

CHAPTER 3:

COMMUNITY TRANSFORMATION

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In order to better ones self and your surrounding community, you need to constantly develop your skills and your talents in order to be a productive member of society. As an African proverb states: “*kodumela moepa thutse, gago lehumo letswago kgaiswi*” – work hard, wealth does not come easy, one needs to be motivated and a hard worker to make a real difference.

It is telling us to take responsibility for our own lives which is in your own two hands. Individual success is dependant on each individual, even though most of the time; people need collective actions to achieve the success they want.

In the bible we read in 2 Thess. 3:10, “For even when we were with you, we commanded you this: if anyone will not work, neither shall he eat”. A work ethic has been encouraged in the bible. People must be hard workers in order to eat or to live. I have often heard Christians saying work is a curse.

Gen. 2:3, “...He rested from all his work which God Had created and made”. God Himself is a worker. He rested from His work, it means He worked, it means working is not a curse and neither slavery.

Gen. 2:15, “Then the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it”. God commanded man to tend the garden before the fall of man into sin. This shows us work is not a curse neither or slavery.

The community must take a full participation in its own transformation process. If this participation is not taken fully the community will become stagnant as the African proverb says “*Tau dia hloka seboka, di shitwa ke nare e hlotsha*” It means that if people do not work together, they will fail even to achieve minor things. In order for the community to be transformed it needs everyone to take ownership of the process of transformation.

African people have always believed in communal life. They do things together. This can be seen in their proverbs. Here is another proverb “*sedikwa ga se pale*” meaning if people work together they will be successful in their work.

Therefore this chapter will focus on transformation, development and the empowerment of people and their communities enabling them to take responsibility for their own lives and actions.

3.2. TRANSFORMATION AS AN ACTION

3.2.1. Defining the concept of transformation

Transformation, according to the (*Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 2005*) means a complete change, from something into something different. It is a change of a form or structure for instance a country’s transformation from a dictatorship to a democracy.

(The Chambers Dictionary tenth edition 2006) put it this way transformation (n) means to change the shape of, to change especially radically or thoroughly to another form.

Transformation according to the (Reader's Digest Oxford Word finder 1993) is the act or an instance of transforming. Transform as a verb means to make a thorough or dramatic change in the form, outward appearance, character.

Transformation (noun) according to the (Webster Comprehensive Dictionary international Edition 1998) is the act of transforming or the state of being transformed. The verb from transformation is transformed which means to give a different form to, change the character, to alter the nature of.

(The *Strong NIV Exhaustive Concordance* 1998) Greek word: metamorphoo it means changed in form, transfigured, and transformed into another form. The word repent (Greek:metanoeo) comes from the same root meaning change any or all the elements composing one's life: attitude, thoughts, and behaviour concerning the demands of God for living.

In Hebrew the word is *hapak* meaning to be transformed, changed, be turned into. It is in the same line of thought with the Greek meaning. It is all about taking a new form or structure.

I have read all the definitions above, and they all come to one conclusion that transformation is a radical or thorough change of something. This means that we need to breakup the first form and bring about a new form different that completely different from the first form. A community that was

poverty stricken must be transformed into a wealthy and successful community in all aspects i.e. spiritual, physical, emotional and social.

3.2.2. Transformation on an individual level

According to the definitions of transformation, radical, thorough and dramatic change of a form is important. In transforming individuals who have lived in poverty for a long time account must be taken of the fact that their minds have been affected by living in poverty. Therefore a radical change of the form of their minds is critical. According to (Edwards & Sen, 2000:610) processes of change cannot be effective without a deep-rooted personal transformation which could be the catalyst which will start the search for new ways of doing things. Inner changes are very important before the outer change can be realized.

Romans 12:2, says “And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God”. Changing of the way we think is crucial or important in our lives. When we think right we will act right.

Proverbs 23:7, “For as the man thinks in his heart, so is he”. It is important to allow transformation to take place in our minds. The old way of thinking (poverty mentality) must be transformed so that we begin to think that we were created in God’s image and likeness, that we are important.

Essama-Nssah (2004:513) as I have quoted him in the section where I speak about empowerment, he speaks of

freedom of choice. When the individual has been living in poverty and where they have been robbed of their personal freedom of choices in life, the transformation of their mind will give them the freedom to choose the kind of life they wish to live.

According to (Von Kotze 2007:233) I have mentioned him in the section below, he speaks about “dignified decent life” the transformed mind helps the poor to be able to live a dignified decent life. The power belongs to people whose minds have been transformed.

The transformed mind will begin to make correct choices in regard to healthy living. It may start with proper eating programs leading to healthy eating. The importance of following a balanced diet daily will be realised.

Transformed minds will start physical exercising daily, those who have improved their finances can join places like Active Virgin to keep their bodies in a healthy shape and that will protect them from sicknesses. Such people will start to realize that smoking, drug abuse and irresponsible sexual behaviour are not needed.

Transformed minds will start to live a productive life. They are people who add family to the community at large. They are no longer only consumers, but they are producers. They will get involved in community projects to change their own and the lives of others. These kinds of people, wish the community to be in good shape and to be in place where everyone wishes to live.

3.2.3 Social transformation

Continuing with the concept of community transformation, I would like to look into the concept of social transformation. According to the definitions given above, the transformation is a complete change of something, on structure and character. What is social transformation all about?

Groenewald, (2000) (in Erasmus 2005:140) defines social transformation as "...to transform is to change in form or appearance; in condition, nature or character. The social is concerned with human beings in their relations to each other, their living conditions, and living together in organized communities". It simply means a complete change of how people live as human beings in relation to their neighbours and conditions in life.

In my research, this is a core matter. I would like to see how people who live in poverty stricken communities can be transformed into a new structure and their living conditions to be renewed.

Wint and Ngcobo (2000:93) state that transformation in South Africa is all about moving from exclusion into inclusion in the sphere of life, such as economic, political and social and that all people are able to share in all of the opportunities that are in the country. We are all aware that South African people were treated according to their race and that certain races were excluded; now, through transformation those races must be part of South Africa.

The democratic governments proposed a Reconstruction and Development programme (RDP) which was developed to facilitate social transformation. There were three

objectives of the RDP as (Midgley 2001:269) stated in her article. Here are the three focuses of RDP:

- Meeting the basic needs of people.
 - Housing
 - Food
- Human resource development
 - Given high priority to education and skills development.
 - Implementation of affirmative action.
 - Improvement of culture, arts, and youth services, and enhanced sports and recreational activities particularly in poor communities.
- Economy
 - The RDP promised to support industrial development, trade, small business and resource-based such as mining and agriculture.
- Democratisation
 - RDP calls for the creation of an equitable, people-centred, democratic and appropriate welfare system that will create a humane and peaceful society.

Edwards & Sen (2000:606-607) shares their perspective on change that all social systems depended on three bases: set of principles, ethics and values; a set of processes; the subjective states that constitute our inner being, personal

feelings and institution. Effective change depends on integration and working together of the three bases.

3.2.4. Transformation as a story of action in the Bible

Conversion of Paul

Acts 26:1-22

In this narrative, we read about Paul speaking before King Agrippa, after he has been accused of causing the trouble from the Jews. He claimed that he did everything that was right according to the Law of Moses. He stood against those who had believed in Christ Jesus. Many Christians were put in prison and some were put to death and Paul was also casting his vote against them.

12 While thus occupied, as I journeyed to Damascus with authority and commissioned from the chief priests,

13 at midday, O king, along the road I saw a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, shining around me and those who journeyed with me.

14 And when we all had fallen to the ground, I heard a voice speaking to me and saying in the Hebrew language, 'Saul, Saul why are you persecuting me? It is hard for you to kick against the goads'.

15 So I said, who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting.

16 But rise and stand on your feet; for I have appeared to you for this purpose, to make you a minister and a witness

both of the things which you have seen and of the things which I will reveal to you.

17 I will deliver you from the *Jewish* people, as well as from the Gentile, to whom I now send you,

18 to open their eyes, in order to turn them from darkness to light, and from power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a inheritance among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

In order to transform the community, we need first to develop the community. Now I will look into the meaning of development and how communities can develop their own context.

3.3. DEVELOPMENT

3.3.1 Defining the concept of development

Development means the gradual growth of something that becomes more advanced. I will look more into these words and to see how we can apply them in our community to bring a new story of hope and progress

Development explained in this way, is “about empowering people to take charge of their destinies” (Essama-Nssah 2004:510). Community development if it can be said to be successful is when people or the community controls their destinies.

It can be put in this way “development is about fighting and overcoming poverty and inequalities especially in the developing countries or third world” (Kotze 1997:1).

Development agencies should not be concerned about themselves, but about the eradication of poverty and inequalities in the communities of the world. Again development can be defined as positive social, economic, and political change (Kotze 1997:1). We do not know what positive change is or when do we say a change is positive or negative? I would say the change is positive if the poor people are in charge of the development process. The poor people or grassroots or marginalized must be part of the social change, economical change and get politicians to account.

Community development is processes by which the efforts of the people themselves are united with those who are in authority such as government to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of the communities (Masumba 2006:89).

The local people must play an important role in this process. Indigenous knowledge is absolutely essential. The development process should be built on what people know already and how they have been doing things in their community. This could be pertaining to their local strategies about living and overcoming the obstacles of life. The social developmental theory was meant to broaden opportunities for people to participate in the economy rather than in making them dependent on state hand outs (Gray 2006:61).

Again, development should not only be in the economic sphere but also should be at institutional, social, cultural, political, and psychological areas of life (Kotze 1996:9). Changing the economy alone without paying attention to the context of the community cannot be successful. Relevant

departments of government must work together with the local people to change the poverty they are living in. Development is “a process by which the members of a society increase their personal and institutional capacities to mobilize and manage resources to produce sustainable and justly distributed improvements in their quality of life consistent with their own aspirations” (Myers 1999:96; Korten 1990:67).

