious that the radio could become vulnerable to opportunistic vultures. Within the same discussion, Meiyu acknowledged a need for the community radios to be bailed out.

Community radios without revenue are under threat and open to exploitation because the people with financial muscles are ready to sponsor for their own personal gain. The communities are, in the process, losing out and fed with propaganda carrying a lot of misinformation that does not serve their needs. The target group is the parents who are being deceived and parental involvement takes a backseat.

The poor who cannot access other social media platforms, are targeted and exploited. The powerful flex their muscles on the vulnerable parents who cannot respond to the abuse of power. The missed opportunity to access information is a direct regression to enhancing parental involvement.

#### **4.6.3 Poor community participation**

Community members who are committed to their community radio will stand together and organise programmes to sustain their community radio. If well organised, the community will benefit from the objectives of the radio, which is to educate, inform and entertain.

Parents wish to participate in the community projects organised by the radio, but the co-researchers raised the problem that, unfortunately, they do not own radios at their homes. Unemployment is also a serious hindrance to community participation in the radio station. Unemployment impedes the parents to donate money to the community radio, to purchase airtime to phone during talk shows and to travel to its organised activities. The following matters were raised:



**Mumaza:** *“No projects are given to the village in order to empower people for temporary jobs. People cannot afford radios, therefore they cannot be part of the radio.”*

**Betsi:** *“Parents are not benefiting from the radio. Resources must be allocated to visit the listeners at their localities. In the past, those who are unable to attend are visited at their homes, communities, or schools. Nowadays, it’s dead as dead.”*

**Chana:** *“Broadcast can be done from trucks and donkey cars.”*

**Kishe:** *“We need to work together and bring the radio to the people, although it is expensive to do that. School must benefit from the radio. Radio has a big role to play to bring parents together.”*

Mumaza argued that “[p]eople cannot afford radios, therefore they cannot be part of the radio”. Their non-participation is beyond their control, although they are willing to participate. Therefore, Betsi made the following plea:

**Betsi:** *“Parents are not benefiting from the radio... In the past, those who are unable to attend are visited at their homes, communities, or schools. Nowadays, it’s dead as dead.”*

The plea is that in order to encourage community participation, the community must be visited where they are and not be expected to go to the station because it is difficult for them to reach the station if they do not have money for transport. Kishe also indicated that it is not only the parents who will benefit from the community radio, but also the children and the school.

Chana provided the solution of mobile radio trucks that can be taken to the community to broadcast in their vicinity, even if, as he suggested they have to “[b]roadcast from trucks and donkey cars”. The management shies away from allocating funds to the presenters’ crew to visit the communities. This compromises

the achievement of the objectives of the radio station, which is to educate, inform and entertain.

Unfortunately, when one listens to Betsi, one gets the impression that the management of the radio is in the wrong hands when he said, "*Parents are not benefiting from the radio.*" The interpretation is that the resources are not provided, therefore, the radio reaches the people with difficulty. Shying away from allocating resources is not a solution. The community will stay in darkness as far as information is concerned.

The creation of employment should become a priority for those who have the means to do that, namely the government and the private sector. Some homes do not have radios, televisions or even cell phones. The lack of ownership of these devices has an impact on the poor and the illiterate to receive information. Therefore, Kische is correct to ask for projects in the village to create employment for the community people and to generate an income to buy radios, pay school fees and the other basics necessities of life.

The imbalanced access to opportunities renders the communities perpetually underprivileged.

#### **4.7 SUMMARY OF CHAPTER**

Chapter 4 focused on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data generated from the literature study conducted on the role of the community radio in enhancing parental involvement in education. The chapter tried to justify the need for the framework by discussing the challenges and the possible solutions for successful parental involvement in education, the components of the framework and conditions that are conducive to the successful implementation of parental involvement, and the threats to the community radio to overcome parental involvement.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter, a presentation is done of the findings of the analysed data and the recommendations, discussions and conclusion towards the role of the community radio in enhancing parental involvement in education. The chapter starts with the aim and objectives of the study, followed by the findings and recommendations, based on the challenges, solutions, components and conditions of the findings. Thereafter, a brief discussion of the limitations of the study and a conclusion with the summary of the chapter follow.

#### **5.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The aim of this study is to enhance parental involvement in education through the use of community radio. The objectives are to demonstrate and justify the needs for or challenges of parental involvement through the use of community radio, the possible solutions for parental involvement through the use of community radio, the components of parental involvement through the use of community radio, the threats to the community radio to enhance parental involvement successfully and the indicators of enhancing successful parental involvement.

