

## CHAPTER 5

### PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH

#### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, the researcher has registered that programme evaluation research is a strong ingredient for the success of social programmes. This study is about the evaluation of the Poverty Relief Programme (PRP) in the Limpopo Province within the context of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) from a social work perspective. It is a difficult task to evaluate a social programme such as the PRP unless an effective programme evaluation research process is accordingly conducted. This chapter is therefore about a thorough discussion of programme evaluation research.

In attempting to do so, the researcher will divide this chapter into sections and present them as follows:

- In the first section, the study will conceptualize programme evaluation research
- In the second section, the study will discuss the aims and objectives of programme evaluation research. Aims are specified in broad terms and in order to measure them, they are divided into objectives which are stressed into variables which are measurable.
- In the third section, the study will discuss the categories of programme evaluation research.
- In the fourth section, the study will identify and discuss the theoretical perspectives of the programme evaluation research.
- In the fifth section, the study will discuss the four types of programme evaluation research, namely: monitoring, impact/outcome evaluation, formative evaluation and summative evaluation research. This study utilizes the summative evaluation research.
- In the sixth section, the study will discuss the programme evaluation research process. During this discussion, the researcher will identify some important programme evaluation research concepts namely: stakeholders, participation, types of participation and the barriers to participation.

## **5.2. CONCEPTUALIZATION OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

In this section, the researcher conceptualizes programme evaluation research through its definition and discussion of its characteristics.

### **5.2.1. DEFINITION OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:20) define programme evaluation research as “the use of social research procedures to systematically investigate the effectiveness of social intervention programs that is adapted to their political and organizational environments and designed to inform social action in ways that improve social conditions.”

For Monette, Sullivan and DeJong (1994:313), programme evaluation research is “a means of supplying valid and reliable evidence regarding the operation of social programs or clinical practices - how they are planned, how well they operate, and how effectively they achieve their goals.”

According to the above definitions, programme evaluation research is an investigation which is conducted on the social programmes in order to identify whether they are successful to achieve their goal of improving the conditions of communities. Social programmes were already explained as components of the social policy. In this regard, programme evaluation research intends to inform those who formulated and implemented the social programmes about their effectiveness or weakness.

Mark (1996:230) defines programme evaluation research as “a type of research that uses established social science research methods to evaluate the success or effect of a social service program.”

Programme evaluation research is defined as a social science research in that it utilizes the research methodologies which are scientific in nature, it is conducted in an ethical manner and that its process is accordingly specified to ensure replication by future researchers. This type of research is therefore relevant to this study which seeks to evaluate the PRP within the context of the RDP from a social work perspective.

Usually when a programme has taken place or it is in operation, its recipients, managers and funding institutions need to know whether it is improving the lives of those it was intended to assist, and if it is effective and efficient in achieving its intended goals. Programme evaluation research provides information regarding what has led to the programme success or failure. Programme evaluation research could be viewed as a tool used by managers to improve their programmes and thereby making appropriate decisions. Decisions regarding the PRP's successes or failures are through its characteristics which will be discussed in the following part of the section.

## **5.2.2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

It is necessary that the characteristics of programme evaluation research be identified and discussed in detail. In this way, the researcher will discuss the following characteristics of programme evaluation research in detail: it is a newly established research type, it is an applied research, it is a social science research, it improves the qualities of lives, it has a political element it is a guide to the stakeholders, it is a project planning, it is about accountability and it has an element of participatory action research.

### **5.2.2.1. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH IS A NEWLY ESTABLISHED TYPE OF RESEARCH**

Potter (1999:209-210) explains that programme evaluation in South Africa, is increasingly gaining recognition although it is relatively in a smaller fraction. It has since the 1990's become "an essential part of the development of social programmes."

Programme evaluation research is a necessary requirement for every social programme which receive public funding. The researcher believes that programme evaluation research will in future be a prerequisite for social programmes which will be formulated and implemented in the South African context. This requirement was discussed in the previous chapter on the RDP which explained that one of the objectives of the RDP is to evaluate the social programmes.

#### **5.2.2.2. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH IS A SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH**

Programme evaluation research is a scientific research endeavour which utilizes the advanced social science research methodologies which are intended to provide information regarding the achievement or failure of particular social policies or social programmes which are intended to improve lives of communities.

Programme evaluation research “supplies information to decision makers who have responsibility for designing, funding, and implementing programs” (Brooks, 1997:113).

Mark (1996:231) says that “for these reasons, program evaluations typically use preexperimental or quasi-experimental designs that are approximations to the experimental designs.”

Programme evaluation research is a scientific endeavour which is guided by the research design and ethical considerations. In this regard, the programme evaluation research utilizes all the available social science research methodologies and as such it is regarded as highly scientific.

#### **5.2.2.3. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH IS AN APPLIED RESEARCH**

Programme evaluation research is a type of research which is applied in nature, in that it is intended to improve the lives of people who are recipients of the social welfare services.

Robson (1993:171) writes that “applied research in general is seen as being concerned with defining real world problems, or exploring alternative approaches, policies or programmes that might be implemented in order to seek solutions to such problems.”

Mark (1996:230) says that “programme evaluation research is always concerned with a program that serves people” and that “the results of program evaluation are always intended to be applied to a real-world program.”

The researcher has noted that programme evaluation research should be considered as applied research because its results are utilized to improve the social programmes.

The products obtained from the programme evaluation research are immediately consumed by communities because programme evaluation research is intended to improve the qualities of human lives. Programme evaluation research is a must for every social development programme because without it, programmes will not have a meaningful direction. Robson (1993:170) supports that the evaluation research is a necessity in many real world settings. Programme evaluation research is intended to advise the policy makers and programme formulators, implementers, and evaluators of the most effective information to improve their policies and programmes.

#### **5.2.2.4. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH RESEMBLES AUDITING AND IS MORE THAN AUDITING**

Programme evaluation research resembles auditing which is commissioned by policy makers. Pollit and Summa (1997:88) say that “in audit, the idea is to apply fixed criteria to a set of accounts and to report the results of this comparison to a clearly identified audience.” According to Clarke and Dawson (1999:153), auditing focuses largely on the structure, process and the outcomes of a social programme.

Programme evaluation research has a number of responsibilities which are absent in auditing, namely: it is concerned with theory and explanation, it asks a question “why” of a phenomenon and it reformulates issues in order to encourage the stakeholders to perceive problems in different perspectives (Pollit & Summa, 1997).

Potter (1999:210) has to say that “evaluation research tracks the efficiency of social programmes- not financially that is done by auditors.”

The researcher deduces from this definition that auditing is basically concerned with the

financial efficacy of social programmes without regard of the social gains, this being the concern of the programme evaluation research.

Both auditing and evaluation research contribute to the enhancement of collective control over social programmes and organizations (Pollit & Summa, 1997:89).

#### **5.2.2.5. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH IMPROVES THE QUALITIES OF LIVES**

Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:23) contend that programme evaluation research is intended to improve the social programmes which are on the other hand intended to improve the qualities of lives. These authors add that a social programme “ is a planned, organized, and usually ongoing set of activities carried out for the purpose of improving some social condition.”

For Dawson and Tilley (1997:406), “social programs are undeniably, unequivocally, unexceptionally social systems, and they are composed, as is any social system, of the interplay of individual and institution, of agency and structure, of micro and macro social processes.”

Programme evaluation research investigates social programmes as to whether they are delivering services which are necessary to improve the lives of communities. Social programmes which are not achieving their goals as expected are irrelevant and because such programmes are funded by the taxpayer money, they must be immediately discontinued.

Social programmes are expected to always do good or produce quality results because they are entrusted with the lives of people and are funded by taxpayers money.

#### **5.2.2.6. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH HAS A POLITICAL ELEMENT**

Programme evaluation research has a political element. This is because it is concerned with the social programmes which are formulated, implemented and evaluated by the politicians at the highest political level of governance. The politicians and bureaucrats have a much say on the direction the evaluation research projects might take.