The key words of these authors are capacities of both personal and institutional which must be improved to change the lives of the poor. Poor people must play a key role in the process of liberating their own lives. Institutions must be poor people- centred rather than focusing on the donors

Any community project must be sustainable beyond the presence of the development agencies. It means that the poor people must run this process without outsiders.

Government should act justly towards the poor. Most of the time government institutions act in favour of the rich or the powerful. The poor must be at the focus of any development.

The aspirations of the poor must be taken into consideration. Any improvement should be in tune with their aspirations. They should be the one who decide what improvements should be made.

Friedman (1992:33) speaks about alternative development as a process that seeks the empowerment of households and their individual members through their involvement socially, and politically. Empowerment here must be in the form of helping the locals to devise their own decision-making process and locals to self-reliance, participation. This would mean that empowering is to enable to win their lives

back. Poor people must be able to hold politicians accountable in fulfilling every promise they have made.

Friedman (1992:13) says again on alternative development:

The objective of an alternative development programme is to humanize the system that has shut them [the poor] out, and to accomplish this through forms of everyday resistance and political struggle that insist on the rights of the excluded population as human beings as citizens, and as people intent on releasing their loving and creative powers from within. Its central objective is their inclusion in a restructured system that does not make them redundant

Development should empower the excluded population, so that they can begin to release the love and creative powers within them. This community of the excluded must start to walk in their identity and to be productive as human beings created by God in His image and likeness.

According to Chambers (1997:9) there is a significant shifting that is occurring in development processes; shifting is from “the things and infrastructure to people and capacities”. Empowerment of people is the cornerstone of development. The technical aspect must follow people who are capacitated. If, we transfer things such as money and technology without empowering the people themselves it would be a waste of money and resources.

The spiritual dimension has been prominent in development as an important element; “questions relating to the uses of power, values, love, brotherhood, peace and the ability of people to live in harmony with one another are fundamental

to religion and to the role of the church in society” (Korten 1990:168).

3.3.2. Economic development

The economy of the community is amongst other developments that are so crucial for us to concentrate on in order to transform our communities.

Economic development must start with focusing on building people capacities as Chambers put it in section 3.3.1 above. The need for economic development must be researched by the community itself not by development agencies who are coming into the community. Development agencies must work in partnership with the community.

Deepa Narayan (2002:212) put it this way, “when the community controlled the type of projects they have chosen and implemented, they tended to select projects that better match community needs and interests”.

The poor people should identify what kind of economic project they can engage in to bring improvement to the economy of their lives. After the project has been identified they should do the planning for the project. Also, the poor people must be able to implement the project that they have been planning. They should not only, implement the program, but also should evaluate the project, to see if the project is doing well. It means the power is in the hands of the people.

The poor community must survey and identify the projects that would be viable in their communities. Receiving money

without building human capacity it would be a waste of resources because it could not be used properly

The government must encourage the poor people as they change their economic situation. It must help people by building structures for business. They should help with financial assistance where necessary.

3.3.3. Post-development theory

The development discourse functions to construct the third world in which legitimizes development intervention (Kim and Foster 2007:52). This discourse functions as a tool for creating and managing the third world. The same people who want to bring development are the people who have colonized the third world. It is promoting or legitimizing relations of domination. People on the ground will feel that they cannot do it without their former bosses. “Various post-development theorists argue that development intervention functions as a continuation of Western Colonial imperialism” (Kim and Foster 2007:52).

3.3.4. What is post-development?

Escobar (1995:215) lists the hallmarks of post-development as follows:

- An interest not in development alternatives but in alternatives to development does rejection of the entire paradigm.
- An interested in local culture and knowledge.

- A critical stance towards established scientific discourses.
- The defense and promotion of localized, pluralistic and grassroots movements.

This school of thought bluntly rejects development as a Eurocentric discourse, imperialist project and meaningless concept (Ziai 2004:1045).

Also, post-development claim that the knowledge deployed in development is a product of the epistemic perspectives of the West (Jakimor 2008:315).

Post-development promotes that knowledge should be localized and contextualized. The knowledge should not just be applied to the community but it should be generated in the community (Jakimor 2008:316). As I work from postfoundationalist epistemology, that would sound good. But will not pursue an in-depth of post-development may be later one can pursue research on it

3.4. DEVELOPING AND EMPOWERING THE COMMUNITY

I think the point that has been mentioned in the above 3.3 by Pieterse that it is important and powerful for empowering the community. As, we have seen above, the government has a lot of work to complete in this area and is still doing so today.

Pieterse, (2001:67) parliament passed the National Empowerment Fund Act, its aim was to restructure various state assets so that disadvantaged communities can benefit

by investing in the shares. The money would help poverty stricken communities to start small businesses.

3.4.1. Defining the concept of empowerment

I think it is appropriate to start with a definition of the word empowerment. The (Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary 2005) put it this way, empower means to “give someone authority to do something”, to give someone more control over their own life or the situation they are in. Someone could be a group or the whole community. E.g. the movement actively empowered women and helped them to feel confidence in themselves.

Von Kotze (2007:235). Argues that empowerment is the “Capacity refer to the ability to perform the actions necessary to create and sustain life, including being able to identify and make use of livelihood opportunities and cope with stress and shocks” I understand the author's stress on the issue of livelihood. The empowerment process should assist poor people to live a fulfilled life.

Von Kotze (2007:233), speaks about a “dignified decent life” , that is livelihood, meaning that a person is not just working for a salary but making a productive living which God has created for us to live here on earth and beyond the present life.

Empowerment is more than just transferring technical solutions to the community, it must be more in capacity building and raising standards for the poor people (Essama-Nssah 2004:510).

Every community empowerment must be in relation to living well. The people must have a choice to make the life they wish to live. People should take charge of their lives towards their destinies.

Empowerment can be defined in this way “implies freedom of choice and action in the pursuit of one’s life plans” (Essama-Nssah 2004:513). This would be a fulfilled life which helps one to achieve their full potential.

Kim et al (2007:39) has defined empowerment as the process of increasing the capacity of individuals or groups to make choices and to transform those choices into desired actions and outcomes.

The aim of an empowerment process includes “power within”(internal qualities, such as self-confidence or critical thinking, skills that contribute to individual agency), “power to”(creation of new opportunities without domination: factors such as the ability to make independent decisions that determine and demonstrate such agency) and “power with”(communal dimensions, such as group solidarity or collective actions which acknowledges that positive change may often be affected through acting together, rather than alone (Kim et al 2007:28)

Nussbaun (2000:72): has put it this way

The core idea that the human being as a dignified free being who shapes his/her own life in cooperation and reciprocity with other, rather than been being passively shaped or pushed around by the world in the manner of a flock or ‘herd’ animal. A life that is really human is one that is shaped

throughout by these human powers of practical reason and sociability.

We could also define empowerment as the expansion of the assets and capacities of poor people to participate in, negotiate with, influence, control, and hold accountable institutions that affect their lives (Essama-Nssah 2004:504). The poor people must take back the control of their lives. No transformation can take place effectively without the poor being in charge of their destinies.

When people or a community has been capacitated they can own the process of economic empowerment in their hands and create work for themselves and their children.

3.4.2. Four elements of empowerment

Deepa (2002:18), mentions four elements of empowerment, that has been seen across most of the empowerment processes that have been completed by poor people, government, and civil society in different contexts. They are as follows:

- Access to information
- Inclusion and participation
- Accountability
- Local organizational capacity

Access to information should be a two-way street. The information should move from the government to the poor communities and at the same time government must get

information about the poor in order to serve them better. Information such as what do the poor think about their condition? What can they do to change their condition? What ability do they have to change the condition?

Citizens that are well informed make better choices and can also take advantages of opportunities, access services exercise their rights, negotiate effectively, and hold state and nonstate accountable(Deepa 2002:19). The poor people must receive relevant and timely, information so that they can take effective action to change their condition.

Inclusion and participation is important in the process of empowerment. An empowering process should take poor people as co-producers with authority and control over decision-making and resources. Participatory process is more on helping the poor to achieve “independence from the external agents in formulating the agenda and managing the affairs” (Kweku 2001:9).

Accountability refers to the ability to call public officials, private employers, or service providers to account (Deepa 2002:20). Officials and private employers must be aware that they serve the poor people and they must be aware that poor people are co-producers and they are in partnership with them.

Local organization capacity, is a process that enables people to work together, organize themselves and mobilize resources to solve their problems of common interest (Deepa 2002:21)

3.4.3. Empowerment through education

Education is an important empowerment tool; there is a need to involve knowledge, skills transfer, critical thinking, and values (Essama-Nssah 2004:518). The individual or group must be equipped with the necessary education.

Knowledge will equip poor people and give them the power to make informed decisions about their lives. Knowledge is power. One cannot shape his/her life without arming himself/herself with knowledge. And this knowledge becomes power for individuals or group of people who operate in the business of shaping their lives.

Capacity building cannot happen without education. In order for people to become capable, they need the kind of education that will help them to be critical thinkers, to make choices for the life they want to live (Essama Nssa 2004:510).

Education must help people to achieve their full potential. They become productive in life as individual and as groups of people living together. And by using their full potential, they must participate in shaping their future.

When people have learned the skills to do something, such as a project that can bring economical change in their lives then they are empowered. Skill is about practical reason, or ability to do something such as a decision-making skill, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and “note that skill may be attributed to the purposeful use of self” (Lee 2001:58). Skills can be defined as what people do rather than what people are.

Human values must be at the centre of community empowerment. *“Motho ke motho ka batho”*(a person is a person because of others). If this value is in place people will manage to live with other people. Other values are as follows: respect, responsibility, honesty, accountability, and reliability. Our values are more about who we are rather than what we can do.

3.4.4. Researcher’s reflection on empowerment

I have chosen the following themes to reflect upon. My co-researchers have been involved in this process and they are happy with them.