#### **5.3 AN OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY**

The aim of the study is to explore the role of the community radio on how it can enhance parental involvement in the education. Many parents never find the opportunity to advance in education and, hence, they find themselves positioned in an imbalanced social construct that seems to make them reluctant to become actively involved in the education of their children. For these reasons, this study is grounded on a critical theoretical viewpoint. Therefore, CER is used as a theoretical framework for this scholarly piece. The argument of the study is informed by the five principles of CER, namely emancipation, hope, peace, democracy and social justice

and its five objectives. It is on this basis that the study argues from the premise of the emancipation of an imbalanced social construct. The study is also informed by the ontological and epistemological assumptions of its theory. Therefore, the theoretical framework assists the principal research to understand the role of the researcher and relationship with the co-researchers and how equality should be negotiated among the researchers.

## **5.4 FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The findings and recommendations in this chapter are based on the three components that were identified as the challenges of the community radio to enhance parental involvement in education. These three components are the standard of radio programmes, the inadequate basic infrastructure and community participation.

### **5.4.1 Findings regarding community radio programmes**

Capacity development ensures that the personnel in any institution are well capacitated in their different fields and it is no different at community radios. Nevertheless, it has been established that poor programming has become a problem at community radios and the listeners are not satisfied. As a result, listenership numbers are shrinking, which has been attributed to a lack of skilled personnel. The sustainability of the station is also under threat due to the shrinking numbers of the listeners.

In order to circumvent this problem, the findings have indicated that capacity development through training and workshops should be administered because it will allow the staff to work as a team and produce programmes that are accepted and embraced by the community. During the capacity development programmes, the management team is trained to monitor and evaluate the programmes, the programme developers are trained to produce quality programmes and the community members are trained in the co-production of the programmes.

#### **5.4.1.1 Recommended components of community radio programmes**

Based on the findings, it is recommended that the community radio should have a clear purpose by training and capacitating all its personnel. The presenters must be trained to be proficient in the language of broadcast and have a clear understanding of the subject matter of the programmes. The managers need to be competent to monitor and evaluate the programming process, to review it and to make informed decisions. A well-planned capacity development programme with well-planned policies must be in place.

Capacity development must be extended to the parents and the community in the co-production of the programmes, management skills and presenting from the studio. The parents can be involved in in-service training programmes and workshops in order to enhance their existing knowledge of the social needs and interests.

#### **5.4.1.2 Recommended conditions conducive to community radio programmes**

For successful programming, the presenters, programmes developers, management team and parents must have been trained and be competent in producing the programmes that are acceptable to the community. These programmes must be educative, informative and entertaining and must talk to the needs and interests of the community. The parents, together with the community, must be allowed the opportunity to co-produce the programmes because they are the end users of the programmes. Required, adequate and sustainable resources must be allocated because the community radio depends on these resources to render its services sufficiently and satisfactorily to the community.

#### **5.4.1.3 Risks for community radio and recommendations for community radio programmes**

The findings of the study are that if there is no funding of resources, no skilled presenters and programme developers and poorly trained management staff, the

programmes are at the risk of collapse. The number of audiences are dwindling due to non-appealing radio programmes. The parents are not able to relate to the radio and rather look for alternative media platforms to access good programmes.

Adding to that, when parents are not part of the production team, they tend to show little interest in the programmes that do not carry their stamp of approval. The programmes, therefore, will not be sharing their needs and interests and the community participation becomes insignificant.

Based on the risks identified, it is, therefore, recommended that an effective capacity development plan that will be continuously funded by the government, private sector or the community itself, if possible, must be developed. The community, particularly the parents, must be included in the production of the programmes and training and workshops conducted.

#### **5.4.2. Findings regarding basic infrastructure and resources**

It is clear that the community radios are able to function optimally when adequately resourced.

The findings of the study show that it will be easy to reach the majority of the listeners and provide the relevant programmes needed by the communities. The community radio will render the programmes that touch on social issues, for instance, education, health, culture, religion and sports. If the community radio serves the communities well, the communities will be prepared to work towards the sustenance of the community radio, together with the radio station's board of directors. The generation of funds and other resources can be secured from the communities' radio clubs, government and the private sector. With the available stipends, the volunteers and permanent staff will be able to be paid. The conventional way of reaching the listeners can be utilised, for instance, trucks and donkey carts, playing at public spaces and schools.