“Evaluations are almost entirely contained within the current policy space in other words, with making judgments about policies or programmes on the current agenda of those responsible for making such policies” (Robson, 1993:183).

It has been mentioned in the third chapter that social programme derive from social policies. In this way, the social policies are formulated by politicians and because programme evaluation is a main requirement for every social programme, programme evaluation research indirectly therefore becomes politically influenced.

#### **5.2.2.7. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH IT IS A GUIDE TO STAKEHOLDERS**

Programme evaluation research is a hand- tool which is utilized by policy makers, recipients of the social services and social work practitioners in determining the most effective and efficient methodologies to improve the service delivery.

The administrative staff who implement the social programmes have a clear understanding of the goals and objectives of the programmes, and this guidance help them improve the programme processes. Goals and objectives are clearly defined during the development of the programme evaluation research plan. All these requirements are contained in the programme evaluation research as guidelines.

Royse (1995:259) states that “ the mission of program evaluation is to provide information that can be used to improve social programs.”

“An evaluation study, therefore, primarily addresses the audience (or, more accurately, audiences) with the potential to make decisions and take action on the basis of the evaluation results” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:26).

Programme evaluation research is an endeavour which has a purpose of informing social action. That is, what is suggested by the programme evaluation research is automatically put into action to formulate new programmes or to improve the existing ones.

#### **5.2.2.8. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH IS A PROJECT PLANNING**

Programme evaluation research is an effective and efficient social programme plan which is put in place before the implementation of programmes.

“An important aspect of planning an evaluation, therefore, is to break down the tasks and timelines so that a detailed estimate can be made of the personnel, materials, and expenses associated with completion of the steps essential to the plan” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:52).

Programme evaluation research is about programme planning, in that, it is intended to identify the best strategies for reducing social problems which are experienced by the communities, and that it is also a plan intended to improve an on-going programme so as to suggest improvements in order to sustain the interventions. Plan means the listing of the resources which are necessary for the implementation of the social programme. Resources are in the form of funds, personnel, materials, technical expertise, records, access and services.

Resources should be tabled accordingly in the evaluation plan.

#### **5.2.2.9. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH IS ABOUT ACCOUNTABILITY**

Programme evaluation research is about accountability in that it ensures that certain expectations are met. Royse (1995:260) supports this by stating that programme evaluation research can “be used to ensure the public, funders of programs, and even the clients themselves that a particular program works and that it deserves further financial support.”

According to Robson (1993:171), accountability is “a drive to place public services within a framework similar to that governing private profit-making businesses.” In this way, every process of the programme is accounted for and as a result this will certainly minimize inefficiency.

Social programmes must be seen to be achieving goals because they involve the real-life of communities and that they are formulated by politicians who utilize taxpayers' money to conduct them. Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:23) conclude that "many social programs will be held accountable for such results by those parties who invest in them, sponsor them, administer them, or are legally responsible for them, for instance, taxpayers, funders, boards of directors, agency heads and legislators"

#### **5.2.2.10. PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH HAS AN ELEMENT OF PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH**

Because programme evaluation research is conducted through the community participation by different stakeholders, it resembles the participatory action research which is intended to empower both the outside experts and communities.

Bhana (1999:235) maintains that "the outcome of a successful PAR project is not merely a better understanding of a problem, nor even successful action to eliminate the problem, but raised awareness in people of their own abilities and resources to mobilise for social action."

Programme evaluation research is highly scientific but communities must not be underestimated because they are able to learn as they participate in the evaluation process.

#### **Conclusion**

The programme evaluation research is a newly established research type which utilizes the social science methodologies of both the quantitative and qualitative nature. It is aimed by politicians at improving their interventions onto the social problems. Programme evaluation research is conducted through stages of development, it is well planned and lastly, it has a feature of the participatory action research. Community capacity to conduct the programme evaluation research process should not be underestimated because communities and other stakeholders learn as they participate in the programme. This advantage opens avenues for the development of effective and efficient methods of improving the lives of people and it is usually transparent. That is, processes which are conducted in a transparent manner usually achieve fruitful results.

The aim and objectives of the programme evaluation research will be discussed in the succeeding section of this chapter.

### **5.3. AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

In this section, this study discusses the aim and objectives of the programme evaluation research.

The concepts aim and objectives are very important in the discussion of programme evaluation research because they provide us with scientific guidelines regarding the direction of research projects. It is therefore necessary to know what an evaluation seeks to achieve when discussing about it.

#### **5.3.1. AIM OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

An aim is a purpose or goal and is always generally stated.

Potter (1999:210) says that “the central goal of programme evaluation, however, is not theoretical but is focused on answering specific practical questions about social programmes and their development.”

“The purpose of an evaluation is to assess the effects and effectiveness of something, typically some innovation or intervention: policy, practice or services” (Robson, 1993:170).

An aim is a general concept and therefore it is difficult to measure. In social science research, aims are divided into a number of objectives which are specific and measurable.

#### **5.3.2. OBJECTIVES OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

Objectives are specific, can be measured and are expressed in an operational manner. Objectives have the following features; (i) they are specific, (ii) they are measurable, and (iii) they contain the time frame in which particular programmes should meet them and how they are met (De Vos, Schurink & Strydom, 1998:6).

It is objectives which we measure in order to conclude whether a programme has achieved what it was intended for. Royse (1995:267) admits that “ if the objectives are met, the evaluator could conclude that the program is doing what it ought to do.”

The objectives explain how an evaluation programme achieve its goals. In this study, Mark (1996:232) lists the objectives of programme evaluation research as effort, performance, impact or adequacy of performance, efficiency and process.

#### **5.3.2.1. EFFORT**

The first objective of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is effort.

Evaluation should assess a number of qualities in social programmes: the comprehensive evaluation should assess effort objective, that is, it should assess the need for the programme, the design for the programme, the programme implementation and service delivery, the programme impact or outcome and programme efficiency or the cost-effectiveness (Mark, 1992). By measuring the effort objective, we will be able to tell how the attempts of the programme met the needs of those who are assisted by it. We will be able to answer the question: what did the programme do?

#### **5.3.2.2. PERFORMANCE**

The second objective of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is performance.

Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:20) write that evaluation entails “a description of the performance of the entity being evaluated, and, on the other, some standards or criteria by which that performance is judged.”

Performance accurately describes what an intervention does or is able to accomplish.

Robson (1993:180) states that “process evaluation is concerned with answering a how, or what is going on? question. It concerns the systematic observation and study of what actually occurs in the programme, intervention, or whatever is being evaluated.”

Performance of a programme is achieved through evaluating its impacts on the recipients of the social programme. As an example, Rono and Aboud (2001) conducted a research study to evaluate the impacts of socio-economic factors of the community projects on the western Kenya communities. They maintain that the socio-economic factors are respondents' age, sex, formal and informal education, annual income, religious affiliation, occupation, marital status, total number of dependants and children who attend school and those who work (Rono & Aboud, 2001:117).

The researcher is of the opinion that there is a close relationship between the concepts performance and impact, in that performance tells what has happened whilst impact tells how communities feel after the intervention.

### **5.3.2.3. IMPACT OR ADEQUACY OF PERFORMANCE**

The third objective of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is impact or adequacy of performance.

This objective closely flow from the two objectives discussed above, namely; the effort and the performance, in that the information obtained from them should then tell whether there has been an improvement or an impact on the lives of communities after the social programmes were provided to them.

For Robson (1993:180), the impact objective of an evaluation research is “measuring how far a programme, practice, innovation, intervention or policy met its stated objectives or goals.”

Programme evaluation research has as its main objective to investigate whether social programmes have intended impacts on the communities.

A single social programme usually has a number of impacts on the communities, for example, employment opportunities created, number of those who were educated and trained, the development of the community based organization, and the type of infrastructure constructed.

#### **5.3.2.4.EFFICIENCY**

The fourth objective of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is efficiency.