3.4.4.1. Increasing the capacity

Increased capacity was shown as an important key to empowering the community or individuals. As we have seen in chapter 2, poverty excludes poor people from many things which disempowered them. Poor people feel that they do not know that they have the capacity to change things.

Poor people must be aware that they have the ability to make things happen. When there is a need in the community the government and private sector must work with community or the individuals from the community so that they can build their capacities. If, these qualities have been strengthened poor people can stand for themselves.

3.4.4.2. Dignified decent life

The poor people deserve to live a dignified decent life. By living in poverty this element of life has been forgotten or is not known. Poor people have a desire to own things that will make them feel good. I have known some people who have taken their retirement fund to build big houses which they will not stay in for a long time. From this I have observed that these people wished to live decently but poverty denied them.

3.4.4.3. Freedom of choice

In life poor people have been denied the freedom of choice. The people with control of the resources such as government officials, and donors would make choices for the poor. Poor people have not been given a chance to be free to make their own choices to change their lives.

Empowerment sets the poor free so that they can have freedom of choice in their lives. We all need to have freedom of choice in our lives.

3.4.4.4. Participation in the process of the empowerment

Sustainability is an important element in community empowerment. In order to reach this goal the community or the individuals who need to be empowered must be included and take a full participation in the process. They must own the process of empowerment. They must be part of the decision-making, implementation, and evaluation

3.3.4.5. Expansion of assets

When the poor have taken their position as human being and have been capacitated in every way then assets or money can be pumped into the community. These are assets that would assist in the process of empowerment. They will be able to use the assets correctly

3.4. Entrepreneurship spirit: “*Mpofutsho wa phatla*”

According to (Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary 2005 7th Edition) entrepreneur means a “person who makes money by starting or running the business”, especially when this involve financial risks. So, entrepreneurship would mean the process of starting or running a business. This is a skill that education must bring to empower poor people to take charge of their lives.

In Pedi, we say “*motho o tla ja mpofutsho wa phatla ya gagwe*”. Meaning everyone will eat his/her sweets or meaning that we must work before we get food or money to buy whatever we like or desire. The entrepreneurship spirit encourages us to take ownership of our life or to be our own boss. Proverbs 6:6 says “Go to the ant, you sluggard! Consider her ways and be wise”. The bible is challenging us to look at the life of an ant. The ant gathers food during summer times and keeps it safe for winter times. Winter time is a period where there is no food.

One of my researchers (Mr. TN) said that “most black people lack initiatives”.

Proverbs 6: 7 will say “which, having no captain, overseer or ruler”. The ants have this ability because ants plan ahead and save food for the future and can organize where to save food. The ant is showing us a characteristic of entrepreneurship. Poor people must develop the potential that God has given them. Initiative is one of the characteristics an entrepreneurship spirit. The African proverb that I have quoted above emphasizes an entrepreneurship spirit.

3.5.1. Empowerment – the power of participation

The development agencies, government, and the community must work together towards community empowerment. All these people must be in partnership.

Nieman (2006:597) is stating that “the South African government has shown political will by accepting social development as policy”. The Government came up with a white paper on social development stipulating, among other things, participation, empowerment, equity, accountability, accessibility, and partnership as elements, considered to be the key principles for a South African developmental approach. The church is one of the main stakeholders in this partnership and she has the ability to do a lot. The government wants to help people to help themselves.

Effective participation can include the following honesty, respect, and caring (White 1999:128). Honesty is about being truthful toward self and other participants in the process. Respect is about respecting your self and respecting others. People who are in a participation process must feel a caring

spirit. Participants must feel that they add value to the process that they are a part of it.

When the atmosphere is good, people who are in this process will feel the compulsion to open up their lives to the group. They will feel safe and protected and feel cared for by the group. This care must be according to the definition of the local people. Development agencies might define it according to their own understanding. Here, participants are more important than anyone else.

The local people or grassroots must be listened to, to be allowed to contribute to their own decision-making process and their policies (White 1999:155). Actually the participation empowers the local people to take ownership of the community project.

Participation means that the training creates an atmosphere in which the trainee, trainer, and their materials engage in a dialogue to find suitable answers (De Beer and Swanepool 1996:4). The equality of the participants is vital for the community project to succeed.

The Comprehensive Development Framework, wants to see the following, a local ownership, a long-term holistic approach, focus on result and partnership (Essama- Nssah 2004:510). The World Bank wants to see local people taking ownership of the empowerment process in their community. They must be in partnership with those who are helping in the process such as governments, institutions and development agencies. Local people should be able to do strategic planning to get results.

3.6. TRANSFORMATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Transformational development means more than development which is concerned only about social change in the material world, but transformational refers to a positive change in the whole of life materially, socially, and spiritually (Myers 1999:3). Transformational development is a life journey and is endless. Above all it stresses really change from within the person.

In this section I would like to look into different stories that are involve in transformational development. As a narrative researcher, the narratives play an important role in my research, so I pay serious attention towards narratives involved in transformational development. They are three voices that I want to look like this:

3.6.1. Convergent stories

The most important thing in transformational development is the stories that are involved in this process.

3.6.1.1. Biblical story

Theology is a necessary element in the process of transformational development. We cannot be successful in our process without listening to the story of God. He was part and working in the community before anyone was there (Myers 1999:20).

3.6.1.2. Creation

God is the one who created the whole of creation that we see today. The bible says, “In the beginning God created heaven and earth” (Genesis 1:1). Everything in creation that we see today has been created by God. We see the stars, the moon and the sun. All these things come from God.

He also, created man in His image and likeness (Gen. 1:26). He is a moral being whose intelligence, perception, and self-determination has far exceeds that of any other earthly being. Man has been created in God’s image, this gives man his identity. The question that says who am I has been answered.

Man has been given a responsibility by God. He was created to be like God (he receive his being ‘identity’) and his duty (Gen.2:15), “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to tend and keep it”. Man has received his being and his responsibilities from God. The poor bear the image of God and they must live productive lives. In our community transformation, this story must be shared so that the poor could realize it and associate with the story.

God did not only create man, but also the nations of the earth (Gen. 10:32). The nations and kingdoms of the earth come from God. Even, other institutions come from God.

Triune God (trinity) is a story of God being one but in three form, God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. We see the unity of God and it must give us hope today. Again, we see harmony during and after the creation period, between God, and man, between man and man, man and

the environment. The Intent of God was that there must be a harmony amongst the people and the environment.

3.6.1.3. The story of the fall

In this story, we hear about the fall of man from the place God has put man. The harmony that existed was broken down because of the disobedience of man. This is what the bible has to say about this story, “And they heard the sound Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him, where are you”? (Gen. 3:8, 9). Man has left the place of harmony with God and with himself/herself.

Again, it could be put this way, “the effect of this disobedience ensured that human identity and all dimensions of human relationships would be marred” (Myers 1999:27). The story of the fall affected everything that God has intended to achieve for human beings. I can say poverty came to earth because of the fall of man. Man became selfish, corrupted, and no longer thought about God’s purposes and his fellowman.

Myers 1999:29 put it this way about the effect of the fall of the institutions:

The economic system was created by God to steward responsibly and justly share the natural and human resources of the nation and to encourage men and women to be productive, and using the gifts God has

given to create wealth. Distorted by the fall, people occupying positions of influence within the economic system now act more often as owners and less as stewards. They skew the system to enhance and protect their own self-interest and insulate themselves from the impact of these distortions on the less fortunate.

The political system was created by God to encourage kingdom ethics and to bring a creation order into the management of human affairs, an order based on justice and peace. Yet, as a result of the fall, the political system becomes a captive of the economic order and begins to serve the powerful; its ministries of justice cease being either ministries or just.

Finally, the religious system, which was created by God to bring the nations and their institutions into relationship with God, too often colludes with fallen political and economic systems. The prophets of accountability are gradually seduced by money, power, and prestige, gradually becoming silent (Eze. 22:28)

In our work for community transformation, we must look carefully into the spiritual causes of poverty.

3.6.1.4. Exodus- liberation story

In the story of liberation, we see the holistic and relational nature of God's redemptive work.

We see God revealing himself and demonstrating his power so that Israel would believe and be faithful.

Socio-politically, exodus is the story of moving from slavery to freedom, from injustice toward a just society, from dependence to independence.

Economically, the exodus story is about moving from oppression in someone else's land to freedom in their own land, a land fairly distributed to all so that everyone could enjoy the fruit of his or her own labour.

Psychologically, the exodus story is about losing self-understanding as a slave people, and discovering the inner understanding that with God's help, they could be a people and become a nation.

3.6.1.5. The story of Jesus

The story of Jesus started outside where the power lies. He started his ministry where no one had expected it to take place. People were saying, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?"(John 1:47). There was nothing of significance that could be expected from Nazareth. Power, prestige, salaried, professional or people of authority could not be expected to come from the periphery.

Jesus performed his ministry out there, where the poor or the labelled (Marginalized) people were living. The people from the centre of power were attracted to the periphery where Jesus was ministering. Jesus was associated with the poor and the outcasts. Today, this is a good lesson for those who are working in transformational development to stand with those who are living in poverty and are been marginalized by the powerful.

3.6.1.6. The mission of Jesus

The mission of Jesus is clearly stated in the bible, The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, Because He has anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor; He has sent me to heal the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to set at liberty those who are oppressed (Luke 4:18).

Jesus was sent by His father to preach the kingdom of God unto the whole world (Luke 4:43). The kingdom of God is about restoration of human identity and human productivity which says God made man in His image and likeness and to tend the garden to produce food. Human beings might succeed if they start to operate from this notion.

3.6.1.7. Death of Jesus on the cross

Jesus died out of the city. He went through a traumatic experience. Jesus was a good person who died for bad people. On the cross, he cried my God, my God why have you forsaken me (Mk. 15:33). If we were to analyse these two types of pain which are physical pain and broken relationship pain one would find that a broken relationship is what Christ was concerned about.