The challenge is that it is difficult to raise capital to fund and sustain the community radio due to the difficult economic environment. It has also been established that the

radio facilities are expensive, especially when they are delivered from foreign countries. The other challenge is that in the fast-growing technological era, resources are quickly becoming outdated and need continuous replacement, which is an uphill struggle in these trying times.

#### **5.4.2.1 Recommended components of basic infrastructure and resources**

The basic resources required for the smooth running of a community radio are functional office equipment and human resources, for instance, telephones, computers, sufficient and competent office staff and an asset register. The regular upgrade and improvement of the infrastructure must be prioritised by generating revenue to replace dilapidated instruments in order to avoid the unsustainability of the radio station. If possible, the government and private sector can assist with the provision of resources.

Sound financial management is a prerequisite for a successful community radio station. The resources that must be procured by the community radio need an attractive bank balance. Therefore, the office secretary must be vigilant and up to date with his or her finance accounts. Sponsorships and donations from other agencies are determined by how the finances are accounted for. The availability of transport must be prioritised in order to visit the audience on a regular basis.

It is important to have committed, accountable and responsible radio staff that will be able to regulate and monitor the radio resources responsibly. It is also advisable to have a community liaison officer in the fold who is able to look after the interests and needs of the community.

#### **5.4.2.2 Recommended conditions for basic infrastructure and resources**

The committees must be functional and should consist of community members, radio staff and civil institution representatives. These committees will assist in raising funds and managing the resources of the community radio.

It is important to generate reserved revenue to function as a stipend in order to attend to the short-term needs and programmes of the community radio, as well as to pay the volunteers and permanent staff.

#### **5.4.2.3 Risk of basic infrastructure and resources and recommendations for circumventing them**

The risk of basic infrastructure and resources is that they are too expensive to procure and might take time to secure. Moreover, the resources in the communication industry are advanced digital resources that quickly become outdated and need immediate replacement, which might be impossible due to financial constraints. It has been established that the resources in the form of funding, especially by foreign donors, is that “the return on investment for donors was obviously not financial but arguably political” (Myers, 2014: 23). USAID used this approach expertly when its media assistance was unashamedly a tool of foreign policy in 2004.

The recommendations to avoid risks are that the total outsourcing of donations can run the risk of being manipulated as a community radio, therefore, a regulated approval of donations must be put in place. The management must be well trained in monitoring and evaluating the use of the resources because the volunteers might take advantage and waste the resources.

#### **5.4.3 Findings regarding community participation**

Community participation is a transformational phenomenon that creates a platform for parents to become actively involved in the education of their children. It is an “intervention strategy of choice for deepening participation and community ownership” (Da Costa, 2012: 17). Therefore, the findings of the study are that the community radio, through its objectives, is a vehicle that can promote the cooperation of the community, school and parents. It has been realised that the community radio can also create an atmosphere of development to thrive, rather than an atmosphere of mistrust, speculations and deception. The community radio can build a network of social relationships and is a very significant potential medium



for social development and social cohesion. The community radio can also be used by the community to support the schools' extracurricular programmes, for instance, attending soccer matches and debate sessions, and assisting teachers with fundraising projects.

#### **5.4.3.1 Recommended components of community participation**

A notion of the common good as an effective approach will bring the parents and communities together. It is an intervention strategy of choice for deepening the participation and community ownership and will promote the cooperation, trust and honesty among the community members through educational programmes that have been produced in combination with the community.

#### **5.4.3.2 Recommended conditions for community participation**

The services of the community radios mostly target the communities that cannot afford mainstream media. Therefore, the resources that are at the disposal of the community radio must be shared with the community. For instance, in small areas, the residents use the community radio to call the emergency services, such as the ambulance services, police and fire brigade.

Without the active participation of the community in the operations of the community radio, the radio will not survive and achieve its objectives. It is, therefore, imperative that in the process of community participation, capacity development must also take place because it will strengthen the relationship between the community radio and the community.

#### **5.4.3.3 Risk of community participation and recommendation for circumventing it**

Owing to infrastructural constraints, poor quality programmes and unsustainable stations, the most communities withdraw from listening or are not reached. As a result, the community radio experiences limited community participation or even none.

People tend to misuse the resources if no strict systems are in place to regulate the resources, especially when the station is reluctant to share the resources. This action is sometimes misconstrued as an action performed by the radio station and people tend to withdraw their support.