This objective compares the social programme benefits with its costs and “it is a useful tool for evaluating the economic efficiency of a program and determining whether a program should be started or continued” (Mark, 1996:235).

Efficiency compares the results with their respective costs. Efficiency assessment is defined as “the relationship between program costs and outcomes, with both costs and outcomes expressed in monetary terms” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:73).

Programme evaluation research has an objective of investigating whether a social programme is worth funding when it compares its outcomes with an amount of money paid to implement it. This objective is of utmost importance because it informs the stakeholders if they are achieving their goals with the available resources.

#### **5.3.2.5.PROCESS**

The fifth objective of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is process.

A good evaluation question “must specify some measurable or observable dimension of program performance in reference to the criterion by which that performance is to be judged” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:81).

Programme evaluation research does not just inform the stakeholders with information related to the failure or success of the social programmes, it also explains how those failures and successes were obtained, that is the process. If a process of a social programme is found to be ineffective, then the stakeholders can find an alternative to make it more effective.

Programme evaluation research objectives are specific, measurable and informs how social programme goals were achieved. In this regard, the objectives are an important measuring devices which are utilized to take informed decision as to whether a social programme should be

continued or discontinued. Apart from the mentioned objectives of programme evaluation research such as effort, performance, impact of adequacy of performance, efficiency and process, there are still a number of other objectives which were not mentioned in this study.

According to Royse (1995:263), there are more than one hundred and thirty three objectives of programme evaluation research. For example to name a few, there is the *quick-and-dirty* which is meant for achieving results with minimal costs, the *weighty* which is produced in thick volumes, the *guesstimate* which is conducted without the proper data collection methods, *personality-focused* which is produced to show only the positive side of the programme whilst hiding the negative side, the *whitewash* which is intended to report only the effectiveness of the programme and the *submarine* which is used by the politicians to destroy the image of the programme.

## **Conclusion**

As social work practitioners, we are guided by the profession's ethics which compel us to assess the costs incurred by our agencies in improving the qualities of lives of those in need. The contents of both the costs and benefits need to be specified in a specific and measurable manner so that we could be able to inform those who are owners, recipients and implementers of the social programmes that indeed the programmes have achieved their goals. The objectives of programme evaluation research are the measuring tools which we utilize to take decisions about social programmes and that evaluators cannot plan, implement and evaluate the programme evaluation research in their absence.

The researcher believes that the long list of the objectives of programme evaluation research could be minimized if the programme is classified into categories. As a consequence, the categories of programme evaluation research will be discussed in the succeeding section of the chapter.

## **5.4. CATEGORIES OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

Programme evaluation research is a general concept which has different categories. Its categories are important in this study because they assist us in classifying the types of evaluations to be conducted in different social programmes.

In this section, the categories of programme evaluation research, namely; programme improvement, accountability, knowledge generation and political ruses or public relations, will be discussed (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:39-43).

#### **5.4.1. PROGRAMME IMPROVEMENT**

The first category of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is programme improvement.

Evaluation is conducted with an intention to furnish information “that will guide program improvement” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:40).

Chelimsky (1997:12) calls this aim a developmental perspective which is “to measure and recommend changes in organization activities, to develop the indicators and performance targets needed to improve institutional effectiveness and responsiveness.”

It should be realized that programme evaluation research is an ongoing process which proceeds from the programme conception to the programme completion phases of the social programme. This nature ensures that the inputs of the programme evaluation research are meant to improve the social programmes and that if there is a need, a recommendation will be made that the fruitful programmes should continue.

#### **5.4.2. ACCOUNTABILITY**

The second category of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is accountability.

Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:40) state that “ the use of social resources such as taxpayer dollars by human service programs is justified on the grounds that these programs make beneficial contributions to society.”

Chelimsky (1997:11) adds that “questions about results from an accountability perspective may involve merely documentation of whether or not anything has changed after something new has been tried.”

In this way, programme evaluation research is utilized as an accountable measure which is intended to assure the stakeholders that resources provided for the social programme are responsibly, effectively and efficiently utilized and that there is a need for them to advocate for the continuance of the programme.

#### **5.4.3. KNOWLEDGE GENERATION**

The third category of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is knowledge generation.

Knowledge generation purpose of programme evaluation research “mainly describe the nature and effects of an intervention for broader purposes and audiences” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:42).

Programme evaluation research has an aim to enhance knowledge and understanding of an entity which is studied. For Chelimsky (1997:13), it is “to continue in-depth cumulative inquiry into particular areas or sectors of research.”

In this context, it means evaluation research could be utilized to enhance knowledge about some new research concepts which were not previously known by the researchers. This is the case when both the experts and stakeholders jointly participate in a research programme through which they both learn skills, knowledge and experiences from each others’ perspective.

#### **5.4.4. POLITICAL RUSES OR PUBLIC RELATIONS**

The fourth category of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is political ruses or public relations.

This is when evaluation results are intended, say for example, by the politicians to fire an administrator. An example of this category was contributed by Robson (1993:179) when he stated that submarine evaluation is utilized by politicians as a stratagem to destroy the image of an administrator or the programme as a whole.

This is an ugly purpose of programme evaluation research which usually make programme administrators suspicious and uncooperative during the research process. To support this, one agency member was heard as saying that “most of us feel a little uncomfortable when we know we are being evaluated- especially when the evaluator is unknown to us” (Royse, 1995:273).

Social programme practitioners must abide by their ethical consideration and not in any manner involve themselves in conducting research type of this nature.

## **Conclusion**

Programme evaluation research is intended to improve the planning, implementation and evaluation of the social programme. Although it is a complex entity which is difficult to implement, programme evaluation research has a process which could be used to during the evaluations.

In the succeeding section, the researcher will discuss the three theoretical perspectives of programme evaluation research, namely: positivist perspective, interpretive perspective and critical-emancipatory perspective which were contributed by Potter (1999).

## **5.5. THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

Perspectives were defined in chapter two as a means utilized to explain a phenomenon under investigation from different angles. Programme evaluation research as has been indicated earlier is a general concept which can be explained through different dimensions or perspectives. Perspectives of programme evaluation research are important in this study because it is specifically concerned with the evaluation of the PRP within the context of the RDP from a social work perspective.

According to Potter (1999:211), programme evaluation has three possible perspectives, namely: the positivist approach, the interpretive approach and the critical-emancipatory approach. Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999) term these perspective the approaches and list them as the independent; participatory/collaborative; and empowerment perspective, respectively.

In this study, the researcher selected to utilize the former terminology because it was contributed by a South African author and therefore more applicable in a South African context.

### 5.5.1. POSITIVIST PERSPECTIVE OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH

The first perspective of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is the positivist perspective.

Within the positivist perspective “the evaluator takes the primary responsibility for developing the evaluation plan, conducting the evaluation, and disseminating the results” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:57).

An evaluator is a practitioner who is solely involved with the processes of an evaluation. The following types of programme evaluation research exist:

- **Needs assessment**:-which is concerned with the determination of areas which require intervention,
- **Programme planning**:- which is basically aimed at gathering information intended to develop the initiation of a social programme,
- **Formative evaluation**:- which is intended to improve an ongoing social programme. Formative requirement includes in it the programme monitoring process which intends to establish whether a programme is implemented as planned,
- **Summative evaluation**:- which is intended to evaluate the after-effect of a social programme in order to share information whether the programme has achieved its intended goals (Potter, 1999:211-212).

It is always useful to combine the above types in order to develop effective programme evaluation research projects. This connotation was supported by Royse (1995:273) who mentioned that “ you are free to take any one of these or to combine elements from several designs to fit the requirements of an actual situation.”

Mark (1996:233) adds that the “most comprehensive program evaluation involve more than one type of evaluation.”

The positivist perspective has a limitation of involving only one person in the evaluation process, namely the evaluator. Results obtained from this perspective are usually one-sided and will be biased with the evaluator's personal views. Programme evaluation research should involve the stakeholders, that is, the managers, the recipients and the social practitioners of a social programme.