Furthermore, the bible asserts that in Christ all things hold together through the work of the Holy Spirit (Myers 1999:20). God is still busy today working in the world. As I am writing this research project God is with me, even the poor where they feel that sense of hopelessness God is with them and He works with them for the betterment of their lives.

3.6.1.8. The Faith-based organization and social transformation.

As I stated in my objectives the research process looks into the impact of poverty on identity formation and how faith-based communities play an important role in influencing that identity formation in a positive way. We have many different faith-based people who belong to different religions. In this research I chose to work from a Christian religion and also interdisciplinary approach.

South Africa is considered to be a religious country, (Erasmus 2005:139). He continues saying that the church is the strongest faith-based community and the most influential non-governmental organization (NGO) reaching, on average, 63% of the Christian population weekly (Erasmus 2005:139).

According to the census of 2001 -79.8% of the population have indicated that they are affiliated with the Christian religion. Froise (1999:37),(quoted in Erasmus 2005) stated that “there are approximately 43,000 Christian faith communities in South Africa and the infrastructure of these churches reaches every corner of our country”.

Erasmus (2005:139) is stating that “in rating South African social institutions, the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) 2000 found that the public’s view of the church received the highest percentage of trust (74% in 2000)”. So, Christian communities can play a major role in social transformation.

There are other arguments such as that religion often inhibits change (Erasmus 2005:139).

There is a notion or a school of thought that says the church has no value in connection with transformational development. Myers put it this way, “too often Christian development professionals see the church as a distraction, or worse, an impediment to transformation” (Myers 1999:126). This kind of thinking separates people from the community of believers where they must grow in fellowship with one another. Their argument is that the church is not professional enough to do transformational development.

Again, they view the church as part of the problem, so the church is unable to bring the solution into the communities of the world.

Despite all these thoughts, the church is a plan of God to expand the kingdom of God into the world, and she (Church) is not perfect, so she too need transformation (Myers 1999:126).

Myers 1999:127 puts the work of the church as follows:

First, the role of the church in transformational development is the same as ours: to be a servant and a source of encouragement, not a commander or a judge.

Second, the church can and must be a source of value formation within the community.

Finally, the church is the hermeneutical community that reads the biblical story as its story and applies this story to the concrete circumstances of its time, place, and culture.

3.6.1.9. The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit is part of the triune God. He came to give us the power to do his ministry, especially in transformation development using the church and all of those who are busy in serving poor communities. Jesus said to his disciples, “Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high” (Luke 24:49). Jesus was aware that His disciples will fail by themselves, so they needed the Holy Spirit.

Also, in Acts 1:8; “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witness to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth”. The Triune (God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit) God chose to work with us in touching the lives of those who are suffering.

The Holy Spirit teaches us all things and reminds us about everything that Jesus taught us (John 14:16, 26).

The Holy Spirit initiates mission (Acts 13:2). The Holy Spirit leads and guides missions (Acts 8:28; 16:9). The Holy Spirit makes people response to the preaching of the Word (Acts 16:14).

Bearing in mind what the bible says, about the Holy Spirit, those who work in transformation development need the Holy Spirit, without Him, there would be no sustainability in the things that we do

3.6.1.10. Three important theological ideas

These three theological concepts could give us some guidance for doing transformational development.

➤ **Incarnation**

In defining incarnation, John says, “the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as the only begotten of the Father, Full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). The Word in this passage is Jesus, one of the trinity or triune God. It means Jesus or God left His glory to come to be with sinners that He might save them.

Without going into deep theology on incarnation, what we could learn as people who want to work in community transformation is that Jesus emptied himself, He became nothing, and He left His glory to become a sinner. So for most of us working in transformational development, we must empty ourselves, it is no longer about us, but is about those communities that live in poverty, we must listen to their story and work with them without looking at them as if they are nothing.

➤ **Redemption**

According to the New Bible Dictionary, redemption means deliverance from some evil by payment of a price. This payment is called ransom. In this circle of ideas Christ’s death may be regarded as a ransom for many.

Myers 1999:47 put it in this fashion, “God is working to redeem and restore the whole of creation, human beings, all living things and creation itself” God is busy now, working for His creation to become better.

So, the work of transformation development falls under the redemptive plan, when we work for transformational development, we are working as God’s hands and feet (Myers 1999:47).

➤ **The Kingdom of God**

The main focus of Jesus was to preach the kingdom of God. In His first sermon He spoke about the kingdom of God (Mark. 1:14. In Matt. 6:33, He says seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness. This means that the kingdom of God is what we must seek and everything else will follow us.

Matt, 6:10, Jesus, says that we must pray for the kingdom of God to come on earth. The kingdom of God is unshakeable (Heb. 12:28). What a blessing, to be in a kingdom that is unshakeable in the world where everything is shakeable. And to have a fixed person is something that can give strength to those who live in poverty that their situation will change by arrival of the kingdom of God which is through the Jesus Christ (Heb. 13:8).

The gospel of the kingdom must not be for personal salvation only but it should be for the whole system. (Wink, 1992:83) put it this way, “The gospel is not a message of personal salvation from the world, but a message of a world transfigured, right down to its basic structures”. The whole community needs the Kingdom of God to be transformed completely. Living in the Kingdom of God must be the one that brings hope. The bible

says, it is an “unshakeable kingdom” (Heb 12:28). Transformational development must establish this kingdom.

3.6. Community story

In order for transformational development to take place, all stories must be listened to, even the story of the community. Most of the time, this is the story that community developers do not listen to.

It is important that the story of the community is listened to because “the community comes from a past, and its memory of that past is the beginning of any new story” (Myers 1999:138). Narratives speak about the story of the past and the future being in the present. To know where someone is going we must know where someone is coming from.

Again, when the development agent is listening to the community story, which alone will tell the community that their story is important (Myers 1999:139). By listening to someone telling his/her story, demonstrates that one values the story teller that alone can create a strong partnership. By listening to the story of the community one would be able to understand the belief system of the community that is spirituality of the community. By understanding their spirituality one will be aware of where the power lies (Myers 1999:140).

The survival strategy must be listened to. If people know about how one has survived, the same strategy can be used to plan for the future. Also, the indigenous knowledge must

be listened to often these are the elements that people ignore.

3.8. Story of the development agent

It is very important, that the development agents do not come there as people who have all the answers to offer to the poor community. (Myers 1999:51, 52) speaking about very important attitudes that can help the community practitioners:

- Be a good neighbour: A good neighbour will give his/her life for others. To be good neighbours must change who we are.
- Be patient: development does not work on a timetable. The donors might be happy if the project is finished within a given time, but sometimes it is not good for transformation and sustainability.
- Be humble before the facts: development agents must know that they do not know everything. So, must be willing to learn from the people of the community.
- Everyone is learning: The poor and nonpoor must be aware that they need to learn. Without learning transformation cannot take place.
- Everywhere is holy: development workers must respect the poor people. They must be aware that they have been created in God's image like nonpoor people.
- Every moment and every action is potentially transforming: Community transformation workers must

be very careful of the way they do things at all times.
Do or live as the community.

- Love the people, not the program: Development workers are in the community not for programs, but for people. Programs are just a means to assist the people. The business must be people.
- Love the churches too: development workers must love and be prepared to work with local churches without looking down at them. God has put gifts inside these churches.
- Cultivate a repentant spirit: No one is perfect. So, the development workers must be willing to repent if they have done something wrong, especially if it is related to the poor people.
- Act like dependent people: Working with the poor, we must appear depending on God not on our skills, development technology, or our financial resources. By so doing, we teach the poor to trust in God.
- Whose reality counts? It is not about the way development agents see things, but the reality of the poor or the community must be taken into account.

3.9. The role of spirituality in social transformation in South Africa

The South African government in dealing with the Moral Renewal of the nation is aware that it needs spiritual transformation. In pursuing political and economical

development, spiritual transformation is a necessity (Erasmus 2005:142). So, the church must get into a partnership with the government to transform the communities of South Africa.

McGuire (1997:240-248) stresses that religion can bring social change in three ways which are religious ideas, religious leadership, and religious group:

McGuire (1997:140) states it in this way that ideas themselves do not directly effect change. “Ideas indirectly influence society through people whose interests lie in pursuing those ideas and applying them on social action in two ways: They may form the content of what a group of people try to do; and they may shape people’s perception of what their interests are”.

Secondly, social change needs a leader who will express the desired change, motivates followers to actions, and direct their actions into some larger movement of change. Religion has historically been a major source of such leaders largely because religious claims form a potent basis of authority. The prototype of the change-oriented religious leader is the prophet, whose social role is especially significant (McGuire 1997:244).

In South Africa, we see the Dutch Reformed Church as the main church in the Afrikaner community. She (Dutch Reformed Church) establishes the commissions of poverty relief programs such as old-age homes, orphanages, schools for the blinds and death. Also, we saw that the African Indigenous Church putting more stress on development of self-sufficiency for its members (Kinghorn, 1998:85). The

church is in the community to give hope and encouragement for those who live in poverty stricken communities.

3.9.1. Spirituality-The spirit's way in social transformation

Bruce et al. 1996:154 stated three aspects of the spirit's way in social transformation:

- First, taking Christian spirituality seriously would mean our analysis of the world-its happenings, its structures and its people. The structures such as the World Bank etc.
- Second, taking Christian spirituality seriously would mean our perspective in involvement becomes participatory with the spirit in redemptive events.
- Thirdly, taking the biblical understanding of spirituality seriously would require accepting the context of suffering as essential for developing spirituality. It would mean learning to see participation with those who suffer and their suffering as a fundamental context for spirituality.