In order to avoid a huge withdrawal of community participation in the community radio, the recommendation is that more resources should be allocated, the resources should be shared and the co-production of the programmes should be enhanced. Proper systems to monitor and evaluate the programming and the proper regulation of resources should be enhanced.

## **5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

One of the limitations of this study is the fact that more emphasis is put on the community radio, instead of radio as a whole. The weakness here is that in an urban setup, the most people are nowadays exposed to mainstream radio instead of community radio only. The study also wrongly assumed that people generally are radio listeners and it failed to take into account that there is also a powerful social media in the market, backed up by people with huge resources, who can easily influence or sway listenership. It is also the researcher's view that not all the people have time to listen to the radio, but instead prefer to watch television, become glued to their social media devices and go out on weekends. As a result, the radio is not able to reach or get the attention of the targeted population.

The other limitation of the study is that it was not possible to reach and use a broad spectrum of co-researchers, although they were representative based on the proposed title of the research. More focus groups from various areas are needed in order to reach a broader consensus on the role of the community radio in enhancing parental involvement in education. This perception may be particularly evident in the limited input given by the group members concerned.

The study has limitations that can be improved by other researchers.

## **5.6 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

Chapter 5 summarised the synthesis of the findings and conclusions of the research process. It justified whether the aims and objectives of the research proposal were met or not. It also gave an overview of the study by deliberating on the various chapters of the study. It concluded by expressing the findings encountered in the research and how they addressed the theoretical framework of the study.

## **5.7 FINAL REMARKS**

Through the journey of the study, the researcher realised that it has been an educative trajectory that fulfilled the understanding of parental involvement in education. It has also been humbling to discover that the community radio can contribute towards an informative environment and to an effective comprehension and enhancement of parental involvement in education. It has been an eye-opening exercise to engage with the co-researchers and much was learnt from their experiences.

Not all the parents were fortunate to have advanced in education. Some of the others did not have the opportunity to be exposed to various types of media that empowered them with information on the importance of education and how parents can be involved in the education of their children. Some parents did not register their children of school-going age at school and others did not show full responsibility of making sure their children attend school regularly. With this understanding, the researcher argues that there needs to be a mechanism to enable the parents to access information in order to educate and enhance their understanding of parental involvement in education. Similarly, it is important that the culture of community participation must be practised in order to sustain parental involvement.

Through the interaction with the team of co-researchers, it was discovered that people must have an in-depth knowledge of the importance of the community radio and how to utilise it to their advantage. The community radio enables access to information that “encourage[s] open dialogue and democratic process by providing an independent platform for interactive discussion about matters and decisions of

importance to the community” (Fraser & Restrepo-Estrada, 2002: 70). Through this interaction, the parents can learn about education and how to become involved. The challenges, which the community radio has picked up during the journey, makes it difficult for the community radio to achieve its goals and have been supplemented with solutions. Throughout the study, it has also been discovered that radio programmes, adequate radio resources and infrastructure, and community participation play prominent roles in educating the communities. Therefore, the solutions to the challenges are as follows: capacity development of the radio personnel is important in order to produce effective programmes that are able to sustain listeners and effectively inform the communities; adequately resourced community radio stations reach listeners easily; and the participation of communities in the operations of the radio station is able to sustain the radio and enhance better information-sharing and build societal cohesion and human dignity.

The aim of the strategy was to ensure that the community radio becomes a relevant tool to the community, particularly underpinned by the desire to ensure the parental involvement in education and how it will benefit the community and the country in general. Furthermore, the strategy sought to ensure that parental involvement with the backing of the community radio contributes positively to social justice, peace, hope, emancipation and democracy. The strategy advances the role of the community radio by becoming a public sphere where “different development issues are discussed because open lines of communication have been established to ensure that there is horizontal communication or the free flow of information among community members” (Mhagama, 2004: 70). This strategy must ensure that no community members, irrespective of their social statuses and those deserving, are left behind. The strategy tried to address the imbalance of power within the community that put the deserving community members to a disadvantage to access information through the community radio.

The researcher is of the view that this strategy can be applied to any other country where there is a need for the enhancement of parental involvement in education. Similarly, it is the researcher’s view that this strategy is not cast in stone and is open for inquiry. Inputs by other scholars are welcome and can be infused to this strategy

in order to popularise the community radio to the problem of parental involvement in education.

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