### **5.5.2. INTERPRETIVE PERSPECTIVE OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

The second perspective of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is the interpretive perspective. According to this perspective, evaluation is conducted by a team which is comprised of an evaluator and representative of stakeholder groups

This perspective maintains that "understanding of stakeholder perspective is essential to understanding the programme" (Potter, 1999:216).

The evaluator enters a community and interacts with stakeholders who are the individuals, groups and or organizations who are in control of the social programme. These individual, groups and or organizations are called the stakeholders, which Potter (1999:216) maintains "includes those who fund programmes, those who plan and implement programmes, programme participants and users, as well as those whose interests are affected by the work of programmes."

As has been mentioned above, the programme evaluation research perspective which involves the stakeholders in the research process is more effective than it is when only an evaluator was involved. This is a learning process which is reciprocal in nature through which researcher and the stakeholders gain skills, knowledge and attitude from each other as they interact in the evaluation process.

### **5.5.3. CRITICAL-EMANCIPATORY PERSPECTIVE OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

The third perspective of programme evaluation research to be discussed in this section is the critical-emancipatory perspective.

The critical-emancipatory perspective of programme evaluation research is concerned with empowerment. In this context, the evaluation process is conducted by both the recipients of the social programmes and other stakeholders. This perspective has a participatory action research orientation in that it is intended to give power to the people who receive social services.

“This is done by a process of analysis of the underlying forces that keep oppressive relations in place, and the development of empowerment strategies” (Potter, 1999:219).

Empowerment evaluation research has a participatory action research background (Hansson, 1997:183). This has a reciprocal benefit for both the stakeholders and the evaluator.

Durst, MacDonald and Parsons (1999:48) maintain that community empowerment is the transfer of research knowledge and skills to the community researchers and as such it becomes reciprocal in nature, in that both the community and the outside experts gain from the research process.

It has already been mentioned that the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the communities must not be underestimated because they are capable of conducting even the more sophisticated tasks in the evaluation process. Other authors have noted this capability of the communities. Empowerment evaluation “is designed to help people help themselves and improve their programs using a form of self-evaluation and reflection. Program participants- including clients- conduct their own evaluations; an outside evaluator often serves as a coach or additional facilitator” (Fetterman, 1997:382).

“A sense of empowerment is enhanced by participation in citizen groups in ways that involve increased responsibility, involvement with others and organizational problem solving” (Berryhill & Linney, 2000:239).

It is evident from the above discussion that communities are able to do their own evaluations. This is possible only if the outside researchers actively involve them in doing these evaluations for themselves.

## **Conclusion**

The interpretive perspective and the clinical-emancipatory perspective share a common feature of involving the stakeholders in conducting their own evaluations. The clinical-emancipatory perspective has yet another additional important element, namely that of the participatory action research through which it empowers communities to conduct evaluations for themselves with minimized outside involvement.

In reality communities are not able to do their evaluations without assistance from the professional evaluators. Communities therefore should be assisted in the process of doing their evaluations.

The types of programme evaluation research will be discussed in the succeeding section.

## **5.6. TYPES OF PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

In the previous section, it was mentioned that the positivist perspective of programme evaluation research requires an evaluator to conduct the evaluations without the involvement of other stakeholders. The evaluator is according to this perspective, free to combine different types of evaluation research in order to achieve effective evaluation. The types of evaluation research are important in this study because they provide researchers with an ample opportunity to choose and combine them in order to produce results. It is therefore necessary for this section to discuss the types of programme evaluation research, namely: monitoring evaluation, formative evaluation, outcome evaluation, effectiveness or impact evaluation and summative evaluation.

### **5.6.1. MONITORING EVALUATION**

The first type of programme evaluation research is monitoring.

Programme evaluation research involves programme monitoring which is intended at “measuring the extent to which a program reaches its intended target population and whether the service being provided matches what was intended to be delivered” (Royse, 1995:262). Monitoring is therefore a basic form of programme evaluation research in that the latter cannot be successfully achieved without it.

Programme monitoring could be “implementation assessment evaluates program process, the activities and operations of the program” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:67).

Programme monitoring is intended to evaluate whether social programmes are having an impact on the target population, and whether they are conducted according to their respective designs. Monitoring evaluates the functions, activities, service, transaction, administrative processes and whether the programme is doing what it was intended to do.

Programme monitoring is therefore an important aspect of the programme evaluation research, because from it, programme evaluation has a foundation from which to proceed.

As an example, De Wet, Kherehloa, Masheane and Botes (2001:365) conducted a study to monitor an early child development programme, the Hippy which was funded by the Home Instruction Foundation (HIF) in the area of Bloemfontein in South Africa. According to them, monitoring is a important process for every community developmental programme.

Monitoring could be in the form of home visits co-opted with reports. “Evaluation research usually begins by examining the mission statements of organisations, thereby clarifying aims and objectives. This provides information for estimating the success or failure of development programmes and is done by means of monitoring and evaluation activities” (De Wet, Kherehloa, Masheane & Botes, 2001:368).

Visitations and their respective reports compiled by the programme implementers form the process of programme monitoring. Monitoring is a means of revisiting the processes of social programmes.

De Wet, Khrehloa, Masheane and Botes (2001:368) consider monitoring and evaluation as synonyms when they mention that “monitoring and evaluation are means of making programmes more effective and efficient.”

For Oakley (1988:1), programme monitoring has “to do with measurement, judgment and analysis and are critical in terms of ensuring that any rural development project is indeed moving towards and accomplishing its intended objectives.”

Judgement is based upon the findings contained in the social programme reports as compared to the goals. It is a conclusive statement which is based on the comparison between the programme activities and its intended goals.

Monitoring judges both the organizational and implementation structures and should advise staff of the social programmes with information related to planning and any necessary mid-project adjustment (Oakley, 1988:1).

Monitoring is in fact not a type of evaluation. Both concepts are confused with each other because after monitoring process the evaluation process takes place. In this regard, the researcher selects to view monitoring as a process which is contained within the evaluation process. Vasoo (1991:7) contends that “the purpose of the monitoring is to indicate whether the project objectives are being achieved, whilst the evaluation consists of a systematic analysis of the monitored information with a view to making necessary project adjustment” (Vasoo, 1991:7).

It therefore means that an evaluation process cannot take place before a social programme was accordingly monitored.

### **5.6.2. IMPACT EVALUATION**

The second type of programme evaluation research is impact evaluation.

For Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:70), impact evaluation can also be termed impact assessment or outcome evaluation.

Impact evaluation “gauges the extent to which a program produces the intended improvements in the social conditions it addresses” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:70).

Impact assessment has two important components, namely: (i) that the objectives of the social programme be operationally defined, and (ii) that a criterion for success or failure be developed in order to measure the entities of that social programme. “To conduct an impact assessment, the evaluator needs a plan for collecting data that will permit a persuasive demonstration that observed changes are a function of the intervention and cannot readily be accounted for in other ways” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:70).

As an example in this study, Rono (2002) conducted an impact evaluation study to find out what impacts the structural adjustment programmes have on the Kenyan society. It is quiet interesting to learn that a single programme such as the SAP has a number of differing impacts on the society, namely: it caused a decline in employment opportunities, crime and deviancy were reduced, it made a tremendous progress on education although children from poor communities experienced a high rate in school drop out, health improved and as such the number of medical professionals increased, death rate declined, there has been a political stability in the country, increase in democracy and human rights, and poverty has increased (Rono, 2002:88-95).

It is important for this study to include these impacts as examples of what social programmes like the PRP can impact on the communities.

In this way, impact evaluation research informs us of the consequences the social programme has on the communities.

### **5.6.3. FORMATIVE EVALUATION**

The third type of programme evaluation research is formative evaluation

Formative evaluation research is utilized when new social programmes are developed.

In most instances, the evaluator spends more time discussing the probabilities of effective intervention with programme stakeholders and as a consequence, this type of programme

evaluation research is highly informal (Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey, 1999:40).