3.9. My own reflections

While writing this chapter I felt sad and a failure. Because as I was writing I became aware that my house is too small, I do not have a private place where I could study without disturbing my family. My computer is right where the family watches the television. Also, I do not have the money to

please my family. The question for me was how can this research project bring transformation to my life, so that I will be able to take my family on holiday and to live a decent life? To see every limitation of poverty that has been placed on me by all injustices of the past being destroyed.

CHAPTER 4

EXPERIENCES ARE LISTENED TO AND DESCRIBED

4.1. INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I chose 9 people who have agreed for me to listen to their stories. They are 4 ladies and 5 males. 6 of these co-researchers are married and 3 are young adults. One of the males is a person living with a disability.

4.2. HOW DID I CHOOSE THEM?

When I invited these people to be my co-researchers the process was fully explained to them. No money was promised to each one of them. They fully accepted my invitation. I have not used their real names because they have requested not to be addressed by their real names. I have used their initials only.

4.3. HOW DID I COLLECT THE DATA?

My co-researchers and I have had semi-structured and unstructured conversations. We have our conversation following seven questions that have guided us.

Due to the time factor we only managed to have two interviews with each co-researcher and three group meetings that were held at the church. Some of the Interviews I conducted in the homes of my co-researchers and some took

place in my own home. Time was quite a serious problem for meeting with my co-researchers.

We recorded the interviews and I also took some notes. One of my co-researchers was and still is working out of town and spent most of his time away from home but we managed to communicate telephonically. The following are the narratives of my co-researchers as they were shared with me. The chapters of their narratives were given to the co-researchers for feedback. All of the above was carried out continuously during the research process.

4.3.1. The questions I asked the co-researchers are as follows:

- How would you describe poverty?
- How poverty does affects the way you feel about yourself?
- What do you think can be the causes of poverty?
- What is the role of the church towards those who have been affected by poverty?
- What do you think can be done to eradicate poverty?
- What is the role of the government and private companies to wards those who have been affected by poverty?
- What is your role as a person who lives in poverty to eradicate it?

4.4. LANGUAGE USAGE

I am writing my thesis in English as a requirement of the university's medium of instruction. In my conversations with my co-researchers we used English, Northern-Sotho and Swati to enable all concerned to feel free to express themselves in their mother tongue. I then translated what they said into English in order to fulfil the requirement for writing this thesis

4.1.1. Mr. P's story

This is a young man, who grew up in Nellmapius. He completed his high school in Mamelodi and he went to Technical School to study civil engineering. He is presently working with a big company where he holds a managerial position. He is very positive in his outlook and determined to make a difference in the community of Nellmapius. He is also a promising leader who can play an important role in his community.

4.1.2. How Mr. P understands poverty

Poverty *ke motlako* meaning that poverty is suffering. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's dictionary suffering means physical or mental pain. Poverty affects people physically and mentally, caused by people lacking food,

clothing, and all the other things that would be described as basic needs.

4.1.3. Mr. P's identified causes of poverty in an African context

4.1.3.1 Bantu education as a cause of poverty

Bantu education was a structure of education that was imposed by the apartheid regime for Africans referring to the indigenous black people. It was a style of education that would encourage a servant or slave mentality. Africans were only allowed to receive education in order to be better servants or slaves to serve a white minority. It was not an empowering education that would train people to be critical thinkers, to receive proper knowledge and human value system.

It could not develop entrepreneurs who would create jobs for other people, but would encourage people to be consumers rather than to be producers. The majority of elderly people were restricted by Bantu education to follow certain professions, such as police, teaching, nursing, that were inferior. This kind of education does not lead to the freedom that we all need to be the kind of people who can walk strong with confidence.

In, 1994 the education system started to change. Young people today, have more opportunities than previous generations of people. They can follow the profession of their choice or according to their abilities. Education should be a tool to eradicate poverty and in order to do this it must encourage an entrepreneur spirit. Young people need to be critical thinkers and able to identify the problems that caused

poverty and come up with solutions. They must be able to create jobs in their local communities.

4.1.3.2 Mindset has impact on our lives

The way we think, will affect the way we act. People must think positive, meaning that they think that they are convinced that they have the ability to improve their lives. With this attitude nothing will be too difficult for them when they put their minds into a positive mode. He was trying to show that everything depends on the way people think about themselves. Whatever people think they will ultimately act according to their thoughts.

4.1.3.3 Laziness as a cause of poverty

Laziness could also be considered as a cause of poverty. People who are lazy are not prepared to do anything to help them but would wait for someone else to do it for them. They expect things to come to them without them taking any action. At the present time those who are running businesses in our communities, mostly foreigners certainly much more than the local people. To eradicate poverty is the individual's responsibility to rise and do something about.

4.1.3.4 The environment has an impact on the lives of people

Some people are saying that they are poor because they come from a poor environment. Therefore it is surprising to find that there are people who are successful and come from the same environment that has been defined as a poor community. This demonstrates that it is more to do with the way we think than on our surroundings. Environment cannot

prevent a person from uplifting yourself and cause you to stay poor.

4.1.3.5 Researcher's thoughts on Mr. P. narrative

I agree with Mr P. about what he thinks are causes of poverty such as the quality of so-called 'Bantu' education from the apartheid era as well as a particular mindset, and even laziness.

'Bantu' education was introduced by the apartheid government to make African (in this thesis black people) to feel inferior (Pieterse 2001:47). This act had disadvantaged Africans with regard to knowledge and vocational training.

Education on the whole should be more liberating than anything else. It needs to open our minds to ourselves and to the world. It teaches us how to think and act appropriately at all times. Education has been identified as of the key that can be used in the eradication of poverty (Smith 2005:61).

A negative attitude and mindset is the biggest problem to be overcome if the lives of poor people are to be improved. Also, I think Bantu education was introduced in order that we think of ourselves as insignificant. The way in which a person thinks influences how that person will act. Most Africans live in squatter camps because the doors of education were closed to them which in return closed the doors of their minds. There is nothing more debilitating if one only has a negative outlook of life.

I believe that for people to be successful they must think positively. If, people are lazy they will remain in poverty forever. At the same time most Africans (blacks) are poor

and yet most of them are not lazy. They are hard working people. They are those people who dig for gold for low wages and they have built our cities, our roads and our houses.

4.2. Mrs. J's story

I have known her for about 10 years. She is a qualified teacher but for a long time unemployed. She lived by piece jobs and her husband is a deputy principal. She had faith that one day things will be right. Now, she has full-time employment in one of the Nellmapius Schools. She is completing her honour's degree in Education with the University of Pretoria.

4.2.1. Mrs J's view on causes of poverty

4.2.1.1 Environment as a cause of poverty

People who grow up in an area where there are no resources and no successful people around will continue to live in poverty. When children are born and grow in such an environment can be affected by that environment. If, young people see that only girls have children they will think this is the way to do things. Also, if they are continually exposed to drunken people around them, they will also get drunk.

It is important for those people, who were born in that environment and are successful, should stay or keep coming to visit that community so that people can be influenced by them in a positive way

4.2.1.2 Poverty is a chain

Poverty can be seen from generation to generation or a chain. It is something that is moving from the elderly to the children. If only one person from the family can make a stand against poverty then that chain can be broken. It is the responsibility of the individual to say enough is enough.

4.2.1.3 Grants

Grants for those girls who have children can be one cause of poverty, because girls will keep having more children so that they can receive more money from the government. At the same time one cannot support these children with what the government is giving.

These children are born into an already very poor family; it means poverty for that family will only increase and there is no way that they can get out this poverty trap. Those girls are not learning to be responsible people but they want the government to be responsible for them. In this way the chain of poverty will continue to be strong.

4.2.1.4 HIV and Aids

Girls will sleep with more than one partner in order to get money to buy whatever they need. Because most of these girls are having sex with more than one partner HIV/AIDS will spread rapidly and poverty will escalate because many people will be unable to work because of ill health. It is possible to find a girl with five children and each has a different father. It means that all of these fathers would possibly be HIV positive as well as those children and their

mother. This will also enable them to get grants from the government.

4.2.1.5 Education and the mother tongue

To eradicate poverty, children must receive proper education. This education must be given in their mother tongue. Those nations of the world, who are shaping the economy of the world, do things in their own language. We cannot master subjects if we are not using our mother language.

The apartheid system was promoting Afrikaans and a little bit of English in South Africa. African languages were treated as less important compared to these two languages. This can cause people to undermine their own language and treat it as inferior compared with other languages of the world. Every child must start mastering his/her language from an early life.

4.2.1.6 Impact of poverty

The poorest of the poor do not have the resources to open a bank account. This means that they cannot save for the future, when they get old they cannot take care of themselves.

Also, some who are professionals continue living in poverty because of a lack of financial literacy. She means that people live in debt they cannot enjoy their money.

Poverty causes stress in the lives of people. They can not afford basic medical care, clothing, shelter, and food.

4.2.1.7 Church and community transformation

It is impossible for the churches to work together because the church is a business. Pastors are making money out of it.

The rate of unemployment has encouraged many people to say “I am called”. Even although they have not called they still offer for the ministry because they see being a pastor as an easy way of making money.

4.2.1.8 God

Poor people do not realize that God exists. If, the church wants to talk about God to the poor, the church first should provide the basic needs of the poor, such as giving them food parcels and clothing. Then the church can begin to disciple them.

It may that it is the will of God that some people will remain poor while others become wealthy. As the Pedi proverbs says “*Ga re lekane re se meno*” meaning that people are not equal like the teeth. It suggests that it was the will of God not to be equal so that we can help one another.

4.2.1.9 Researcher’s thoughts on Mrs J’s narrative

I agree with Mrs. J the environment can be a cause of poverty. If to be poor is the norm of a community it will affect the mindset. The children who have been born within the poor environment will continue to live there without seeing anything wrong with the situation. Because they do not see anything wrong, they will continue to live that kind of life. Poverty will be a chain that will be more generational. HIV will spread across the community because people are not experiencing good role models around them.

On the 01/01/2010, we were sitting down with my brother talking about the way we grew up. He said to me that people ill treated us because our family was the poorest in the

community. Life became too hard for him. This environment changed him; he had to look for way in which he would be able to live in that hostile environment. He became the very harsh person as he is now.

Sometimes he would challenge those men who treated him badly in order to avenge himself. Some of those people are now fathers and have their own families, but he still feels that he should challenge them. That is when I realized just how much that environment shaped us.

People act violently, not because they were born that way but environment has a way of creating them. So, in order to change the people we must first change the environment. The hidden stories of success must be discovered in order to influence that negative description of the environment.

4.2.1.10 Church as a business

This attitude of people offering for the ministry without being called by God is very disappointing because people see the church as way of making money. Many people have lost hope in the church. Because I am a pastor this is my concern.

It is important for me as a pastor to correct this wrong attitude about the church. The community must realize that the church is a place to connect with God and their fellow brothers and sisters. When people come to church, they feel that is a time to rest from the toils of the world.

4.2.1.11 Grants

People must be taught about responsible behaviour. I think it is the right thing for the government to assist the community.

According to the government it is not its aim to create a dependent manner of living. The government must inform communities about their real aim of giving people grants which is to assist them not to support them.

The other thing that is required is for the governments to monitoring these grants, to establish if the correct people receive them and that they are being used for the right purposes. It is possible that some people receive the grants but their children are not benefiting from those grants which are aimed at helping the poor

4.3. Miss JM's story

Miss JM is a 27year old lady. I have known her since she was at high school, as a young girl. She has now completed her grade 12 gained a diploma in production management from Tshwane University of Science. She was brought up by her mum after the divorce of her parents. Since her mother passed away, she now lives in what was her mother's house with her brother. She works with ABSA bank. She and her brother have turned their RDP house into a mansion. She is one of the leaders in the church.

4.3.1. Miss JM's view on the causes of poverty

4.3.1.1 Unemployment grant will kill economy

If people who are not employed can be given a grant, it might kill the economy because people will tend to depend on the government rather than being responsible people. There

would be no need to look for a job or to start a business which will provide an income and create jobs for others so that we can eradicate poverty. Even those who are working will end up leaving their jobs to live off the government.

4.3.1.2 Parent's role

Parents must play a role in shaping the future of their children. They should teach them to be responsible people and to have a positive outlook for life and the future. Parents when they play their role will create a healthy community.

4.3.1.3 Taking own responsibility

Poor people must stop blaming apartheid and other people, for their situation they should rise and take the responsibility to change their situation. The more people spend their time in blaming others; they will fail to take the necessary steps to solve the issues that are facing them.

4.3.1.4 Positive thinking

Poor people must learn to confess positively. By confess positively she meant to speak positive words to yourself. The more we speak the more poverty cracks. There is power in our confession.

4.3.1.5 Environment

To be successful, we need a healthy environment that is motivating and inspiring so that we can grow in what God has given us. It is better spend time with people who are positive rather than people who are negative. This means that one should choose friends who are able to help you to grow

holistically. Every individual person must strive to be a role model

4.3.1.6 Researcher's reflection on Miss JM's narrative

Miss JM seems to be putting her focus on personal responsibility. She is also looking at other reasons out of the self that make people poor. I believe that many poor people are responsible but their historical background, corruption of officials, politics, and the economic systems that have been put in place make the poor more deprived.

If poverty is to be eradicated then all the aspects that I have mentioned above must be transformed.

4.4. Mrs T's story as 'co-researcher'

She is about 37years of age and working as an assistant nurse in old age home. She has three children, two boys and one girl. She has completed studies to become qualified assistant nurse. She worked and studied at the same time. It was hard for her but she continued until she completed her studies. She is still prepared to continue improving her nursing qualifications.

4.4.1 Mrs. T's view on causes of poverty

4.4.1.1 Reasons why people live in poverty

No one likes to be poor. Some live in poverty against their own will; they try to change their situation but fail.

Some are living in poverty because of their own making, e.g. if you are working and you steal from your boss, when you get caught they will dismiss you.

4.4.1.2 Poverty is not only material

They are people who have material wealth but they are poor in other areas of their lives such as having a failed relationship. Some people feel driven to commit suicide and even wealthy people have committed suicide. This teaches us that poverty need not only be material but spiritual as well

4.4.1.3 Over populated

There is poverty in the world because we are too many people on the planet. There are not enough resources and what is available cannot reach every one of us. This suggests that this is an issue that needs looking into.

4.4.1.4 Poor family

If your family is poor then obviously children born into your family would be poor as well. This would suggest that poverty is a generational issue, until eventually some member of the family decides to take a positive step towards changing the poverty that has been controlling the whole family.

Many people were born in poverty stricken families. They stood up and changed the direction of their family. All the other members of the family began to see light at the end of the tunnel. She said when you think about most of those who are in government and in the business world they come from places that were stricken by poverty.

4.4.1.5 Education

Education is a tool that could be used to eradicate poverty on the earth. Holistic education that is building the mind, spirit, physical body, and develops social awareness. Our minds must be trained in critical thinking, our spirit must connect with God, and we must feed our bodies with healthy food and exercise, and learn to live in brotherly love with other people.

Children must be encouraged to go to school. Adults who cannot go school, should be encouraged to go to abet (adult education), where they can learn more about how to start and run their own businesses. There are many adults who are not educated (classroom) but they are very wealthy.

4.4.1.6 Grants to 14yrs girls cause poverty

Government causes poverty by giving children who have babies' grants. These girls keep becoming pregnant because they know that the Government will support them and they no longer need to go to school. She is saying that grants cause poverty because those girls will stop going to school to take care of their families and by not going to school they have no hope of ever improving their situation. Since the government grants are not enough for people to live a decent life, these children are still going to lack most of life's essentials.

4.4.1.7 Drugs are results of being hopeless

Many children because of poverty end up living on drugs. Their poverty gives them a feeling of hopelessness and they have a sense of being useless because they do not have the

basic requirements for life. That is why drug addiction is so high in poor communities.

4.4.1.8 Crime is caused by being in poverty

Poverty increases the rate of crime. People, who do not have basic requirements for life provided, end up committing crimes. Poverty has forced hungry people to satisfy their own needs in a different way which is stealing which may lead to killing.

4.4.1.9 Teenage pregnancy caused by poverty

Because of their poverty, many girls start providing sex in exchange for money. Also, if there is no love at home, girls may attach to an older man who offers affection to the point of giving sex to that man.

4.4.1.10 Things are very expensive

Poor people cannot afford the basic needs because things are very expensive. If, one has an income R1 000.00, will not sustain a family because it will only buy a few items

4.4.1.11 Poverty has levels

There are in different levels of poverty for instance there are people who lack the basic needs of life, whereas others can afford the basic needs but they cannot afford a reasonable lifestyle. This would indicate that poverty is relative.

4.4.1.12 Poverty kills the feelings of the person

Poverty causes stress in the life of people. It becomes stressful because a person cannot afford to fulfil their needs, and it puts pressure on the mind, which will end up

affecting feelings, for example disrupt the sexual life of a couple or cause the lack of good relationships within a family. This can result in sicknesses that cannot be cured.

4.4.1.13 Poverty makes people to feel hopeless

If poor people cannot pay their rent or provide basic needs, such as pay school fees for their children, take their children to a decent health care centre where they do not spend the whole day and give presents to their children on birth days these are the things that will cause people to feel hopelessness. They cannot see tomorrow.

4.4.1.14 Change is always possible

Poor people must not accept the situation as it is, but have hope that the situation will change. Nothing will stay the same forever. An African proverb says “*Bophelo ke sempheko*” meaning life changes. The life that one is living today might change in the future. Take for instance that, many years ago, white people were ruling South Africa, but now change has taken place and Africans control the politics of South Africa.

4.4.1.15 Spirituality and God’ presence experience

It is hard to believe in God when one does not have the basic needs of life. The concern of poor people is to satisfy their basic human needs. The issue of whether God is present in their lives or not is of little relevance to them.

For those people who believe in God, they can persist on waiting for God to bring them answers. They are aware that God takes time to answer the prayers of His children.

4.4.1.16 Researcher's reflection on Mrs. T's narratives

Teenage pregnancy is a problem that I have also observed in poverty stricken communities. Mrs T put it this way that many girls sell their bodies for sexual intercourse to earn some money. Here, we can see the impact of poverty. Most of these teenagers can not see any other way of earning money apart from prostituting themselves.

In communities where there is a lack of places of entertainment forces young people to engage in unprotected sexual activities. Many young people because they feel bored engage in sexual activities. For them this is an activity which removes some boredom in their lives

4.5. Mr. JR's view on poverty

4.5.1 Describing poverty

A person who lives in poverty is a person who has nothing at all. No food, clothing, decent shelter, cannot afford basic needs such as medical care, shelter, and education. They are those people who live without hope. They do not know where their next meal will be coming from.

4.5.2. Mr JR's view on causes of poverty

Historical

- Job reservation
 - Good jobs were only being provided for the white community and excluding black people.

Today the abject poverty that we see is because of that historical background of South Africa. Today, the squatter camps that we see everywhere is because of that past

- Bantu education
 - Better education that would be the key in the eradication of poverty, this was denied to millions of the people in the country. The Bantu education act was introduced to keep blacks as third class citizens of the country. Other people, especially older people cannot go back to receive education.
 - Education must be compulsory for all people before poverty can be eradicated.
- Environment
 - He says that the environment where people live can be a cause of poverty for people. If someone grows up in a deprived environment then it is likely that the majority of those people living in that community would be poor
 - There are some people who would be successful despite growing in a disadvantaged environment but it would be a very small percentage.
- Role of the Government
 - Government must promote technical skills because it gives people the opportunity to earn

money otherwise people will be become lazy and start to depend on the Government for everything. They would stop preparing for their future.