Thus the results of a formative evaluation are reported internally to the programme directors and other staff members.

Royse (1991:197) identified formative evaluation as a type of programme evaluation research which focuses on improving programmes.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:48) add that “evaluation designed to promote the effectiveness of a programme is called formative research.” This type of evaluation research is therefore a good tool for managers when they make decisions for improving the effectiveness of their programmes.

“Formative evaluation is, to a large extent, best designed as summative evaluation of an early version, with particular attention to components or dimensions rather than a holistic account” (Scriven, 1997:498).

It means that summative evaluation develops from the formative evaluation, and therefore, formative evaluation is an initial stage of the summative evaluation research.

#### **5.6.4. SUMMATIVE EVALUATION**

The forth type of programme evaluation research is summative evaluation.

According to Royse (1995:272), summative evaluation research is “ where a conclusive statement is rendered regarding the worth of a program.”

Summative evaluation research is defined by Monette, Sullivan and DeJong (1994:316) as “assessing the effectiveness and efficiency of programs and the extent to which the outcomes of the project are generalizable to other settings and populations.”

It was mentioned above that formative evaluation is an initial stage of evaluation from which the summative evaluation may proceed. In this regard, the researcher views the summative evaluation research as a stage in which the evaluators can take informed decisions as to whether the social programmes are worthwhile or not.

For Bless and Higson- Smith (1995:51), “ summative evaluations set out to determine the extent to which programmes meet their specified aims and objectives.”

Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:40-42) maintain that summative evaluation research is about accountability in that, it is aimed at advocating for the continuity or the discontinuity of a social programme, based on its findings or results. Summative evaluation research is therefore a form of an advice to decision makers if they should continue funding a particular social programme.

There is an important element of the programme evaluation research which was identified in the above definitions of programme evaluation research, namely; advocacy. Advocacy is a motivational statement which programme stakeholders utilize to convince the programme funders and recipients that a social programme is worth for funding.

Summative evaluation research is paramount over other types but has to be combined with some of them in order to produce an effective evaluative research.

Potter (1999:224) states that “there is no single correct approach to programme evaluation, and evaluators typically choose an appropriate methodology to fit the pragmatic requirements of each programme, rather than being guided by one particular model or approach.”

Summative evaluation is reported to the external decision-makers or to the external clients (Scriven, 1997:499).

The researcher mentioned above that the formative evaluation is informal and that it is intended for the internal clients such as the officials and the administrators of the social programmes. The summative evaluation on the other hand, continues from formative evaluation, it is intended for the external clients such as the stakeholders in general and that it is a formal entity.

## **Conclusion**

The types of programme evaluation research should inform evaluators whether the social programmes are achieving what they were intended for such as improving the conditions of the communities. The formative evaluation is basically concerned with discussions around the effectiveness of the programme which take place informally within the institution. This type lays a foundation from which the summative evaluation research kickstarts. The summative evaluation is therefore a higher level of the formative evaluation and involves the process of advocacy. Advocacy is a process which is utilized by the stakeholders to convince the funding institutions of the programmes that programmes are achieving the goals they were intended for. In a real evaluation research situation, the types of programme evaluation research are combined in order to achieve good results.

This study will therefore utilize the summative evaluation research because it intends to evaluate the Poverty Relief Programme (PRP) in the Limpopo Province within the context of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) from a social work perspective. This is because the PRP has been going on for years and that suggestions and recommendations are necessary in order to improve it. The succeeding section of this study will detail a discussion on the process of programme evaluation research.

### **5.7. THE PROCESS OF THE PROGRAMME EVALUATION RESEARCH**

It has been mentioned in the previous section that the researcher has selected to use the summative evaluation research in order to evaluate the PRP within the context of the RDP from a social work perspective. The researcher has realized the importance of combining summative evaluation research with other types, and is of the opinion that this selection will achieve good evaluation results. The process of programme evaluation research which will be discussed in this study is not only meant for the summative evaluation research but also can be utilized for other types of evaluation.

A discussion on the process of programme evaluation research is an important and effective tool which social programme practitioners should utilize in order to conduct effective evaluations.

From Mamburu (2000), it was reported that the programme evaluation research process is undertaken through a number of steps (compare De Vos, 1998:368; Tripodi, 1983:2-3; Monette, Sullivan & DeJong, 1994:32; Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:51-53.) This study will again utilize a model contributed by De Vos (1998), because it is highly simplified and easy to conduct.

De Vos' (1998) model is made up of the following ten steps:

1. What is to be evaluated
2. Identify the consumers of research
3. Cooperation of staff
4. Specify programme objectives
5. Specify evaluation objectives
6. Choose variables
7. Choose research design
8. Implement measurement
9. Analyse/interpret findings
10. Report/ implement results

During the discussion of process of the programme evaluation research, the researcher will provide examples from similar studies which were conducted by different authors. The researcher will also discuss important concepts such as needs assessment, stakeholders, community participation, its types, levels and barriers, and the research designs.

#### **5.7.1. DETERMINE WHAT IS TO BE EVALUATED**

The first step in the programme evaluation research process is determining what is to be evaluated.

This step is concerned with needs assessment. Needs assessment is an important phase in the programme evaluation research process because it is meant for the establishment of new programmes or the expansion of the existing ones (Mark, 1996:236).

Robson (1993:185) note that “needs assessment is the process whereby needs are identified and priorities among them established.” This phase takes place before the implementation of the project and therefore it an important component of the evaluation plan. The phase has another important concept of *prioritization* which was mentioned above. In this regard, it means that there are many needs within a particular community and that due to inavailability of resources, social programmes will satisfy only those which are prioritized as highly important.

Needs assessment can be achieved through discussions with the *key informant*, an approach which “relies on information obtained from persons who are in the position of knowing a community’s needs and service use patterns” (Mark, 1996:237). Key informants are the public officials, the clients, social work practitioners, the staff of the agency and board members of the agency and organizations.

Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:47) say programme evaluators are not free to define the programmes, their goals and objectives, and the evaluation questions, this is the task which is done by the stakeholders as they continue to interact with them. Thus, an effective means of doing needs assessment is through collecting information from the knowledgeable informants who are the stakeholders.

As an example of how community needs assessment is conducted, the researcher selected to discuss a research study conducted by Durst, MacDonald and Parsons (1999) on the Aboriginal community of Conne River, Newfoundland, Canada into finding the causes and solutions of family violence. According to these authors, the best research method conducted when doing needs assessment, is the *triangulation* (Durst, MacDonald & Parsons, 1999:48). According to this methods, they used face-to-face interviews with key-informants, community focus group interviews and self-administered questionnaires (Durst, MacDonald & Parsons, 1999:49). They concluded that “a meaningful needs assessment should include demographic/statistical data, the perspective of key informants (knowledgeable experts from within the community), and the perspective of randomly selected consumer and potential consumers” (Durst, MacDonald & Parsons, 1999:47-48).

The evaluators are therefore free to utilize a variety of research methodologies during the needs assessment phase of the programme evaluation research process.

### **5.7.2. IDENTIFY THE CONSUMERS OF RESEARCH**

The second step in the programme evaluation research process is identifying the consumers of the research.

Who is to benefit from the findings of the programme evaluation research project is a question which needs to be satisfied during this phase. In most projects, communities, managers of the funding institutions and the social work practitioners are the beneficiaries of evaluation research projects.

Mason and Bramble (1989:388) maintain that there are five groups of people who are affected by the programme evaluation research, namely:

- sponsors:-are agencies which authorize the evaluation
- the client:-those who request the evaluation
- the participants:- individuals whom the evaluator works with during the evaluation project
- the stakeholders:-those who have the most interest in the evaluation results
- the audience:-those who might want to emulate the programme in other settings in future.

The stakeholders will be discussed in detail later in this part.