- Government must help the community to establish projects such as bakery, sewing and gardening within the community.

4.5.3. Some of the impacts of poverty are:

- People will lose confidence in themselves.
- Crime
- Stress- Sometimes leading to suicide
- Makes people feel hopeless about life.

4.5.4. How to eradicate poverty?

- Individual level
 - People must take personal responsibility to get themselves out of poverty.
 - People need to be motivated to climb out of the poverty trap.
- Government
 - Government must promote technical skills, so that poor people can be equipped.

- Government must not give people money for instance government must buy all the things that will be needed for people to start the business because if people receive cash they might use it for their person needs not on something that can generate money.
- Government must assist people to start projects that would encourage self help
- Community
 - The community helps those who are poor by giving them food or supplying their basic needs while the poor are busy establishing their projects.

4.5.5. Mr. JR's Experience of God

Some people ask themselves where God is. Why does God not remove them from their poverty. Why it seems that He does not hear them when they pray.

Some people stop praying to God because it seems as though He is not listening to their prayers. Sometimes God takes time to answer their prayers.

Some poverty motivates them to pray and to put their trust in God. Most of the time, they would ask God to make a way where there was no way.

God wants us even though we pray to Him, to do something, we must participate with God.

Meeting with fellow believers helps the poor to carry the yoke of poverty.

4.5.6. Researcher's thought on Mr. JR's narrative

He mentioned that poverty is historical in South Africa. The apartheid government legislated laws that excluded the majority of people from proper education which I think is what has caused backwardness in the lives of many.

In addition the job reservation acts that were introduced had excluded the black people from contributing towards the economy of the country. Many of the people today are unemployed because of these acts from the previous government.

In eradication of poverty, the individual, government, and private sector must all play a part. People must take responsibility for their own future. The government must make it possible for people to receive relevant information that can assist them to make informed decisions about their lives. The private sector must partner with poor people to provide money that can assist the poor to win the battle against poverty.

The church is a part of the community. The church must preach hope to poor people. It must teach the poor that they were made in God's image so they are important. The church must not just concentrate on the spiritual aspect of life but must involve itself in community development by helping the poor to start projects that will empower them

4.6. Mr. T's story

Mr. T is a man of about 42 years of age. He lost his arm when he was a little boy. He was retrenched from Vista University some years back. When I met him he was unemployed and life was not easy for this man to provide for his family. His wife was working in an old age home, where they were paid little money. He is now employed in the police department as an administrative clerk. This improved life in his home. Mr. T is living with a disability. He got injured while he was still a boy.

4.6.1 Unemployment causes poverty

If there are no more jobs in the country then it means that people cannot work and poverty will grow from generation to generation. It will be impossible to satisfy your needs.

4.6.2 Poverty causes stress and depression for the parents

If parents cannot afford to provide for their family, it puts pressure on the parents, and they end up being stressed which will cause other bodily sicknesses. Poverty affects marital relationships because stress can affect our sexual life so that the marriage may become an unstable relationship. Women become harsh towards their husbands because they cannot provide for them.

4.6.3 Budgeting system

Sometimes, people are suffering poverty because they cannot manage their money well. They do not know how to do basic personal budgeting and that can cause them to find themselves with many debts.

4.6.4 Peer group pressure.

If parents cannot afford to provide for their children, the children might end up following their friends in doing illegal things to satisfy their lives, such as committing crimes, doing drugs and prostitution.

4.6.5 People who live in poverty need a lot of motivation

Parents must keep motivating their children, reassuring them that the situation that we find ourselves in one day will change. Parents need to give their children hope and let them see that there is light at the end of the tunnel.

4.6.6 Effective education must be given in own language

Children must use their mother tongue in school. They must do mathematics and science in their mother tongue so that they can excel and have pride in their own languages.

4.6.7 Poor people feel that prayer is useless

Many people have given up with prayer, if they pray, and it seems prayer does not work for them then they think it is pointless. They need to pray and see the result of those prayers now.

4.6.8 Poverty comes from God

Poverty comes from God so that people must follow Him.

4.7. Mr. TN's story

I have known Mr. TN for about ten years we met while he was still a student attending the high school. His parents

divorced in the early years of their marriage. He stayed with his mother and his sister. Presently, at the time this research is being written Mr. TN is completing his degree in Computer studies.

Mr. TN said that although he had never gone to bed without food, he has still experienced poverty because his mother could not provide all of the necessities of life. For instance she could not buy him certain items that were required for school.

He also defined poverty as a lack of a proper relationship within the family. As a boy growing up you need your father to be around you or to speak to you. If one has challenges to face in life then he can go to his father and share his heart with him.

4.7.1. Mr. TN's view on poverty

4.7.1.1 Parents divorce affects children negatively

Divorce would cause poverty in the family. Children need to live a decent life. They will suffer at school and in life in general. The children of divorced parents sometimes experience difficulties integrating with other children at school

Divorce causes an emotional poverty in the lives of the children and their parents.

Lack of parental involvement frustrates children and can inhibit healthy and strong growth.

People might be impoverished because of unemployment.

4.7.1.2 Lack of willingness

Black people do not have a willing heart to plan for the future. It is as if they like to live for today only, they do not think about tomorrow.

They cannot prioritize, unable to set goals to implement any goals that have been set and carry out an evaluation of them. He said one of his co-workers was commenting about the company they work for saying that it was well managed because the management is white. They thought that if it was managed by someone black it would not be as well managed as it is being managed now.

4.7.1.3 Curse upon black African

It seems as if blacks are being cursed by God, not to succeed in life.

It is possible to break the generational curses upon our lives. One has to tell himself that I will be successful and start to plan around what you are saying. Identify your problems and get solutions.

4.7.1.4 To continue within poverty is a choice

People who live in poverty made a choice to continue living in poverty. Meaning that poor people are the ones to be blamed for the mess they find themselves in. They must not blame the government or the apartheid regime all the time.

4.7.1.5 Willingness to go to school

In order to overcome poverty, poor people must go to school to learn. Education is a weapon that could help to destroy the power of poverty.

4.7.1.6 Making the right decisions.

By becoming educated, people would be able to make the right choices in life. And those choices will change their lives.

4.7.1.7 Most African (Blacks) lack initiative

Many black Africans seem to want the government to give them everything they need. They just want to wake up and stand in street corners expecting miracles to come to them. They would like to receive free houses from the government.

4.7.1.8 Stop blaming apartheid

It is time for us to stand up and take charge of our lives and be responsible for our future. It cannot help us to keep looking backwards and blaming apartheid. Poor people must learn to be in charge of their lives

4.7.1.9 Researcher's thoughts on Mr. TN's narrative

I felt rather disappointed as I was listening to my co-researchers because I started this research project with some anger against the previous white government for being the cause of black people having to live in poverty. Mr. TN has looked into the causes of poverty but he spent more thought and discussion saying that it is time to move on, meaning that we have to stop focusing on the pasts, but have to start focusing on the future. And he has spent more time talking about poor people is their own responsibilities in life. It has challenged me to rethink my whole attitude on the poverty issue. As much as people need to learn from their past, they should never stay in the past. It is time to move on.

4.8. Mr. S's story

Mr. S is about 30 years of age and married to Mrs Z and they have two boys. He works for the National Empowerment Fund. This fund helps new companies by lending them finances. This is what he has been sharing about poverty in our conversation:

4.8.1. Describing poverty as

He described poverty as the inability to satisfy human basic needs. He put the needs as follows;

4.8.1.1 Spiritual needs

He describes spiritual as living according to the Word of God; following God's principles for life.

4.8.1.2 Physical needs

This is having enough food, shelter, money and clothing.

4.8.1.3 Emotional needs

Lack of love caused by poor relationships in families and community

4.8.1.4 Social needs

A feeling of acceptance by others from the community knowing that they are able to accept us despite being different from each other

4.8.2. Causes of poverty

- Lack of information
 - If people are living in a poverty stricken community it is because they often lack information about what is available that can help them to fight poverty; things such as the programs of the government about poverty alleviation, bursaries, and other opportunities that are available.

- Education
 - People cannot always access the opportunities in education that can change their conditions. Education is a powerful tool that can remove people from poverty.

- Political system
 - Politics can cause poverty for a particular group of people. Like in South Africa the previous government introduced apartheid where the system was favouring whites and excluding blacks.

 - Also, the previous government introduced the Bantu Education Act which was aimed at making Blacks third class citizens and introducing a job reservation act that was privileging white people by giving them all skilled and semi-skilled jobs.

- Economical system
 - Economical system to favour those people who are connected to a ruling political party.
- Corruption and nepotism
 - Corrupt officials will cause poverty by stealing the money that was given to assist in alleviating poverty to create jobs and to build houses for the poor. And they will give jobs to their relatives. When they offer tenders they will sell the tender. If you are not known by the officials or do not believe in corruption you cannot win a tender.
- Unequal distribution of wealth to the different provinces.
 - He says most of the time government has been focusing in Gauteng and the Western Cape. Provinces such as the Eastern Cape have been neglected. The people who live in poor provinces cannot enjoy the fruits of the New South Africa.

4.8.3. Impact of poverty

- Stress on the life of those who live in poverty.
 - It manifest in family violence because there is not enough money in the house.

- Poor people may commit suicide because they are hopeless.
- Crime
 - Most of the poverty stricken communities are identified with crime. People fight against poverty in a negative way.
- Drug addiction
 - Poor people would live on drugs to forget about their situation. If they are drunk their wives cannot talk to them about the problems of the family.
- Teenage pregnancies
 - Poverty stricken communities do not have any facility for the youth to entertain themselves. Young people are bored and they end up using sex as a means of entertainment. They end up with children before marriage.

4.8.4. Spiritual

He sees teaching about God as a way of promoting morality. It concentrates on the heart of people. God in His Word teaches us to share what we have with those who have less. When people follow the teachings of God it means that we will take care of the poor.