### **5.7.3. OBTAIN THE COOPERATION AND SUPPORT OF THE SERVICE GIVERS AND MANAGEMENT CONCERNED**

The third step in the programme evaluation research process is obtaining the cooperation and support from the service givers and management concerned.

De Vos (1998:380) warns that programme evaluation research is associated with “negativism and sabotage by staff” and as such researchers need to develop a healthy working relationship with the funding institutions and the communities they intend to research about.

Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:27) write that the “the planning phase of evaluation, which is best accomplished in collaboration with program personnel and stakeholders” will ensure the successful implementation of the evaluation project. There will be cooperation if the purpose of the research project and the approaches to be utilized are initially communicated to those who deliver the services. These individuals should also be made part of the research programme.

Without cooperation and support from the service providers and management, programme evaluation research is impossible and therefore evaluators should consider this phase as the most important which should be accordingly addressed.

It is of utmost importance that cooperation and support be obtained from the stakeholders.

A social programme is made up of different individuals who represent different organizations within the community. Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:55) admits and note that “every program is a nexus in a set of political and social relationships among those with an association or interest in the program, such as relevant policymakers, competing programs, and advocacy groups.” These are called stakeholders.

Stakeholders are according to Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999), drawn from the following:

- **Policymakers and decision makers:** these are individuals who may decide whether the programme continues or should be terminated.
- **Programme sponsors:** those who fund the social programme
- **Evaluation sponsors:** those who specifically fund the evaluation processes of the programme.
- **Target participants:** communities who are the recipients of the social programme.
- **Programme managers:** individuals who are responsible for the administrative processes of the social programme
- **Programme staff:** individuals who are employed by the programme who render the delivery service to the communities
- **Programme competitors:** they are organizations or groups who compete with the social programme for available resources.
- **Contextual stakeholders:** they are “organizations, groups, individuals, and other social units in the immediate environment of a program with interests in what the program is doing or what happens to it” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:55).
- **Evaluation and Research community:** they are evaluation professionals who study the evaluations and “pass judgement on their technical quality and credibility and academic and other researchers who work in areas related to a program” (Rossi, Freeman & Lipsey, 1999:55).

The importance of stakeholders during the programme evaluation research process is exemplified by a research study by Rabeharisoa and Callon (2002) which sought to investigate the importance of the involvement of patients' associations in matters which affect health and welfare. The stakeholders can assist in research processes and they have a prime interest on the evaluation results. According to these authors, “of the 156 organizations for which we have detailed information on the subject in question, 34% do indeed fund research” (Rabeharisoa & Callon, 2002:59). This calls for participation, through which individuals, groups and organization assist the evaluations of programmes.

While this chapter is basically about programme evaluation research, there is a strong need for the discussion of community participation concept, reason being that evaluations are not

possible without the involvement of the communities who are recipients of the social programmes.

Participation is "expected to improve the quality of planning, to make programmes responsive to the desires and preferences of local residents, to reduce alienation, enhance the power of the low classes, improve communication between government and the people, encourage moderation and responsibility among residents" (Vasoo, 1991:1).

“Participation is here defined to mean the commitment and involvement of the government, non-governmental organizations, co-operatives, private business and individuals in achieving social progress” (Rono & Aboud, 2001:109).

It has been mentioned under the clinical-emancipatory perspective that programme evaluation research is about community empowerment and that communities are empowered through the process of participation. In this context, stakeholders needs to be involved in taking an active role in the research processes of their social programmes.

The researcher has identified that this phase of the programme evaluation research process is basically concerned with the stakeholders and their participation in the evaluations. It is therefore important to discuss the types of participation, levels of participation and barriers to participation in this context.

The succeeding part will discuss the types of participation.

### **5.7.3.1. TYPES OF PARTICIPATION**

in this part, the researcher discusses the two types of participation, namely: the means participation and the end participation.

Haidari and Wright (2001:154) maintains that there are two kinds of participation (*mosharekat*) in Iran, namely: the means and an end participation.

These two kinds were identified by Raniga and Simpson (2002:183-184).

- **Means Participation**

According to the means participation, “people are brought into a project in order for its aims to be accomplished more efficiently, effectively or cheaply” (Haidari & Wright, 2001:154).

Raniga and Simpson (2001:183) state that “at one end of the scale participation can be seen as an attempt by the external organisation to co-opt communities to “rubber stamp” decisions and to gain legitimacy for funding and personnel.”

Means participation explains that the stakeholders did not initiate to participate in the evaluative programme but were drawn into it by the outsiders who want to claim at the end that communities were part of the decisions arrived at during the programme processes.

- **End Participation**

End participation is participation which has been initiated by the communities in order to improve their own development.

“At the other end participation is seen as a liberatory process that leads to empowerment and self-mobilisation” (Raniga & Simpson, 2001:183).

This type of participation was initiated by the stakeholders themselves. Haidari and Wright (2001:57) say that the end type of participation was evident in Iran during its formative stage of development when “people themselves initiated the project and organized their own involvement in cash and kind.” End participation is a good type of participation which should be encouraged over the means participation.

Participation is also discussed by focusing on the levels of participation.

### 5.7.3.2. LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

Raniga and Simpson (2002:183) listed the levels of participation as passive participation, participation in information giving, participation by consultation, participation for material incentives, functional participation, interactive participation, and self-mobilisation participation which are briefly discussed below.

**(i) Passive participation:-** where the outsider experts dominate the community programme processes and communities are only told what is happening

**(ii) Participation in information giving:-** communities provide answers to questions posed to them by the outsider experts

**(iii) Participation by consultation:-** the external organizations consult communities in matters regarding their development or programmes

**(iv) Participation for material incentives:-** this is an active form of participation because communities provide materials in the form of labour, funds, human resources to the evaluative projects

**(v) Functional participation:-** the notion to participate comes from the outsiders organizations but communities implement the projects

**(vi) Interactive participation:-** this is an empowerment or transformative participation in which both the communities and the outside experts treat each other as equals and fully participate during the needs assessment, planning and implementation phases of the evaluative projects.

**(vii) Self-mobilisation participation:-** “people participate by taking initiatives independently of any external organization” (Raniga & Simpson, 2002:183).

The levels of participation informs us of the type of an evaluative project, its aim and the interest groups behind its planning and implementation. Participation is an important concept of evaluation research and can also be hindered by some barriers which are discussed in the succeeding part.

### **5.7.3.3. BARRIERS TO COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

The final concept utilized to explain the stakeholder participation during the third phase of the programme evaluation research process which is concerned with obtaining the cooperation and support is the barriers to community participation. This topic is important in this study because it equips evaluators with effective strategies to be implemented in order to avoid poor participation in the evaluation of programmes.

Njoh (2002) conducted a research study on the self-help water project in Mutengene (Cameroon) in order to identify the barriers to community participation. The following barriers to community participation were found in his study:

- *Paternalistic posture of authorities*:- the experts and bureaucrats do not afford communities with an opportunity to participate in the evaluative programmes because they underestimate the skills and knowledge available in the communities. Haidari and Wright (2001:54-55) explain that according to the paternalistic posture of authorities barrier to participation, most projects had a top-down character in their conceptualisation, design and implementation and technocrats regard the communities as backward, illiterate and do not worth consulting in matters of their development.

This conception has been addressed in a discussion of the interpretive perspective and the critical-emancipatory perspective of the programme evaluation research when the researcher concluded that the skills, knowledge and attitudes of the communities must not be underestimate because they are able to perform even the most sophisticated tasks required in the evaluation process.

- *Prescriptive role of the state*:- the state is not concerned with the development of the communities, but instead it is concerned with the maintenance of its power control over communities.

This type of barrier to community participation must be effectively avoided in the democratic states such as South Africa. Government and communities should be brought closer to each other so that they can be able to maximize a control over the evaluation process regarding the social programmes.

- *Embellishment of success*:- programme practitioners have a tendency of reporting only the successes of the programmes without saying anything about the failures.

This limitation can be avoided through a process of transparency, meaning that stakeholders must be afforded an opportunity to access every process and information regarding the evaluation of the social programmes.

- *Elective participation*:-“some members of the project beneficiary communities either tend to exclude themselves, or are excluded from the development process (Njoh, 2002:242).

Stakeholders which are excluded from participation in the evaluation could be those with information necessary to improve the condition of the communities, and therefore, evaluators should make sure that nobody is excluded from participating in the evaluation process.

- *Hard-issue bias*: stakeholders mainly discuss difficult issues of the project which other members find it hard to understand. Raniga and Simpson (2002:188) calls this the lack of administrative and project management skills on the part of programme directors. When the stakeholders cannot adequately decide on what to discuss and how to refine the technical terminology, the process has a negative impact of participation of the entire community members.

- *Intra/ inter-group conflicts*:- this occurs when there are internal conflicts within the community or among the stakeholders. There is also a conflict between local leaders which was identified by a study by Raniga and Simpson (2002:187).

Community participation in the programme evaluation research is retarded when stakeholders cannot work together for a common goal. Local leaders should be discouraged from treating community development programmes as their own personal commodities.

- *Gate-keeping by local leaders*: Njoh (2002:243) has noted “that community level decision-making may be hijacked and monopolized by a small and self-perpetuating clique, acting in its own, as opposed to the community’s, interest.” Raniga and Simpson (2002:187) blames this problem of non- participation to the problem associated with the community leadership. Those who are in community leadership positions demand the ownership of the community projects.
- *Excessive pressures for immediate results*:- authorities demand immediate products without regarding the time-frame for processing those products.

Community participation is concerned with empowerment and therefore, in order for empowerment to take place, enough time should be allocated to the evaluation process.

- *Disinterest within beneficiary community*:- stakeholders are not interested in being involved in the community development programme. Raniga and Simpson (2002:185) have noted that “research in informal settlements is difficult- when people are struggling to meet their day-to-day needs, it is unrealistic to expect that research will be a priority for them.”

It is true people would like to actively participate in activities which concern their own development.

- *Population size*: Njoh (2002:245) found that the size of the population is a strong determinant of participation, because the larger the population size, the higher the rate of

participation would be. Similar in this regard, the smaller the population size, the lower participation would be.

- *Belief System*: some stakeholders will fail to participate in the evaluative programmes due to the time meant for the participation, eg. Sundays are regarded as church going days and holidays are not regarded as working days in some of the South African communities.
- *Lack of commitment*: this barrier was contributed by Raniga and Simpson (2002:187) who say that they found in their study that community members failed to attend the training sessions and project meetings.

Failing to attend community development programme activities such as launching, meetings, workshops, training and official opening of infrastructure is classified as a form of failure to participate.

The researcher has so far detailed a discussion on the stakeholders and their types, and community participation, levels of community participation and barriers to community participation.

The researcher intends to proceed to a discussion of the succeeding phase in the programme evaluation research process, namely: specify programme objectives clearly and in measurable terms.

#### **5.7.4. SPECIFY PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES CLEARLY AND IN MEASURABLE TERMS**

The fourth step in the programme evaluation research process is specifying programme objectives clearly and in measurable terms.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:51), advise that “to translate the aims and objectives into observable changes which can be measured in the target community” is an important step in programme evaluation research process.

Objectives need not be stated in general statements but in “precisely worded statement of desired changes in behaviour” (De Vos, 1998:381). This is easily achieved if researchers manage to give "a numerical value to the supposed results of a rural development project" (Oakley, 1988:1). The researcher has already mentioned that objectives are expressed in a specific, measurable and operational manner. In this line, the researcher can precisely specify what the social programme is expected to achieve, for example, to create job opportunities for 2000 unemployed women who are not married, have more than three dependent children, do not work and are residents of the Chihoko community in the rural area of the Limpopo Province.

Objectives are more important in programme evaluation research process because they state exactly what will be accomplished and by whom (Mason & Bramble, 1989:389).

Rono and Aboud (2001:114) contend that in order to measure the objective work ethic more accurately, for example, it has to be expressed into at least 12 work ethic variables, such as working on Sundays and public holidays, working in the rains and bad weathers and risking all the money and property by investing it in their work, and others.

#### **5.7.5. SPECIFY OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS ITSELF**

The fifth step in programme evaluation research process is specifying objectives of the evaluation process.

Specify whether the study is a formative or summative type of evaluation research. According to Mason and Bramble (1989:396), the formative evaluation has to do with the process of the programme whilst on the other hand, the summative evaluation is concerned with the effectiveness and efficiency of a programme. The summative evaluation research is

concerned with the advocacy of the evaluation process, that is, decision with regard to the effectiveness and efficiency of the evaluation process.

#### **5.7.6. CHOOSE VARIABLES THAT CAN BE MEASURED TO REFLECT DESIRED OUTCOMES**

The sixth step in programme evaluation research process is choosing variables that can be measured to reflect the desired outcomes.

Not all variables are relevant in reflecting the desired outcomes of the research project, and as such, the researcher should “decide on the use of those variables that provide the best measures for the research” (Tripodi,1983:3).

The objectives of the research programme are easily measurable when they are expressed into the form of variables, that is, they are divided into parts.

There are two important types of variables for programme evaluation research, namely: the *dependent variable* which is an outcome or result of an event or cause, and the *independent variable* which is the cause or an event of something. To explain them, Render and Stair (2000:176) write that the sales of a product might be related to the firm’s advertising budget, the price charged, competitor’s prices, promotional strategies, and even the economy and unemployment rates. In this regard, the sales would be termed the dependent variables and the other factors or variables would be termed independent variables.

#### **5.7.7. CHOOSE AN APPROPRIATE RESEARCH DESIGN**

The seventh step in programme evaluation research process is choosing an appropriate research design.

Programme evaluation research utilizes both the qualitative and quantitative data collection methodologies.” Evaluation is a complex field where the benefits of multiple methods are particularly clear. Many evaluations collect both qualitative and quantitative data” (Robson, 1993:185).

It is therefore necessary for the researcher to select the research designs which utilize both the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies. Robson (1993:186) supports by contending that “if you can find out something useful about a program by talking to a few disgruntled employees, then talk to them. If the only way you can get the data you need is by participant observation, then participate and observe (and do not forget to take good notes)...Use whatever you have in your toolbox that will get the job done” (Robson, 1993:186).

Another important item to be satisfied when choosing a research design is to closely consider the available resources before the actual programme evaluation research process is conducted. That is, “the design must take note of constraints of time and resources, of how information is to be collected, of the permissions and cooperation necessary to put this into practice, of what records and other information is available, and so on” (Robson, 1993:179).

Robson (1993:181) provides a checklist which must be satisfied when evaluators design their evaluations, namely:

- (i) **utility**:-the research project must be useful
- (ii) **feasibility**:- it must be feasible, that is, there should be available resources for its implementation
- (iii) **propriety**:-the evaluation research project must be scientific and ethical
- (iv) **technical adequacy**:- there should be available skills and sensitivity which ensure that the project is worthwhile.

Research designs are plans which should be put into action in order to achieve the programme evaluation research results.

#### **5.7.8. IMPLEMENT MEASUREMENT**

The eighth step in programme evaluation research process is implementing measurements.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:52) and Tripodi (1983:3) begin this step by constructing the instrument of measurement. This means the decision to use either questionnaires or interviews or observation and/or focus group interviews. Data gathering process takes place during this step.

Programme evaluation research utilizes the combination of different research methodologies, this practice being a concept which is referred to as triangulation. Triangulation will be discussed in detail in the succeeding chapter. It is important to mention in this part that programme evaluation research process is not a rigid plan which should be executed as it appears on paper. It needs to be regularly adjusted in order to accommodate other emerging requirements. Rossi, Freeman and Lipsey (1999:24) admit and state that “the initial evaluation plan must be tailor-made to the particular program circumstances and the typically requires reversion and modification during its implementation.”