The bible teaches us how to prosper, following the bible people will prosper. The teachings of God must shape the way we think, the way we think it will influence the way we live and do.

If government officials were follow the spiritual teachings of God they would never steal the money that was made available to assist the alleviation of poverty. They will have a good heart of God.

4.8.5. Eradication of poverty

- Morality
 - People must be empowered in spiritual things so that they can take care of themselves how to use resources and not to be greedy. Here morality is connected with God.
- Up skilling
 - People must be empowered by teaching them technical skills, so that people can be employed or can create their own jobs.
 - Providing information that teaches people that they need to rise up from poverty
 - The church must come up with projects that would change the community. The church as a centre of morality must encourage all professionals who are members of the church

not to be selfish but to share what they have with those who do not have.

- Youth programs
 - Good programs must be introduced to young people so that it will encourage them not commit crimes, prevent teenage pregnancies and to train them for life.

4.8.6. Researcher's thoughts on Mr. S's narrative

On eradication of poverty, he suggested the following: the first is to teach people about the Word of God. He called it morality. It's when people live right, respect other people hate corruption, and are willing to serve the poor. I agree that people must change especially when dealing with the poor.

Also, the poor people must be helped to help themselves about helping themselves. Projects that will empower the community must be promoted.

4.9. Mrs Z's story

She described poverty as a lack of money, because if one has no money that person cannot buy what she/he needs.

4.9.1. Mrs Z's view on causes of poverty

4.9.1.1 Mindset can cause poverty and also can make us succeed

She says when people think small about themselves then they will act according to the way they think.

4.9.1.2 Laziness as a cause of poverty

Even though people may have opportunities, they can still fail to use those opportunities because they are lazy.

4.9.1.3 The root of poverty is spiritual

Poverty is seen materially but it is also spiritual. All kinds of poverty starts from spiritual poverty where people live out of God's will or are living in sin.

4.10. Researcher's view on poverty

4.10.1 As a Child

I grew up as a child who did not see any problems with the issue of poverty. It was normal for me to go to school without food, clothes and other human needs. I started seeing the differences as I was growing up especially when I saw how white people live.

I was beginning to understand the issue of the difference between white and black this was when anger started to grow in my life. I made a decision that I would not work for a white man when I grew up but that I would steal from them as a way of repossessing what was stolen from African people.

4.10.2 As a man, husband, and father

It is really frustrating as a man, if you cannot provide for your needs and the needs of your family. I felt and still am feeling less of a man compared to men white because of poverty. I know that I am important, but poverty makes you feel that you are not important. It is more stressing, if your own wife and children need something, but you fail to provide for them. I wished to take them on holiday but I cannot go because I do not have enough money.

4.10.3 As a Christian and the pastor

As a Christian, I felt and still feel the pain of poverty the same way as I felt when a child and as a father and husband. I have found myself frustrated that I cannot provide for my family. It is worse if I see white Christians with an attitude towards Black people that is showing signs of apartheid or acting towards blacks as if they are inferior.

As a Christian, I have a sense of hope that things will one day change. I should focus more on the positive than on the negative of the past. I must forgive those who brought apartheid to South Africa especially upon Africans. I must start to work towards the betterment of the future rather than to dwell on the wrongs of the past.

As a pastor, leading and working amongst the poor, I sometimes feel helpless in my ministry. But because of the hope that I have received from God, it gives me strength to minister to the poor. I pray for them and give them hope to face tomorrow.

In South Africa, we must all move forward in life to build a better country where black and white can live together in harmony. Let the white be aware that the time of having a sense of superiority is over and blacks must let the anger and bitterness caused by apartheid be a thing of the past and move on.

4.11. Themes identified in this context and conversing with literature and other disciplines

I have selected themes from the discussions with my co-researchers. There were many themes that came through but we have chosen the most common ones which we came upon frequently in our group discussions

4.11.1 Bantu Education as a cause of poverty

Bantu education was education that was created for black people. I have dealt more with this in chapter 2. It was a form of education that was inferior compared to their white counterparts. Mr. S. mentioned that poor education was a reason why black people were better slaves than entrepreneurs because to be entrepreneur a person would need to be able to read and to write. It did not give black people the opportunity to choose the jobs they would like (Pieterse 2001:47).

After 1994 things started changing in the schools. Opportunities have started to become available. Even although the majority of Black people still cannot afford university education, the government is doing much to support black people to getting a proper education. Mr. S

mentioned that the new generation, is thinking to own their businesses (Smith 2005:61).

Quality education is a major key for destroying poverty in South Africa especially Nellmapius.

Mrs T and Mr. T. said that those poor people, especially young people must go to school because education can change the situation of these people. Children must be encouraged to learn so that their future would be great.

Mrs J. spoke about quality education that must be offered in the mother tongue. Children would go far if they can receive education in their mother tongue. Education that will provide them with skills, knowledge and human values.

4.11.1.1 Personal responsibility

Personal responsibility was identified so strongly in the conversations with my co-researchers. Statements like the following were identified:

“It is time to be responsible for our own lives”

“Stop blaming apartheid”

“Africans lack initiative”

“To continue in poverty is a choice”

As a researcher, I have learned from my own experience that I had to take personal responsibility in order to achieve the educational standards that I have to mention only one example amongst many other examples. As I have already mentioned in my personal story I was born out of wedlock, I have not known my father only his grave which I found in

2007, which was a painful experience. My grandmother and my mother were the poorest of the poor. They managed to educate me up to standard 5 which now known as grade 7.

In 1979 I was out of school, and that was when I received Christ in my life I have read in the bible,(Gen.1:26) says that God made man in his image and likeness. This made me realize that I am important and able to make things happen. I made a personal decision to go back to school. To cut a long story short today I am completing my PhD. There was a lot of challenges on the journey of my life because of the personal decision that I made and despite those challenges I stood firm in order to make those decisions happen.

The education system must help people to take personal responsibility to change their lives and their situations.

4.11.2 Poverty is not only material

From the voices of Nellmapius, it is said that poverty cannot be defined as a lack of resources; it also means that sometimes one can have material resources but still lack in happiness or peace in their life. From literature poverty is identified as more than a lack of resources, (Jayakaran 1996:14) says “poverty as a lack of freedom”. According to (Munroe 1998:74) freedom is a “liberty to dominate”. Every human being has been given a space to be in charge of their environment. If people do not have this freedom they are poor.

Mubangisi (2008:175) says the description of poverty includes the language of voiceless, powerless, risks, and vulnerability. According to the statement above if people do not have a say they are poor or they shall remain in poverty.

Poverty is about lack of opportunities and capabilities (Saha 2008:269).

4.11.3 New perspective on social grants for the needy

According to my co-researchers perspectives they opposed to grants being given to 14 year old girls who have illegitimate babies and also to grant given to anyone else. They feel that people will depend on government rather than take personal responsibility for their lives. Personally I feel that when people have been a long time receiving grants of any kind, those people will be irresponsible in life.

The government is sharing the same feelings about grants. That is why; they have changed social welfare to social development. It follows the developmental theory of help the people to help themselves. It joins social welfare with economy (Gray 2006:S53). According to the government people must be helped temporally with the grants while at the same empowering them to be responsible citizens of South Africa. In chapter 3 I spoke about empowerment, where I have confirmed from literature that people must be empowered to take charge of their lives.

Nieman (2006:599) stated that in receiving handouts, the individuality of people was suppressed and their inherent skills and strengths are not acknowledged. This can lead to apathy, self-blame, low self-esteem, frustration and anger. I believe that God made us to be free to live according to the choices we have made.

4.11.4 Environment as a cause of poverty

It has been argued by my co-researchers that the environment where we have been born and grew will have impacted on us in a positive or negative way. Mr. P said that environment cannot influence you but you can influence your environment using the example of those who are in the government and in business who are successful today. Mr. JR said we should also check how many are successful from deprived communities, most of the time people who are successful would be less in percentage and some of those successful people would be politically connected. The rest of the people from deprived communities would stay in poverty.

Alcock (2006:35) argues that “social circumstances and social forces” will have an impact on the lives of people. It means that people living in a particular environment would act according to its effects.

The communities of the poor were excluded from the wealth of the country and that had a disempowering and marginalizing effect on people (Mubangisi 2006:175). My own experience from school was that our libraries and laboratories were totally empty, and so for most of the time we were taught science in theory only.

African communities do not have proper infrastructures such as community libraries, parks and entertainment places. And that has caused a lot of social ills such as teenage pregnancy, crime, drug addiction and hopelessness amongst the people living in these communities.

4.11.5 Church a vehicle for community transformation

It would be better, if the churches in Nellmapius would work together to eradicate poverty, by researching for different skills and abilities that they have amongst the members of their churches in Nellmapius because if one church is doing community projects and is successful, other pastors might stop their members from being a part of those projects (Mr P).

(Mr P and Mr S) feel that the churches must work together in solving the community's problem especially poverty, because poverty is the root cause of all social ills. And the church is the main organization that is so active and has the attention of many more people than all the other organizations. In chapter 3, the role of church in community transformation has been clearly explained.

Nieman (2006:595) argues that the church is compelled to take a wider view of its role in the communities it serves, communities that in many instances are in poverty, underdeveloped and lacking resources. As a researcher, I feel that the church must play an active role in the social transformation process.

4.12. CONCLUSION

Rainbow nation is a phrase used by Bishop Tutu meaning that South Africa has different people, colours, cultures and tribes. Listening to all the narratives, they stress the importance of striving forward to build a better future for all the people who live in South Africa. We must press on keep

pressing on to build the rainbow nation. As the Freedom Charter of the ANC, stated South Africa belongs to all who live in it, despite colour, religion, tribe, rich, poor and level of education. The church must promote this kind of thought that all of us, we have been created by God as equal and we are of the same blood. The issue of blood is so amazing; if we can take the blood of a white man and the blood of a black man it is the same.