#### **5.7.9. ANALYSE AND INTERPRET THE FINDINGS**

The ninth step in programme evaluation research process is analysing and interpreting the findings.

The researcher organizes and analyses data which were collected during the previous phase, by transcribing or transforming them into a format that allows statistical manipulation (Arkava & Lane, 1983:28). In this regard, the researcher’s findings explain the direction of a social programme. Mason and Bramble (1989:389) advise that in order for an evaluator to get the results, he/she should “systematically analyse what already exists regarding the objectives and to compare that with what should exist to attain them.”

This state of affairs is not only intended to delineate the effectiveness and efficiency which a social programme achieves, but also to explain why there has been an achievement. This

calls for the interpretation of the finding which “means that data (constructions, assertions, fact, and so on) can be tracked to their sources, and that the logic used to assemble the interpretation into structurally coherent and corroborating wholes in both explicit and implicit” (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper & Allen, 1993:34).

#### **5.7.10. REPORT AND IMPLEMENT THE RESULTS**

The tenth step in programme evaluation research process is reporting and implementing the results.

Reporting back is an important phase of programme evaluation research process as it involves presenting “the findings to those responsible for the intervention, the participants and any other interested groups” (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:53).

Mason and Bramble (1989:411) explain the phase by mentioning that “relevant and accurate information should be made available to persons who need it, and providing this information is often the responsibility of the evaluator.”

Research results are presented in the forms of newspaper articles, newsletters, journals, magazines, radio and theses. Reporting results is an ethical requirement (Strydom, 1998:32).

A second requirement for this step is that the results of evaluation programme should be implemented. Programme evaluation research can suggest that some social programmes are not achieving their goals due to their failure to put an effective process in place. Programme evaluation research can also suggest that some social programmes lack of the effectiveness and efficiency. Suggestions which are made in this regard should be implemented in order for practitioners to achieve the social programme goals. The process of programme evaluation research contains guidelines which “describe the key features and procedures to be followed in conducting an evaluation” (Royse, 1995:264).

## 5.8. SUMMARY

In this chapter, the researcher discussed programme evaluation research through the following concepts:

- Programme evaluation research was defined as a research type which is concerned with informing the social programmes of the effective and efficient strategies they need to apply in order to be able to deliver quality services to those in need. Programme evaluation research was discussed through its characteristics, namely; it is a newly established research type, it is an applied research, it is a social science research, it improves the qualities of lives, it has a political element it is a guide to the stakeholders, it is a project planning, it is about accountability and it has an element of participatory action research. Programme evaluation research is the utilization of scientific research procedures to investigate the effectiveness and efficiency of social programmes in improving the conditions of communities. Programme evaluation research's results are directly consumed by programme practitioners and as such it is applied in nature. It is a newly established research methodology which resembles auditing and is commissioned by stakeholders who require its information in order to take informed decision. Programme evaluation research is similar to project planning and is concerned with the process of the programme and its utilization of resources. It is conducted to improve the qualities of lives because it asks whether social programmes are accountable to the communities. Programme evaluation research has an element of participatory action research because it is conducted by stakeholders who are managers, recipients and practitioners of the social programmes.
- Programme evaluation research was discussed through its aim and the following objectives: effort, performance, impact or adequacy of performance, efficiency and process. Effort informs the managers, the recipients and other stakeholders about the attempts which a social programme has thus far achieved in order to improve the qualities of lives. The performance objective of the programme evaluation research is concerned with the types of intervention which were implemented to solve a particular problem. Impact analysis is about the comparison of benefits and costs of a particular

social programme. Programmes with minimal benefits and are achieved with increased costs are discouraged in the social development arena. An objective of the programme evaluation research which is efficiency contends that programme evaluation research is closely related to auditing in that it is concerned with the assessment of whether a programme is achieving the goals with the available resources it was allocated. A final objective of the programme evaluation research maintains that it strictly expresses variables in a specific and measurable way.

- Programme evaluation research was discussed through its four categories, namely; programme improvement, accountability, knowledge generation and political ruses or public relations. Because programme evaluation research is characterized as political, it therefore means that it is a programme through which politicians utilize its results to report their accountability regarding social programmes and their achievements to the communities. Programme evaluation research is a means of generating more information regarding the objectives of the social programme. Information obtained from the programme evaluation research projects could also be aimed at achieving adverse goals such as utilized by the politicians to crash management of the social programmes.
- Programme evaluation research was discussed through its theoretical perspectives, namely; the positivist perspective, interpretive perspective and critical- emancipatory perspective. According to the positivist perspective of the programme evaluation research, an evaluator conducts evaluations alone without the involvement of the stakeholders. This perspective has a severe limitation because it fails to empower communities. The interpretive perspective on the other hand, has a better level of involvement of the communities than the positivist perspective in that it is conducted by a team which is composed of the evaluators, management, recipients and other stakeholders of the social programme. The critical-emancipatory perspective explains that evaluations are conducted by the evaluator, recipients and other stakeholders of the social programme. This perspective has an advantage of empowering the participants. In this regard, this perspective has the features of the participatory action research which was highly recommended by the researcher in this study. An effective programme

evaluation research process should therefore be conducted by all the stakeholders of the social programme.

- The four types of programme evaluation research, namely: monitoring, impact/outcome evaluation, formative evaluation and summative evaluation research were discussed. Monitoring is a process of regularly visiting the project site and compiling reports about its activities. Impact evaluation is concerned with the identification of possible intended goals of the social programme. This type of programme evaluation research informs the evaluators, recipients and other stakeholder that the programme is indeed meeting its intended goals. The formative evaluation is a programme evaluation research type which is aimed at improving the ongoing social programme. It is identified as a foundation from which the summative evaluation research develops. The summative evaluation research on the other hand, is concerned with the assessment of the effectiveness and the efficiency of the social programme. The summative evaluation research has an important feature of advocacy, because its results are utilized to convince the funding institutions, the recipients and other stakeholders that a social programme is worth of investing. This study utilizes the summative evaluation research in order to improve the formulation, implementation and evaluation of the PRP.
- And lastly, the study shared information regarding the programme evaluation research process. During the discussion, the researcher also identified some programme evaluation research concepts, namely: stakeholders, participation, types of participation and the barriers to participation. The process of programme evaluation research has been derived from De Vos (1998:368). This contribution is of the utmost importance for this study because the process in itself is like a checklist which social work practitioners can utilize in order to conduct their evaluations in a step-by-step fashion.

During the programme evaluation research phase of obtaining the cooperation and support of the service givers and management concerned, the researcher listed a variety of stakeholders namely: the policymakers and decision makers, programme sponsors, evaluation sponsors, the target participants, programme managers, programme staff, programme competitors, contextual stakeholders and the evaluation and research

community. The researcher is of the opinion that an effective evaluation of the PRP should require that at least most of these stakeholders should compose the team which is to evaluate the projects. When evaluations are conducted in this fashion, there is an enhancement of transparency in the social programme. And when social programmes are evaluated in a transparent fashion, there is less likelihood that theft, corruption and nepotism might occur, this ensuring the effectiveness of the social programme.

The stakeholder in the programme evaluation research process should be encouraged to actively participate in the evaluations. The researcher has identified two types of participation in this study, namely: means participation which means that the stakeholders are brought into the evaluation process only for the sake that experts want to claim that they are part of the decisions arrived at. The end participation on the other hand, is an involvement of communities in the evaluations which occurs when stakeholders demand to be included in the evaluation process.

The researcher has reported that citizenry participation in the programme evaluation research is not an easy process because it is also infested by a number of barriers. The barriers to participation during the evaluations must be strongly avoided in order to ensure good evaluation goals.

When evaluators are readily equipped with knowledge, skills and experience necessary to conduct the evaluations on the social programmes, they can then proceed to design their research project plans. These plans are guided by the research methodology which is nothing else but a step-by-step execution of the research project for the purpose of obtaining data and analyzing them. The research methodology and the findings of this study will be outlined in the succeeding chapter.